6. Images and Identities

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6.1 Images of Nations as 'Interdiscourses'. Preliminary Theoretical Reflections on the Relation of 'Images and Identities': The Case of Luxembourg

The common theoretical framework for the analysis of different manifestations of 'images and identities' in the socio-cultural region of Luxembourg is provided by the so-called interdiscourse analysis (Gerhard/Link/Parr 2004: 293-295). It is regarded as an advancement and modification of the discourse analysis developed by Michel Foucault and, as an applied discourse theory, its main aim is to establish a relationship between practice and empiricism. While the discourses analysed by Foucault were, to a great extent, about formations of positive knowledge and institutionalised sciences (law, medicine, human sciences etc.), the interdiscourse analysis is interested in discourse complexes which are precisely not limited by specialisation, but that embrace a more comprehensive field and can therefore be described as 'interdiscursive' (Parr 2009). The significance of such interdiscourses arises from the general tension between the increasing differentiation of modern knowledge and the growing disorientation of modern subjects.

In this sense, 'Luxembourg' can be described as a highly complex entity made up of special forms of organisation, e.g. law, the economy, politics or also the health service. Here, each of these sectors, as a rule, develops very specified styles of discourse restricted to the respective field, with the result that communication about problems and important topics even between these sectors is seriously impeded and, more importantly, that the everyday world and the everyday knowledge of the subjects is hardly ever reached or affected.

The following may serve as a case in point: In Luxembourg, as in all other affected countries, the dangers of the financial crisis can hardly be conveyed by means of the highly specified technical language of the economists. Instead, the

subject has to be translated into forceful images, which are often borrowed from other special discourses. Thus an economist warned in the Luxembourg press at the beginning of the crisis about the "tainted financial products" which spread "like a sort of cancer" (image field: medicine). In addition, he drew the comparison to "nuclear energy" that "had been invented without giving any thought to how the new technology should be kept under control" (image field: technology).

Those and similar interdiscursive metaphorical manners of expression have a communicative-integrative effect which, as in the above example, possibly applies for large parts of western European cultures. In addition, the interdiscourses display specific features typical to a culture, so that their analysis is also able to illuminate the cultural specifics of a given society. One can therefore assume that today these interdiscourses make a significant contribution to sustaining a national culture because they provide an identity potential that acts communicatively.

In this chapter then questions on cultural 'identity' do not relate to personal subjects or hardly verifiable psychological structures but rather to (inter)discursively generated identity options of 'We', circulating in the form of images within a given culture and providing the basis for an interplay of symbolically attributed and appropriated identities. These images, in a comprehensive sense of both linguistic and visual, can also be described as collective symbols of a specific culture, as the totality of the collectively anchored, more or less stereotyped 'imagery' of a particular culture. By establishing in a selective and very fragmented way connections between the specific fields of knowledge as well as to the everyday knowledge of the subjects, and, in addition, by being used by different social agencies, collective symbols generate the *idea* of a common, consolidated cultural identity of a society. This can be produced both as perception of self and of others.

The aim of this chapter is the reconstruction of central elements of the system of collective symbols in Luxembourg that is at present culturally identifiable. The question we have posed ourselves is: How are specific notions of a Luxembourg identity generated by linguistic and visual images? In line with the respective fields of research of the contributors, the analysis is distributed across different interdiscursive media: print media, advertisements, comics and art. In terms of interdiscourse theory, this is a 'mix' of elaborated (art photography, art documentation, comics) and elementary interdiscourses (advertisements, print media) – that is to say, a more reflected and intellectual handling of collective symbols on the one hand, and a more everyday one on the other. In addition, the team of authors has agreed on a set of subject areas that serve to analyse in an exemplary manner motifs and applications of Luxembourg's particular collective imagery in the various forms of media. In brief, these subject areas are: 'Europe', 'banking center', 'cultural capital', '*Mudam*'[1],'migration' and 'Arcelor/Mittal'.

The subject fields consequently cover key areas of the economy, politics and culture. It can be assumed that they are present, albeit in differing degrees, in

1 | *Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean*, Luxembourg.

the everyday knowledge of the Luxembourgers and, in equally different forms, reveal attributed as well as appropriated identities. For instance, the subject areas 'Arcelor/Mittal', 'banking center' and to a certain extent also 'Europe' as well as 'migration' are typical for the structural changes that the country has experienced over the last decades when it underwent the transition from a production-oriented society to a service-oriented one. This transition, which was performed within one generation, has undoubtedly led to a huge prosperity in the country and has made Luxembourg one of the richest nations in the world. However, this process also has an effect on collective definitions of identity that, for a long time, have been perceived as continuous. Just how much the balance between appropriated and attributed identities has become unsettled can, for instance, be seen by the fact that the sale of the Arcelor steelworks in 2006 was regarded as a matter of national concern. There is quite obviously still a strong tendency to identify with the industrial past, including the underlying notion of paternalistically operating large-scale enterprises. By contrast, questions concerning the pro-European position of the Luxembourgers and the related notions and problems relating to the opening of society serve to illustrate the crucial importance of attributed identities.

The event 'Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007' is also to be understood in this context as a large-scale attempt to bundle definitions of identity as they drift apart. However, the event also provides enough material to identify their individual components and to question them regarding their past function or also their present one.

In the first part of this chapter (6.2) the origin and functional use of the national imagery relevant for Luxembourg is discussed using a journalistic and literary corpus of text. The double identity movement typical for Luxembourg, of isolation and adaptation is expressed in the central national symbol of the 'fortress'. In the course of the modernisation of society, this national symbol, which plays a central role as a self-image as well as for outsiders' perspective on Luxembourg, increasingly finds itself in a crisis, which then manifests itself openly in the form of journalistic reporting about the 'bank crisis' or the subject of 'Europe'. Finally, we will also examine the imagery assigned in the print media to the projects on the renewal of the national image ('*Mudam*', 'cultural capital').

The following part (6.3) analyses the *Superjhemp* comics as a pictorial satire about customary stereotypes of country and people. In his physiognomy, private circumstances, in his occupation and his preferences, the hero, Superjhemp, appears as a projection figure of the Luxembourg national character. In addition, the comic uses the leeway provided by the genre for humorous as well as critical hyperbole about conditions in Luxembourg, where, in particular, the tense relationship between provincialism and wealth is one of the recurring subjects. The comic series owes its success in no small measure to the fact that a sort of fool's mirror is held up to the readers. However, the satirical self-image also clearly presupposes insider knowledge about the conditions in the country and cannot be readily decoded by outsiders.

Section 6.4 is dedicated to the advertising discourse as an interdiscourse that impacts everyday life. Though advertising primarily intends to create positive effects for sales and brand images, it can also contribute to reinforcing specific images with identity-forming potential in Luxembourg or even to generating them. In which way advertising in the Grand Duchy operates with images and symbols and can thereby promote forms of collective identities, is illustrated with examples of advertisements taken from the financial sector and the telecommunications industry as well as from official publications showcasing Luxembourg in the cultural capital year of 2007.

Section 6.5 focuses on one aspect of the strategy of culturalisation of the self-image in the country that has become increasingly visible over the last years. In the context of an ambitious art scene and intensive cultural promotion in Luxembourg, photography has developed into an important medium of the reflexion about identity. To what extent identity-based representations, i.e. appropriated as well as attributed identity patterns, are (de)contextualised and (de)constructed, is shown by the analysis of a selection of works of seven foreign and Luxembourgish photographers. Their commissioned works originated in the context of the cultural capital year Luxembourg 2007 and touch on different subject areas, providing a broad basis for analysis.

The final section, 6.6, centers on an exhibition project realised in the cultural capital year under the title 'Retour de Babel'. The aim here was to confront the established image about immigration in Luxembourg with a more comprehensive one. The contribution inquires into the manner in which the image of Luxembourg as a 'European laboratory', a central one for the concept of this exhibition, is perceived and realised.

6.2 Symbolisms in the Media-Based Perceptions of Self and Others of Luxembourg

Luxembourg in the Context of European National Symbolisms

The following section analyses forms of speech with linguistic imagery in literary and – predominantly – journalistic texts of the last years that evince a particular symbolic discourse about the 'Luxembourgish identity'. The guiding hypothesis here is that even the present media culture cannot do without "mass symbols of the nations" (Canetti 2000). For the established European nations steeped in tradition these have been well known for a long time[2] and continue to be used in the media as elementary literary "semi-finished products" (Link 1983: 9) in the most diverse

2 | According to Canetti, the English attribute themselves to the 'sea', the French to the 'revolution', the Germans to the 'forest', the Swiss to the 'mountains' and the Dutch to the 'dyke' (Canetti 2000: 197-208).

variations. For a small country like Luxembourg, however, which even after the Second World War was still struggling to rid itself of the image as an 'operetta state'[3], it was difficult, already for historical reasons, to participate in this long-standing custom of the big European nations of symbolic attributions of self and others, or even to be recognised. This sense of inferiority might also have led to the fact that, for the Luxembourgers, the symbol of the 'fortress', which does not easily blend into the symbolism of other European nations with their references to special heroic achievements or confrontation with nature and history, has assumed a central significance.

Taking this central symbolism as a starting point, we will in the following discuss contexts of its use and attempts to modify it, which result from the rapid social change from which even the spirited Luxembourgers have not been spared. This contribution does not intend any detailed historical reconstruction of the origin of Luxembourg's particular collective symbolism but rather focuses on aspects of its functional use[4].

The 'Fortress' as the Central National Symbol

Luxembourg is one of the few countries that are associated with a building in the perception of their inhabitants, as well as in their public image (Kmec 2007). The 'fortress', as it is called, is the name given to the remaining parts of a huge military fortification enlarged by Vauban after the French conquest of 1684, and expanded over nearly two centuries in rank growth fashion, until, in 1867 France and Prussia agreed, as a specious peacemaking measure, on dismantling it. Today, the key facts are basic tourist knowledge. This knowledge can be enhanced by making mention of the turning points which the history of the fortress has marked in the history of the town as well as of the country itself: the destruction of the medieval town area, alternating periods of so-called 'foreign rule' (Margue 2007) and, finally, the gradual formation of a capital on its remains. The fortifications still visible are, in this sense, material witnesses of an arduous process of national self-assertion.

In the opinion of the former director of the *Service des Sites et Monuments Nationaux*, George Calteux, the fortress history reflects a collective state of mind in

3 | An arbitrary, but illustrative example to which degree the national self-image in Luxembourg had for a long time been determined by an adopted image from outside is to be found in the *Escher Tageblatt* of 12.11.1947: There, an article discussing the issue of conscription in Luxembourg ends with the remark that, without an army, the country appeared "... more than ever in our history as an operetta state" (p. 6). Concerning the public image of Luxembourg as an "operetta state", see Romain Kirt: Zu klein, um überhaupt ein richtiger Staat zu sein? *d'Lëtzeburger Land*, 17.08.2001, p. 1.

4 | This contribution is based to a large extent on an evaluation of articles, in particular from the Luxembourg and German daily press of recent years. The articles themselves are referred to in the respective remarks, however, they do not appear in the bibliography.

the country, which has consolidated in the 20th century, owing to the experiences during both World Wars, into a national attitude. He describes the mentality of his compatriots as follows: "*Viele, lange Kriege, der Druck von Herren und Fremdherrschaft haben seit dem frühen Mittelalter in Stadt und Land aus uns zähe und (manchmal) sture Menschen gemacht, die ihre Hände zu Fäusten in der Tasche ballten*"[5] (Calteux 2005: 144).

The remark sums up the Luxembourgers' self-perception which reveals a stoic conservatism, reflected on the one hand by withdrawal imposed by external circumstances and on the other, by a lifestyle which, only reluctantly and only ostensibly conforms to the times. This pattern of self-perception finds its adequate expression in the fortress: 'We are as well-fortified as the fortress in the midst of our capital.' The fact that town and country have identical names facilitates identification with the building that acquires the stature of a representative national symbol and therefore guarantees in a way Luxembourg's attachment to the symbolic discourse of nations that has already been taking place for a long time in Europe.

As self-attribution, the symbol of the fortress of course also operates as an offer to bundle all kinds of ascriptions about the 'Luxembourgers' that are in circulation into one characteristic. The example of the 'fortress' also serves to show, however, how the communication of national symbolisms in the global age is becoming increasingly difficult.

To what degree the self portrait characterised by periods of isolation and adaptation, applies particularly to post-war identity can be gauged from the way the symbolism of the fortress is employed in the work of Roger Manderscheid, the country's most pre-eminent author of that period. Here are some examples: In a volume of sketches, *aufstand der luxemburger alliteraten*[6], Manderscheid describes, in retrospect, the critical function of literature in the country as a Sisyphean task to overcome a mental block: "*in mühseliger kleinarbeit haben die luxemburger literaten über jahrzehnte hinweg probiert, die festungsmauern, die unser geistiges leben gefangen hielten und immer noch halten, stein um stein abzutragen […]*"[7] (Manderscheid 2003: 16). In a book of poetry published at the turn of the millennium, *summa summarum. gedichte aus einem vergangenen jahrhundert*[8], there is a set of poems about the country under the title *lyrische berichte aus dem innern der festung*[9] (Manderscheid 2000:

5 | Personal translation: "Many long wars, the pressure of masters and foreign rule have turned us since the early Middle Ages, in town and country, into tough and (sometimes) headstrong people who, inside their pockets, have clenched their hands into fists".

6 | Personal translation: "Uprising of the Luxembourg Alliterati".

7 | Personal translation: "In laborious and painstakingly detailed work, Luxembourg's literati have attempted over decades to dismantle stone by stone the fortress walls that emprison our mental lives and always have done […]".

8 | Personal translation: "Summa summarum. Poems from a past century".

9 | Personal translation: "Lyrical reports from inside the fortress".

17). And one passage of a volume entitled *schwarze engel*[10] reads as follows: "*dabei sind die luxemburger die enge gewohnt. Jahrhunderte haben sie hinter festungsmauern gekauert [...] die festungsmauern haben sie durch bankenpaläste ersetzt. Ich meine die grossherzoglichen*"[11] (Manderscheid 2001: 14-15).

The underlying tone of resignation suggests that the concept of an aesthetic education has, up to now, had little effect in changing the widespread fortress mentality. *En passant*, Manderscheid also provides a hint why this is so. In a modern, pluralistic society like Luxembourg, the symbolism of the fortress no longer functions exclusively via the direct reference to an imaginary national character, but is also transferred onto other dominant areas of representation of everyday life: The "fortress walls" have been replaced by "bank palaces", attributes such as "introvert", "secretive", however, continue to persist and can be updated to match present circumstances.

These connections are confirmed if one takes a look at the way the media deal with national symbolism. An article in the *Revue*, for example, about the history of the creation of banks in the country accesses the reservoir of figurative forms of argumentation that has developed over time, with its heading "*Von der Festung zum Finanzplatz*"[12]. While this suggests a certain transformation, the alliteration as such suffices to subtly ensure the continuity of the traditional national symbol.

It hardly comes as a surprise then that the symbolism of the fortress has been used with particular frequency in the recent discussions about banks: "*Risse in der Festung*"[13] was the headline of an article in the *Telecran* about the 'softening' of the banking secrecy, lending a specific national overtone to the, in this context, widespread image of a 'tax haven'[14]. The view from the outside is complementary: the Swiss *TagesAnzeiger* compares the problems in Luxembourg to the "mood in a besieged fortress"[15] thereby almost self-evidently creating a link to supposedly

10 | Personal translation: "Black angel".

11 | Personal translation: "Besides, Luxembourgers are used to narrowness. For centuries, they have been cowering behind fortress walls [...] the fortress walls have been replaced by bank palaces. I mean the grand-ducal ones".

12 | Personal translation: "From fortress to financial center". (Wolf, Claude: Von der Festung zum Finanzplatz. *Revue*, 20.09.2006, p. 21. Similar also in the Belgian national media: Le Luxembourg, forteresse financière. *Le Soir*, 23.01.2002; and in the Luxembourg media: Une forteresse financière au coeur de l'Europe. *Tageblatt*, 23.01.2002).

13 | Personal translation: "Cracks in the fortress".

14 | Lanners, Maryse: Risse in der Festung. *Telecran*, 18.03.2009, p. 22. One further example will suffice to emphasise the apparently widespread practice to circulate precisely these and similarly illustrative headlines in the Luxembourg media landscape: "*Risse in der Festung, mehr nicht!*" ("Cracks in the fortress, nothing more!") is the *Point 24* headline on the state of the debate on banking secrecy, dated 21.10. 2009.

15 | Israel, Stephan: Die Atmosphäre einer belagerten Festung. *TagesAnzeiger*, 08.05.2009, p. 10.

everyday knowledge about the country. In Luxembourg's media, the image of the besieged city, on the other hand, is taken up again immediately as a element of self-perception:

> War es ein Fehler, 1867 die Festung Luxemburg zu schleifen? Liest und hört man die einheimischen Medien, so könnte man den Eindruck gewinnen, es herrsche wieder einmal ein Belagerungszustand. Doch diesmal geht es nicht um militärische, sondern um wirtschaftliche Interessen – um das Bankgeheimnis, genauer gesagt[16].

These examples, of which one could find a great many, suggest that systems of collective symbols have greatly increased in significance in journalism in general and in the mass media in particular, because they have replaced the discussion of complex issues. In the case of national symbolisms, this also assures a coupling with the traditional interpretation patterns typical for a nationality.

In global media culture, the often polemic game with systems of symbolisms can, however, also develop a barely controllable dynamic of its own, plunging national self-images into a crisis. Exactly this seems to have been the case for quite some time for the Luxembourg symbol of the 'fortress' and not only in regard to the subject of 'banks'.

Luxembourg: 'Heart' of the 'Fortress Europe'?

To better understand these problems, it is worth wile to first take a look at the second important component of Luxembourg's image of self which initially evolved independently of the symbolism of the fortress, but was implicitly designed to balance possible deficits of the latter particularly in the way the country was perceived from outside. We are referring here to Luxembourg's European commitment, which began in the 1950s and has gained increasing momentum since the 1980s and which is reflected in the capital's townscape by the establishment of a number of important European institutions on the Plateau de Kirchberg. Besides the establishment of Luxembourg as a 'financial centre', the notion of the nation as the 'heart of Europe' (Stoldt 2008: 19) has acquired a central role in the country's political discourse, not without friction regarding aforementioned image, as public debates have shown. The intensive efforts to present Luxembourg as an "*Akteur der europäischen Integration und 'internationale Plattform'*"[17] (Stoldt 2008: 21) and to gradually harmonise the national interests with the dominant supranational

16 | Personal translation: "Was it a mistake to dismantle the fortress of Luxembourg in 1867? If one reads and listens to the local media, one could get the impression that we are once more in a state of siege. However, this time it is not about military, but about economic interests – about the banking secrecy, to be precise". Klein, Raymond: Bankgeheimnis. Deine Rede sei nein, nein. *woxx*, 23.10.2009, No. 1029, p. 4.

17 | Personal translation: "Player of European integration and 'international platform'".

structures of the economy and politics has led to an official self-image of the Luxembourgers as "avant-garde Europeans"[18].

This image, propagated with considerable effort, of a modern, progress-oriented Luxembourg did have, particularly via the rituals of media-produced symbolism policy, a certain amount of positive effects on the image of others. The awarding of the prestigious *Karlspreis* of the city of Aachen is a good case in point: In 1986, the prize was awarded to the entire people of Luxembourg ("*Klein, aber fein*", "*Das vorgelebte Leitbild eines pluralistischen Staates*"[19]), in 2006 it went to the Prime Minister, Jean-Claude Juncker. Outwardly, it is precisely this personalisation that signals a trans-generational (P. Werner, G. Thorn, J. Santer) continuity of the orientation towards Europe. But also inwardly, Juncker was able to assume the role of a symbolic figure for the politics of modernisation, attributions in the local media like "mediator", "bridge-builder", "arbiter", "motor of Europe" can be interpreted in either direction. At least at this level of politics and media it has been possible to unite the image of self and others.

Under these circumstances, the traditional national symbol of the 'fortress' must be regarded as an exceedingly problematic one. Already for the country's image of self as the 'heartland of Europe', it turns out to be basically counterproductive. The internal symbolism referring to the entity of a nation-state increasingly competes with the new positioning as 'heart', 'core' or 'motor' of Europe that shakes off the mentality of 'fortress' which carries a connotation of confrontation[20] (Parr 2009: 13).

Finally, the problem is compounded by the fact that since the beginning of the 1990s the symbolism of the fortress has had clearly negative connotations in relation to the subject of 'Europe' that has been a particular central one for Luxembourg. During the time of upheaval and a shift from the East-West conflict to a North-South conflict, the image of the 'Fortress Europe'[21] has established itself

18 | Werle, Gerd: Luxemburger weiterhin Avantgarde-Europäer. *Luxemburger Wort*, 10.03.2003, p. 3. The metaphor of the 'avant-garde', which has gained renewed currency in the context of the notion of European integration and the 'two-speed Europe', is also evidence for the systematic use of collective symbols. 'Avant-garde' and Luxembourg's traditional symbol of the 'fortress', are both terms originally used in a military context. In contrast to 'fortress', 'avant-garde' refers to the opposition of stasis and motion. Unlike the problematic strategy of 'entrenchment', 'avant-garde' emphasises an offensive 'pioneer' or 'forerunner role' towards inevitable 'progress'.

19 | Personal translation: "Small but excellent. The exemplified model of a pluralistic state". Headline: *Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt*, 11.0.1986; *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 20.05.1986.

20 | For the 'heart' symbolism, see for instance: Schlammes, Marc: Im Herzen Europas. *Luxemburger Wort*, 02.06.2006, p. 2.

21 | From a German perspective, the symbol of the 'Fortress of Europe', has incidentally, a highly problematic history. It was part of the propaganda language of the National Social-

as a topos for the criticism of the restrictive migration policy in the EU (Koff 2008). This is a polemic reaction to the official political symbolic language of a "European architecture" (Schäffner 1993). While, within the EU and its most important allies, there is much talk of the 'Common European Home', thus an emphasis on open and communicative structures, critics use the 'Fortress Europe' to point out the downside of rigid borders and entrenchment against other, 'undesirable' third countries. Since the Schengen Agreement, signed in 1985, came into effect in the founding member states of the EU in 1990, it was in principle even possible to equate the national symbol of the fortress with Europe-critical symbolism: Luxembourg could basically be considered as the 'inner fortress' of a 'Fortress Europe'.

The *Mudam* and the Image of Self Controversy

For these reasons, it has, for a long time already, seemed imperative in Luxembourg to modify the discredited national symbolism and to link the national image closer to the European perspective. Certainly the most spectacular attempt to decisively accelerate this protracted process of transformation of national typical attitude patterns was the government's decision in 1990 to contract the 'star architect' Ieoh Ming Pei to build a '*Musée d'Art Moderne*' on the foundations of the Thüngen fortress on the edge of the Plateau de Kirchberg[22].

The many years of vehement debate around the construction of this museum that finally opened to the public in July 2006 are only comprehensible against the background of the tensions generated by the internal and external perspectives of national image of self outlined above, that have been characteristic for Luxembourg after the Second World War. The attempt to steer this dual definition of identity, which had come under pressure, into one particular symbolic political direction, led to the "Battle for Thüngen Fortress"[23] and, temporarily, to distinct rifts in the national collective: on one side, there was an institutionally anchored political elite, placing its hopes on the European-global project, and on the other side, there was a coalition of involved citizens and critical intellectuals, acting within an efficient network of different citizens' groups, which managed to garner significant public support with a signature campaign.

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ists at the end of the Second World War and is mentioned by Victor Klemperer in his standard work on the language of the Third Reich, see Klemperer, Victor. 2007 [first published 1957]. *LTI – Notizbuch eines Philologen*. Stuttgart 2007, p. 73.

22 | I would like to thank André Bruns for the opportunity to review the material he has collected on this subject.

23 | Pauly, Michel. 1991. Schlacht um Fort Thüngen. *Forum für Politik, Gesellschaft und Kultur in Luxemburg* 128-129, p. 3-7.

The advocates welcomed the planned art museum as a signal of "*der geistigen Öffnung des bislang eher weltverschlossenen Festungsgeistes der Luxemburger*"[24]. The avantgardistic building, conceived as a work of art itself and erected on a long neglected location rich in symbolism, was designed to build a "bridge between history and modernity"[25] not only within the urban landscape. With the increasing competition between European cities the *Musée d'Art Moderne* (*Mudam*) was to become a point of attraction and a distinctive 'icon' and redirect the image of the 'bank fortress' to a cultural one. As a self-representation with positive external effects, it would contribute to the metropolisation of the town and move it closer to "the vicinity of the so-called 'Stararchitecture Cities'" (Schulz 2008: 93).

The opponents, by contrast, feared the thoughtless and irreversible destruction of parts of the Thüngen fortress and with it the disposal of historical testimony of the past national identity through the construction of what in the initial concepts still appeared to be an edifice of monumental proportions. Major points of criticism were the financial risks, the lack of an acquisition strategy, but above all, the facelessness of a global architectural language that flouts local and historical particularities.

'Arcelor/Mittal' in the National Identity Discourse

While the *Mudam* symbolises the connection of town and country to globalisation as well as a culturalisation of the until then dominant notion of globalisation as a purely economic process, this strategy of the modernisation of the self-image suffered a setback even before the museum opened. In a controversy conducted in the media at the beginning of 2006, over the sale of the *Arcelor*[26] steel group to the Indian entrepreneur Mittal, issues of national identity were raised similar to those that marked the quarrel over the Thüngen fortress, issues that only reveal themselves as such when they touch on conspicuous landmarks – in this case the administrative building of the enterprise as well as the industrial zones in the south of the country perceived as monuments of a grand, industrial past. "We are

24 | Personal translation: "Of an opening-up of the fortress mentality of the Luxembourgers that had hitherto displayed a penchant towards withdrawal".

25 | Ina Helweg-Nottrot: Eine Brücke zwischen Geschichte und Modernität. *Luxemburger Wort*. 1.7.2006, p. 8.

26 | An enterprise that was already multinational at the time and listed on the stock exchange, with representative group headquarters in Luxembourg. An essential component of the *Arcelor* group, which had been founded in 2001 by fusion, was the *Arbed* (Aciéries Réunies de Burbach-Eich-Dudelange; Vereinigte Stahlhütten Burbach-Eich-Düdelingen), a Luxembourg steel group founded in 1911 that, for a long time, had been among the biggest in the world and was of great significance for the industrial history and the national identity of the country.

Arcelor"[27] – read the remarkable headline in the *Luxemburger Wort*, with an explicit allusion to the transformations of 'we' sentiments, which were tested in Germany in the course of the peaceful revolution of 1989 and later at the German pope's election in 2005, into forms of a national consciousness seeking acceptance. After the debate over the *Mudam* project that had revealed extremely divergent attitudes towards the national image of self, the Arcelor/Mittal debate now offered the opportunity to rhetorically strengthen the 'social cohesion' and, in turn, to jointly take a stance against an all too extensive, misguided modernisation. Headlines like "Juncker: This is about Luxembourg"[28] or another one taking up a remark by the Prime Minister that the Luxembourgers were already "happily globalised" even without Mittal[29], does not merely indicate a call on the 'mediator' to advocate a reversal and limitation of the hitherto strongly promoted policy of progressive opening. In this period of "war", of "defensive struggle"[30], which is perceived from the outside also as a "battle over steel" and is even likened to a "duel from the age of chivalry"[31], the symbolism of the 'fortress' reasserts itself unawares. In addition, the 'front' against the Indian group leads, at least temporarily, to a positive re-coding of the 'Fortress Europe'. The implication here is: the "regular global order" (Link 2006: 431) must under no circumstances be invalidated in the course of global competition. According to this order, the Western world, and specifically the 'core of Europe', continues to occupy the upper 'class of normality', while economically emergent 'threshold countries', like India need to content themselves with positions on the lower rungs, due to their unequal standards of living fluctuating between immensely 'rich' and extremely 'poor' There is an allusion to these contexts as subtle innuendo when referring to the Indian entrepreneur as a "steel maharaja"[32] (see. 6.3). Moreover, the 'Arcelor/Mittal complex' is described as a battle between "two cultures"[33] thereby establishing a link to the essentialist thesis of the "Clash of Civilizations" propagated and popularised by Samuel Huntington in the 1990s, and to the fears, kindled by it, of losing cultural supremacy (Huntington 1996).

Altogether, the *Mudam* as well as the Arcelor/Mittal debate supply the articulatory framework for an otherwise vague sense of national identity, which however – and this is substantially different from the identity constructions in the

27 | Glesener, Marc. Wir sind Arcelor. *Luxemburger Wort*, 04.02.2006, p. 5.

28 | Zeimet, Laurent. Juncker: Es geht um Luxemburg. *Luxemburger Wort*, 01.02.2006, p. 3.

29 | Langner, Arne. Glücklich globalisiert. *Luxemburger Wort*, 16.02.2006, p. 14.

30 | G. S.: Arcelor rechnet mit monatelangem Kampf gegen drohende Übernahme. *Zeitung vum Lëtzebuerger Vollek*, 28.01.2006, p. 3.

31 | Braunberger, Gerald. Die Ritter der Stahlschlacht führen ein hartes Duell. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*, 12.02. 2006, p. 39.

32 | Chaton, Cordelia. Wo Berater versagen, kommt der Stahl-Maharadscha zum Erfolg. *Luxemburger Wort*, 01.02.2006, p. 4.

33 | Hirsch, Mario. Zwei Kulturen. *d'Lëtzebuerger Land*, 03.02.2006, p. 1.

period of unqualified nationalism – is no longer primarily expressed through direct demarcation from other nations, nor even from the two big neighbours. Rather, the counterpole here is formed by the image of 'Europe' as a meanwhile all-powerful supranational institution, which appears as a 'gateway' to an uncontrollable and ruthless globalisation. One prospect of curbing this development is offered by the media, when differentiating between 'good' and 'bad' globalisation. These opposing poles are personified by the 'honest' mediator Juncker on one side and by the architect Ieoh Ming Pei and the entrepreneur Lakshmi Mittal on the other, portrayed as 'devious' global players[34].

National Symbolisms in the Cultural Capital Year 2007

The *Mudam* controversy in particular can be seen as exemplary for the conflict between attributed and appropriated identities within an image of self seeking to acquire more distinctive contours. Even though the Arcelor/Mittal debate has had a negative impact on the modernisation of the national image encouraged by the political institutions ('top down'), it nevertheless has had an integrative effect in the run-up to the cultural capital year 2007. Against this background, it is then possible to further develop the intentions associated with this event: Expressed in advertising terms, the cultural capital year 2007 was to provide new impulses for the 'branding' of the 'brand' of Luxembourg.

The 'social cohesion', which was shown to be a problematic factor in the media coverage of the two controversies over Luxembourg's self-image, is taken into account here in so far as an identification potential suited for daily use is provided by the central topic of the 'Greater Region'. For the creation of a regional perspective neutralises the still very characteristic awareness of a contrast between 'global' urban space and 'local' periphery and Luxembourg is presented as one integral and comprehensive space in the 'center of the Greater Region'. In keeping with the collective symbolism of 'core of Europe', Luxembourg becomes, for its inhabitants, the "Middle Kingdom", requiring a new "gauging of the border"[35] (see 4.7).

At the same time, the project of repositioning, initiated in connection with the *Mudam*, is also being pursued. Architectural images of transition, among others, have been inserting themselves between the old image of self as 'fortress' and

34 | In the *Mudam* as well as the *Arcelor/Mittal* reporting approach, this aspect of an identifiable physiognomic character plays a rather essential part. Just like the entrepreneur Mittal was portrayed as "the smiling man" (Meyer, Roman. Der Mann des Lächelns. *Revue*, 08.02.2006, p. 30), there was not one portrait of the architect Pei – who is also considered the "Architect of the Mighty" – without a mention of the "typical broad smile of the Asians" (e. g.: Morbach, Fern. Der große alte Mann der Architektur. *Telécran*, No. 40, 30.09.1995, p. 29).

35 | Langenbrink, Christophe. Im Reich der Mitte. *Luxemburger Wort*, 10.05.2007, p. 13; Wahl, Susanne. Eine Auslotung der Grenze. *Luxemburger Wort*, 31.05. 2007, p. 13.

the envisioned new cosmopolitan self-representation that apparently as yet has generated no concise collective symbolism. The preferred symbol here is that of the 'bridge', which seeks a sense of continuity similar to that of the 'fortress': 'Building bridges' between the regions, between the 'old' and the 'new', between past and future, etc. (see 6.3). In ever new variations Luxembourg is assertively presented as 'intermediate space', as the 'European laboratory' or as an 'experimental region' which in turn enables to establish links to the symbolism of 'heart', 'centre' and 'core'.

Beyond Luxembourg's borders, the attempt to secure connections for national symbolism as well as to search for new orientations, has by no means gone unnoticed. The country is seen as "Europe's multicoloured bridge"[36], and one is well aware that the country is not only home to "bankers and bureaucrats"[37], although the alliteration again emphasises the reversion to traditional stereotypes, to the exclusion of any positive definition. The image of the "treasury of the fortress Europe"[38] is obviously a similarly equivocal one resonating with ambivalencies regarding the intended culturalisation of the economic sector, which still dominates public perception. The German travel magazine *Merian* processes this symbolism on the cover of its 'Luxembourg' issue on the cultural capital year 2007 in an ideal-typical way in the form of an emblem: The curved gallery of the Luxembourg Philharmonic acts as *pictura*, as *subscriptio*, Luxembourg is characterised twice as an "intermediate" region, and in the third statement Prime Minister Juncker is identified as the conciliatory mediator figure and guarantor for this transitional state (see 5.5).

The Media as Agent of Attributed and Appropriated Identities

The question which national symbolism will be able to establish itself or will be established in the near future for Luxembourg remains an open one. This differentiation is important. Even though the media discourses outlined here have failed to lead to a consensus about national symbolism, they do constitute an area where attributed and appropriated collective identities are put into mutual context through a negotiation process, with the effect that they are often no longer easily distinguishable. The application of national symbolisms in the media in particular presumes a close correlation and as an interface makes clear just how much both identity patterns are mutually dependent. However, this also means that collective identities cannot simply be reinvented, even, or especially, in post-national times of image campaigns, nor can the traditional ones simply be perpetuated.

36 | Schiemann, Hans. Europas bunte Brücke. *Merkur*, 23.02.2007, p. 29.

37 | Meyer, Ulf. Nicht nur Banker und Bürokraten. *Die Welt*, 20.07.2006, p. 26.

38 | Schümer, Dirk. Die Schatzkammer der Festung Europa. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 11.06.2007, p. 42.

6.3 The Superjhemp Saga – an Ideal Projection Screen

In 'superhero comics' with national overtones, one frequently finds discourses which are constructs on the identities of the respective population. As such the Luxembourg comic series *Superjhemp* provides a particularly interesting case example for exploring the questions which appropriated and attributed identities are regularly chosen as a central theme and how the satirical representation compares with the actual identity constructs. The hero's identity features play a crucial role in the targeted readers' practice of appropriation. Luxembourg's superhero, Superjhemp, for instance, seems to combine various qualities of foreign comic superheroes. Among others, the figure seems to borrow some of his features from *Superman*, *Batman*, *Spiderman*, *Popeye*, *Asterix*, *Tintin*, etc. However, for their primary source of inspiration the *Superjhemp* authors – Lucien Czuga und Roger Leiner – must have drawn on the French figure of *Superdupont* from the comic series of the same name, which reveals very conspicuous similarities in terms of intentions, humour and general character. Even though *Superjhemp* – as the numerous borrowings from other characters show – is the product of a globalisation of popular culture and therefore belongs, like basically all comics, to the interdiscourses, it nevertheless displays numerous identity-related character traits which have their origin in Luxembourg regionalism.

The anthology *Comics in, aus und über Luxembourg*[39] (Haas 2007) shows that the comic landscape in the small nation of Luxembourg, which has the population of a medium-size town (about 490,000 inhabitants) is a rather lively one. Though the *Superjhemp* stories of the last 20 years have been unmatched as far as success, national visibility and popularity are concerned, there had already before this time been attempts to establish some long-term comic series with the Luxembourg reading public. Most of these products, however, were not published in book form but serially in weekly papers or daily newspapers. The comic compilation mentioned above includes the Luxembourg cartoonists. At the level of signifiers, the comic uses a symbolic language that hyperbolically distorts figures and objects, exaggerates some details while leaving out others. This creates an intended feedback to the character of the depicted signifier. This is particularly true for *Superjhemp* when iconically visual resemblances to famous Luxembourg personalities and objects are established. Formally, the series belongs to the type of comic which consistently employs the means of caricature of that genre. The cartoonising stylistic elements produce, just like in *Asterix*, a certain distortion of reality, which is quite different to the purely external, realistic representations of figures and environment in leading US superhero sagas (see *Superman*, *Spiderman*, and 'graphic novels' in general). On the internationally level, there is a considerable diversity of comic genres. The samples we will presently analyse show that *Superjhemp* defies being

39 | Personal translation: "Comics in, from and about Luxembourg".

uniquely labelled as a 'comic book superhero epic' and indicate that it fits into several categories at once, as we will elaborate below.

In view of *Superjhemp's* success story of more than 20 years, we have to ask ourselves what it is exactly the authors use to cater to the Luxembourg readers. The *Superjhemp* comic contains many references to the social and political life of Luxembourg. The authors of the series erect a sort of parallel world to the model Luxembourg. Many a state of affairs in Luxembourg has been made the target of penetrating and witty caricature by lampooning well-known politicians and institutions; the authors hold up a fool's mirror to the locals. And they seem to like what it shows them. The series' consistently high sales – some volumes are out of print, others were reissued as compilations – attest to the degree of enthusiasm the satirically distorted staging of Luxembourg conditions provokes among the readers. Like the court jester for his king, so do Czuga and Leiner formulate caricature-like stories on the identities of the Luxembourgers. And at times, these are uncomfortable truths too; however, the sarcastic projections are often defused by linguistic and visual humour, making them easier to accept or they are depicted in such an exaggerated fashion that it raises palliative doubts as to their credibility.

Figure 1: Cover examples of Superjhemp *comic books (© Editions Revue, Luxembourg).*

In the almost homonymous construct "*Luxusbuerg*", the authors turn the perceptions of self and others of Luxembourg into a subject of discussion: Identities which are partially attributed and those which have been appropriated to a higher or lesser degree by parts of the population. *Superjhemp* therefore belongs to the genre of comic 'superhero epic' that functions as a "reflection of societal conditions" (Umberto Eco quoted after Ditschke/Anhut 2009: 148) "*Sie [die Comicheldgeschichten] referieren zwar unterschiedlich stark auf tatsächliche soziokulturelle Ereignisse und Strukturen, trotzdem kommen die "in den Comic Books dargestellten 'Wirklichkeiten' […] der Realität*

doch sehr nahe" (Th. Sieck) – einerseits hinsichtlich zugrunde liegender gesellschaftlicher, ökonomischer und kultureller Strukturen, andrerseits hinsichtlich spezifischer Ereignisse […]"[40] (Ditschke/Anhut 2009: 149), which have significant socio-political relevance. Because the authors of *Superjhemp* are very close observers of 'the man in street' and a lot of what they see and hear from the gossip factory is transposed by caricature, one can suppose that the Luxembourgers are quite aware of numerous perceptions of self and others and sometimes even – like in the comic series – play with them.

With its more than 20 volumes, the *Superjhemp* saga represents an almost inexhaustible repertoire of possible samples regarding Luxembourg identities. Due to lack of space, the following qualitative analyses will have to limit themselves to a few particularly characteristic identity discourses. Because comics are eminently semiotic events, we have taken the triadic model of Peirce (see Peirce 1907, German new edition, 2000) as a theoretical basis for the discourse-analytical method, extended with the causal character concept of symbolisation and referencing developed by Ogden and Richards (see Ogden/Richards 1923). Socially specific codes and symbols play a causal role, not only for the selection and representation but also for the receptance and pragmatism of the signs used in *Superjhemp*. The intermeshed sequence that Jakobson outlines in his communication model (see Jakobson 1960) serves to reveal the interrelationships between comic production, social contexts and discourses (e.g., financial centre, steel industry) and the reception of *Superjhemp*. The approach is necessarily an interpretational one. The quantitative data are, wherever possible, put in context to the interpreting results.

In order to discover further details about *Superjhemp*'s relative intensity of perception and the social structure of the readership, the following question was asked when gathering quantitative data: "Have you ever read *Superjhemp*, either as a comic book or in the media?" The latter is relevant because the advance publication of the books occurs in a weekly rhythm of respectively two pages in the *Revue*, a quite widely read weekly magazine. The results indicate that the majority (63 %) of Luxembourg's residential population is familiar with the megahero. The comparison of the different milieus shows high levels of name recognition throughout with little variation: from 69 % in the privileged conservative milieu up to 81 % in the alternative as well as in the privileged liberal milieu.

Appropriated Eating Culture

By highlighting food predilections, which are considered at least by parts of Luxembourg's population as specific to their identity, the *Superjhemp* authors

40 | Personal translation: "Though they [the comic hero's stories] refer in varying degrees to actual sociocultural events and structures, nevertheless, the 'realities' depicted in the comic books […] are not very far removed from actual reality (Th. Sieck) – on the one hand in regard to underlying social, economic and cultural structures, on the other regarding specific events […]".

emphasise appropriations that have evolved over a longer period of time. What spinach is to Popeye and the magic potion to *Asterix, Kachkéis*[41] is to our Superjhemp. This is the substance that gives him his supernatural powers and enables him to embark on his reckless aerial exploits. Many Luxembourgers regard *Kachkéis* as a national gastronomic speciality, but it is by no means a product exclusive to Luxembourg. In other European regions, too, it belongs to the traditional types of cheese. This partial appropriation mirrors a certain local eating habit[42] since even today the supermarket shelves continue to be well stocked with *Kachkéis*. This gastronomic preference is also reflected in the Luxembourgers' popular song culture. In his "*Lidd vum Kachkéis*"[43], the well-known cabaret writer Pier Kremer describes the virtues of the sticky cheese. "*Kachkéis, Bouneschlupp, Quetschekraut a Mouselsbéier*"[44], goes a sung advertisement for a Luxembourg beer brand. The lyrics were written by Marc Schreiner. The popular refrain, which inspired listeners to sing along, was later taken up by the local music band *Cool Feet* and presented as a full-fledged song. While the miraculous powers of *Superman* and *Asterix* are more of a cosmic and magic origin, Czuga and Leiner equip their hero deliberately with a folksy and witty character: he derives his extraordinary abilities from the consumption of a banal and mass-produced cheese which has, however, special significance for identity in the national context. In one episode, "*Luxusbuerg*" is renamed "*Kachkéisien*" already in the title (see Czuga/Leiner 2005). *Kachkéis* also becomes the saviour in times of crisis to ensure full employment: Superjhemp suggests to the Prime Minister that he compensate impending job losses in the financial sector due to the demise of bank secrecy, by building additional job-creating "*Kachkéis*" factories (Czuga/Leiner 2009: 6; 48). In the burlesque world of the comic, the proposal, which politicians in the 'real' Luxembourg would dismiss outright as absurd, becomes a plausible possibility to create jobs because the identity-forming food "*Kachkéis*" transforms in "*Luxusbuerg*" into a veritable miracle substance and can be used like a *deus ex machina*, depending on the predicament in question, as a multiple defensive weapon, as superglue, as a *Spiderman* net and as a foil to entrap US stealth bombers (Czuga/Leiner 2003: 40).

The authors also demonstrate in other stories that they have a special weakness for the traditional eating culture of the Luxembourgers. For instance, "*Judd mat Gardebounen*"[45] is mentioned in several stories. This dish is frequently indicated in Luxembourg cookbooks and tourist pamphlets as a sort of national dish. The ingredient, beans, plays a crucial role in the volume entitled *Superjhemp an déi grouss Gefor* (see Czuga/Leiner 2007a). The "*Luxusbuerg*" hero even hoards large stocks of

41 | Personal translation: "Cooked cheese", a runny cheese called *Cancoillotte* in French.

42 | See also section 7.4.

43 | Personal translation: "The Song of the Cooked Cheese".

44 | Personal translation: "Cooked Cheese, bean stew, prune marmalade and *Mousel* beer".

45 | Personal translation: "Pork neck and sow beans".

cans of the aforementioned "*Bouneschlupp*" in his cellar. And finally, his real name is Charel Kuddel and he is married to Felicie Fleck, which combines to *Kuddelfleck*, a dish containing beef stomach, probably more popular with the older generations. When *Superjhemp* swears, he says "*Poznennö*", the reverse of *Önnenzop*, a type of onion soup that, once again, is not found exclusively in Luxembourg. This expletive is not part of the spontaneous vocabulary of the Luxembourgers but is an invention of the authors, probably a phonetic allusion to the common but vulgar *Nondidjö*, the Luxembourgish form of *nom de Dieu*[46]. "*Poznennö*" is one of the special expressions inherent to *Superjhemp* that Czuga and Leiner define in their *Luxusbuerger Lexikon* (Czuga/Leiner 2008a). In the parallel world of "*Luxusbuerg*", virtually all names referring directly to Luxembourg are either spoofed or slightly distorted. By contrast, the already mentioned dishes have curiously retained their original names. In the comic series, Luxembourgish is the predominant, 'uncorrupted' identity which is common to both "*Luxusbuergers*" and Luxembourgers. Even linguistic regionalism – in the form of dialect variants – is given a place.

The traditional national dishes appropriated by parts of the population and nowadays only prepared on special occasions are simple and hearty and made from rather cheap ingredients. They refer back to a time during the 19th century when Luxembourg still used to be a nation of peasants and grinding poverty forced many into emigration. These appropriations therefore originated from circumstances that reflected a state of need at the time. It was only with the industrialisation during the first half of the 20th century and later with the development of the banking centre during its second half that relative wealth arrived. Consequently, prosperity and luxury are another central subject matter of *Superjhemp*, whose textual and iconic representation aims at contexts of collective symbolism.

Wealth and Globalisation Fears

The pun is an obvious one; the comic country is called "*Luxusbuerg*" and the inhabitants are the "*Luxusbuerger*". For the French speaking cross-border workers who commute to Luxembourg every day for work, the term 'Luxo' not only constitutes an abbreviation for the name 'Luxembourger', but it is also carries a connotative meaning. In *Superjhemp*, this abbreviation is used by the authors several times. For instance, they have a sign indicate "*Luxoland*" (Czuga/Leiner 2007: 19) in the nearby French border region or, another example, French and Belgian workers on strike are shown during a demonstration outside the headquarters of the former Arcelor company holding up a banner that says "*A bas les Luxos*"[47] (Czuga/Leiner 2003: 3).

The representative symbol for luxury and prosperity in *Superjhemp* is the "*Luxonit*", a cosmic element that had landed back in the 19th century in "*Luxusbuerg*" in the form of a meteorite. Its substance, allegedly, unites all the characteristics

46 | Personal translation: "Name of God".

47 | Personal translation: "Down with the Luxos".

and features of the "*Luxusbürgertum*"[48] (Czuga/Leiner 1998b: 9). The absence of "*Luxonit*" has effects on the consumer behaviour of the "*Luxusbuerger*"; no one buys "*Luxusbuerg*" products or any other consumer items anymore (Czuga/Leiner 1998b: 37). This means that the seemingly most important thing taken for granted in "*Luxusbuerg*" society is being called into question. With the "*Luxonit*", the authors create a specific collective icon for "*Luxusbuerg*" and, at the same time, once again borrow from the American hero, *Superman*. Although the cosmic material seems to act in a similar way, its effects are exactly the opposite: while the presence of green "cryptonite" robs *Superman* of his powers, the absence of "*Luxonit*" stops the "*Luxusbuergers*" from continuing to engage in blind consumerism. By employing deconstructive images and texts the authors sarcastically point to the 'dramatic' effects caused by the loss of consumer routines that justify the frequently attributed identity of 'intensive consumer': the "*Luxusbuerger*" seem to become disoriented, slightly confused and begin to question a number of their consumption habits. (Czuga/Leiner 1998b: 37). They leave their cars at home and walk instead, take their televisions to the recycling depot or, when in a bar, order water instead of beer.

The first two syllables of "*Luxonit*", bring the notion of luxury to mind as well as the already mentioned French name for the Luxembourgers. The suffix customary for minerals, '-it', could refer to an imaginary ore and hence to the partial origin of prosperity in Luxembourg – the establishment of the iron and steel industry at the beginning of the 20th century. In the corresponding episode "*Luxonit*" looks like a brown stone, pointing to an imaginary type of ore. The mysterious matter is a sort of catalyst and cannot generate wealth by itself. The rare "*Luxonit*" is kept, durably and well protected, in the building of the State Bank – the "*Luxusbuerger*" Savings Bank – like a national shrine and serves as a symbol for the money reserves deposited at banks by residents and foreigners. Should the "*Luxonit*" disappear, the country too would come under foreign rule. (Czuga/Leiner 2008: 52).

In the volume *Den Dossier Hexemeeschter*, Czuga and Leiner quite specifically show the connection between the relative wealth of the Luxembourgers and the circumstance of their position as an international financial centre. The subject provides the authors with the opportunity to deal with several attributed and appropriated identities. The banks at the "King's Boulevard" (the actual Boulevard Royal) are iconically depicted as washing machines that serve for laundering foreign money (Czuga/Leiner 1991: 15). The association of washing machine (image) and laundering (connotation) shows, in an exemplary fashion, the manner in which the authors' team operates with collective symbolism.

And yet it is not only by means of visual wit that Czuga and Leiner, in a provocative way, advertise the image of a banking centre, consistently officially repudiated but frequently attributed to Luxembourg by the foreign press: for instance, one "*Luxusbuerg*" financial institution is called "Bank for Cocaine and Crime International". There is a clear connection between the origin of the money and organised

48 | Personal translation: "Bourgeoisie of Luxury".

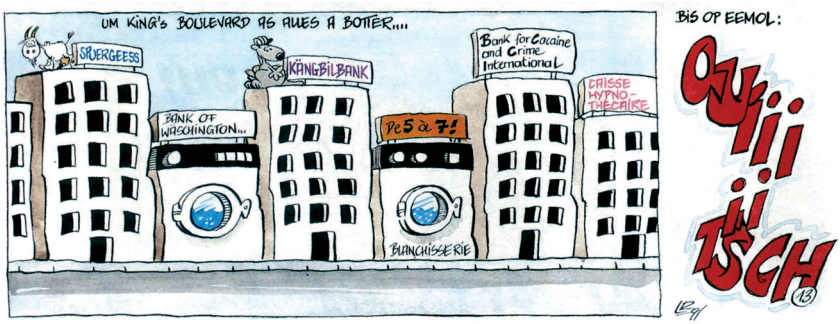

Figure 2: The banks at the 'King's Boulevard' (Czuga/Leiner 1991: 15) © Editions Revue, Luxembourg.

crime. The acronym BCCI, furthermore, establishes the connection with the real finance scandal of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), which caused a stir across the nation in 1991, because the Luxembourg branch of the BCCI was also implicated in criminal activities. The silhouette of financial institutions on Kirchberg in the volume *Alarm am Öro Zuch* shows that precisely those nations that derogate Luxembourg as a 'tax haven' are present there with their national banks in order to turn a profit from the 'haven' with tax refugees from their own countries: the usual puns and spoofs that can be found here, like "Deutsche Dash Bank", "Whyte and Wash Bank" or "Blanchibas", leave no doubt as to which institutions they stand for. The connotative reference to laundry is plain. Quite specifically, examples are also provided for the private clientele which the international press likes to make out as the essential tax evaders: dentists from Germany, Belgian notaries and cattle dealers as well as French politicians (Czuga/Leiner 2001: 9).

Symbolisms like 'tax haven' and 'money laundering' have, of course, a damaging effect on the desired serious image of the financial centre. Ever since the BCCI scandal, the Luxembourg banking authority, on order of the respective governments, has been trying to keep out dubious financial institutions. The authorities are continuously working on trying to rid Luxembourg of the negative image of money laundering. At the height of the financial crisis, in autumn 2008, Prime Minister Juncker reacted very annoyed on French television when, prior to being interviewed, he was unexpectedly shown some satirical footage confronting him with the image of money laundering: a black suitcase is put into a washing machine and a white suitcase is taken out again[49]. At the same time Luxembourg diplomats protested violently against the country being included on the OECD tax haven 'grey list'. Fittingly, a 'grey veil' descends on "*Luxusbuerg*" (Czuga/Leiner 2009: 5). The image, borrowed from detergent ads, again directly refers to laundry. While Luxembourg managed to get itself removed from the grey list relatively quickly, the question remains whether

49 | 21.10.2008: Le journal télévisé de 20 heures, France 2. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YwFhCdznVwM&feature=related

the country, once it had agreed, as a concession, to an exchange of tax information with some key states, will continue to remain as interesting to foreign customers in spite of the softened banking confidentiality. Massive job cuts and shrinking tax revenues at the banks would have a strong negative effect on the prosperity of the Luxembourg resident population. In the second year of the global financial crisis, the *Superjhemp* volume of 2009 highlights these possible developments as a central theme. The ironic title *Cräsh am Paradäis* refers not only to the image of 'tax haven' (more evident in the German *Steuerparadies*) but also to the seemingly heavenly living conditions in Luxembourg attributed in some press articles.

The topic of 'danger to the banking centre' is a recurring one in the individual stories. For instance, already in the first volume, *De Superjhemp géint de Bommeléer* (Czuga/Leiner 1988), the background to the series of bomb explosions in Luxembourg, still unclear at the time, was explained with the competing financial centre of the principality of "*Monastein*", wanting to instill an air of insecurity in "*Luxusbuerg*", inducing the banks to migrate, together with their customers, to "*Monastein*". With the make-up of the name, from the first two syllables of Monaco and last one of Liechtenstein, the authors have created a deliberately cryptic construct. In *D'Patte wech vum Luxonit*, the contracted criminals confess to stealing the "*Luxonit*" on the instructions of the principality of "*Monastein*" in order to destroy the identity of "*Luxusbuerg*" together with the banking centre (Czuga/Leiner 1998b: 47).

The menacing loss of income from the financial centre was also a central subject in 1991, in *Dossier Hexemeeschter*: The foreign money in the resident banks disappears suddenly and inexplicably. The savings bank director of "*Luxusbuerg*" sums the matter up when he says: "*Wann ons auslännesch Clienten dat gewuer gin, dann as et Pilo mat eiser Finanzplaz*"[50] (Czuga Leiner 1991: 17). The authors here highlight the fact that the country's precarious prosperity depends on the existence of the international banking centre. The constant flow of high tax revenues from petrol, spirits and tobacco products is prone to the same insecurity. And since this is also a frequent issue in Luxembourg's media, one can assume that many Luxembourgers are well aware of the uncertain duration of this source of revenue as well as of what it would mean for the country if these sources dried up. With the statement of the savings bank director, the authors voice a subliminal but latent fear of many Luxembourgers.

Fears of loss relating to the local steel industry were also triggered among large parts of Luxembourg's population when, in 2006, the Indian steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal virtually enforced the merger of Arcelor with his own company Mittal Steel[51]. In their iconic depiction, Czuga and Leiner use the means of caricature to show that, in the age of globalisation, traditional identity is lost in

50 | Personal translation: "If our foreign customers find out about this, it's over with our financial centre".

51 | See also section 6.2.

"*Luxusbuerg*" and substituted by a new 'foreign' one: for instance, the neoclassical historicising architecture of the former Arcelor respectively Arbed headquarters is suddenly complemented by a monumental gate in Indian architectural style, reminiscent of the Taj Mahal.

Figure 3: The former Arcelor building turns into the "Taj Mittal" *(Czuga/Leiner 2006: 20) © Editions Revue, Luxembourg.*

The building, which for many Luxembourgers has the character of a collective symbol owing to its obvious reference to the emergence of the country's steel industry, is sarcastically re-christened into "*Taj Mittal*" (Czuga/Leiner 2006: 20). As what appears to be a visionary anticipation of the aforementioned merger, in the *Superjhemp* episode of 2005, a dictator from Central Asia buys up all of "*Luxusbuerg*" on the world market and renames the country – as a protected trademark – "*Kachkéisien*" Czuga/Leiner 2005: 23). The *Superjhemp* saga metaphorically points to the sources of the Luxembourgers' wealth while at the same time also showing the types of dangers that could wipe it out almost instantly.

In a work commissioned for the cultural year 2007[52], the British photographer Martin Parr has documented the relative luxury of the inhabitants of Luxembourg in an ostensibly ethnographic manner. Just like the authors of *Superjhemp*, he holds up a kind of mirror to the Luxembourgers. High income levels and ostentatious consumer behaviour are often considered as being 'typically Luxembourgish'. The first feature at least is a statistical fact. According to a study conducted in 2009 by

52 | See also section 6.5.

Eurostat, the inhabitants of Luxembourg are the richest within the EU (Weltonline 2009).

A Nation of Civil Servants?

Another stereotype is that of civil service: Czuga and Leiner quite obviously play on existing prejudices in the population when they attribute to civil servants certain identities which would actually have to keep them from reading *Superjhemp*: Civil servants, allegedly, are lazy and corrupt – they sort their private stamp collections at work and sleep through their working hours. The stereotyped negative representation of civil servants in texts and images is a satirical practice frequently encountered in Western democracies.

Quantitative surveys have shown that, among all the professions, *Superjhemp*'s widest readership is to be found among the civil servants, equalling 78 % of its total readership. A further recent study (Pigeron-Piroth 2009: 3) determined that the number of Luxembourgers working in the civil service sector is disproportionally high at 42.3 % (as of March 2008) when compared to all available jobs in the country. If one considers the occupation of most protagonists in *Superjhemp*, the equation fits almost perfectly: "*Luxusbuerger*" equals civil servant.

Charel Kuddel works in the "*Ministry of Unsolved Matters*" in the "*Department for Hopeless Cases*". He is a civil servant who can easily afford to be conspicuous by his frequent absences from work because he constantly has to save the country and its people in the course of his undercover activity as a megahero. *Superjhemp*, therefore, has a secret identity and in this respect he is no different from the general identity pattern of traditional American comic superheroes. (see *Superman*, *Spiderman*, *Batman*). The third syllable of *Superjhemp* is derived from the Luxembourg nickname '*Jhempi*' for gendarme. He is, therefore, a kind of undercover super cop for special cases.

A kind of cronyism has been established among high-ranking civil servants in "*Luxusbuerg*": In this context, different scandals which were taken up by Luxembourg's media are caricatured with caustic sarcasm. However, there are some detectives – friends of *Superjhemp* – who surpass themselves in perilous situations and therefore save the honour of their guild; the message here is that they are, despite everything, somehow indispensable for the country. These actions mostly involve protecting certain interests of the nation and the dynasty or even of safeguarding "*Luxusbuerg*" against perdition. *Superjhemp* is a fighter against a good many looming identity losses and material circumstances related to them.

In terms of content, the series reinforces the genre of 'comic superhero epic', which is all about preserving moral, political, economic or social constructs and of reinforcing these through the superhero's actions (Ditschke/Anhut 2009: 156). Nevertheless, the authors of *Superjhemp* follow a path quite distinct from US models (e.g. *Superman*, *Spiderman*) by using caricatures and parodies to take a critical stance on social conditions. The discourse is in a way paradoxical in the

sense that the central figure *Superjhemp* stands for the same constructs and does not question them. He is the quintessential loyal civil servant who serves and does not question authority. Here, an image of the average Luxembourger is established: In his daily life, he is a petty bourgeois (Charel Kuddel) who only takes visionary flights in his dreams.

A Trenchant Depiction of the Locals

The only rebellious aspect of *Superjhemp* is his relished habit of not coming flying in through the door but through the window, which, to the great annoyance of his superiors, gets shattered each time. Also physically, *Superjhemp* displays certain features of the antihero. His build is certainly not an athletic but a rather chubby one. Since he lacks *Superman*'s aerodynamic Adonis-like figure, the obligatory tights look rather ridiculous when worn by this particular superhero. His funny lumpy nose and cute shape are derived from the "baby schema" ("*Kindchenschema*", described by Konrad Lorenz) – designed to induce sympathy among the readers. His hat and sometimes also the cape has a checkered pattern in the national colours (red/white/blue). Similar hats, albeit in neutral colours, are frequently worn by elderly male Luxembourgers. The checkered cape brings a kitchen table cloth to mind. Charel Kuddel likes wearing checkered vests – as do some of his civil servant colleagues – sometimes he also dons a pair of checkered trousers. Since superheroes act as a role model and function as a surrogate, one may wonder whether the authors are employing visual wit to attribute to the "*Luxusbuergers*" a certain kind of petty-mindedness. The fact that *Superjhemp*, when he is at home, likes having things comfortable and orderly might support this view. In the evenings, he enjoys watching TV nursing a glass of cool "*Uelzechtbéier*".[53] The bedsheets that he sleeps in at night have the pattern of the national flag on them. Since superheroes belong to the public domain as it were, the most they can ever expect to have is an unrequited, platonic love to a girlfriend (like Superman, Obelix) or they are totally asexual beings (like Asterix, Tintin). Never do they have, as Charel Kuddel, a wife as well as several children. "*Luxusbuerger*" megaheroes just happen to be different: in their spare time, they like to enjoy the discreet charm that only a bourgeois, idyllic family life can offer.

The attribution of the petty bourgeois idyll can also be found in Martin Parr's photo documentation mentioned earlier. The objects representing this, for instance residential houses in what only appears to be a differentiating uniform style, he calls the "vanities" of the middle class. The petty bourgeois mentality which the *Superjhemp* authors, as well as Martin Parr, attribute to the so-called average Luxembourger, is of course based on their subjective view and is not free of stereotypes. One might think that Martin Parr's photographs are objective

53 | Beer named after the river Alzette *(Uelzecht)*. Here, the authors establish an analogy to Mousel beer, the name of which makes tonal reference to the Luxembourgish name for the river Moselle, which is *Musel*.

ethnographic pieces of evidence. However, this is not the case because Parr selects his motifs according to the criterion of the 'petty bourgeois mentality', partially stages them and subjectively influences them with the artistic and formal means of photography – like framing, focus range and emphasising particulars.

In literature, the petty bourgeois is, among other things, described as a conformist who is narrow-minded, closed to the outside world and anxious for social security. The character of the petty bourgeois pervades the entire European literature and is in many countries a favourite target for comedians. In their research on the European petty bourgeoisie, Haupt and Crossik ask the question whether, considering the empiric heterogeneity, one can actually speak of a uniform class or social group (see Haupt/Crossik 1998). They show that one can also extract positive qualities from the negatively connoted petty bourgeoisie. The features of the petty bourgeois as stereotyped in fiction, can in fact be found throughout all social groups. In *Superjhemp*, entrepreneurs, artists and even intellectuals from academia are attributed petty bourgeois features. Basically, no social milieu is spared the authors' ridicule. Means of distinction used by the different groups to differentiate themselves culturally and economically from each other are satirised with a sarcastic approach. Like a narrative metalepsis, the authors even include themselves in the sarcasm by interrupting the flow of the story in some episodes and self-mockingly presenting themselves in words and images.

On account of existing perceptions of self and others, Czuga and Leiner attribute identities to the Luxembourgers which are partly based on their own projections: as they subjectively perceive the locals or would sometimes also like to see them, for the caricature to take full effect. The persiflage feeds on attributed stereotypes – and/or clichés – as well as on appropriations that are considered odd. The deliberately subtle reinterpretation creates a partial re-contextualisation of perceptions of self and others in the construct "*Luxusbuerg*" and, accordingly, a critical appraisal of identities regarding Luxembourg. Here, the grotesque serves as an instrument of deconstruction. Finally, the concentrated accumulation of all kinds of appropriated and attributed identities generates a discourse which reflects itself, as it were, into infinity and thus refers to the mirror in the reflecting character of the *Superjhemp* saga. The fact that the reflecting surface turns into a distorting mirror which grotesquely deforms the so-called 'Luxembourg Identities' is, to be sure, one of the deconstructive intentions of the two comic book authors.

6.4 Collective Symbols and (New) Identity Options in Luxembourg's Advertising

Images and collective symbols also play an important role in advertising, an interdiscourse which has become a fixture in our everyday lives. Advertising is employed by various societal players in order to achieve specific sales objectives and to generate images in the public perception. To this end, linguistic and visual

images are accessed, reinterpreted or re-assigned. Since people use the information presented to them in part consciously in order to close knowledge gaps, orientate themselves and position themselves in the (consumer) world, this chapter will investigate to which extent the 'advertising' interdiscourse holds a communicatively active identity potential. We will focus our attention in particular on advertising or product communication produced specifically with a view to Luxembourg, since the images employed can impact the generation of a peculiar notion of 'Luxembourg identity'. Advertisements as a form of media content provide "*Attribute für die Konstitution von Identität*"[54] (Krotz 2003: 41). They are reflected in the sense of a process of attribution and are purposefully elaborated. When advertisements reach the consumers, there is the possibility that the latter absorb their content, understand and accept it and appropriate the discourse positions. In a further step, this can contribute to constructions of identity.

First, however, advertising has to be produced and it is necessary to create a communicatively active identity potential. With the progressive destandardisation of lifestyles the creative heads of the advertising sector are presented with a formidable challenge. Mass marketing as a basic strategy is proving to be increasingly inappropriate. There are more and more doubts whether traditional advertising patterns still work. In addition, the issues of communication in advertising in a diversified society are, in Luxembourg, shaped by an extremely multicultural and multilingual environment. Already quite small target groups are even more difficult to reach if one is dealing with a number of different cultural codes and a variety of possibilities for the choice of languages to be used in advertising messages. The question to be investigated here is whether and how advertising in Luxembourg works with a specific Luxembourgish imagery that can be identified as collective symbolism. By discursive processing of collective symbols advertising attempts to overcome the border between product and consumers. Ideally, the symbolism unites the product with the consumers in the sense of an 'associative crosspoint'[55]. In certain cases the national space is imagined as something uniform, for example, by exploiting over and over again the same familiar sceneries and skylines, or also traditions like folk festivals and religious holidays for advertising purposes. In Luxembourg, in particular, the homogeneous representation of national space has proven to be a difficult task because the targeted consumers are very heterogeneous, which is, among other things, due to the distinctive border-crosser mentality[56] and the high proportion of persons with a migration background[57]. The heterogeneity also becomes evident in the acting out of consumer patterns which permit appropriated identities to partly manifest themselves. With the aid of examples

54 | Personal translation: "Attributes for the constitution of identity".

55 | The symbol acts as an 'associative crosspoint' if the promoted product can be connected to the symbol and, at the same time, the targeted consumers can identify with the symbol.

56 | See the remarks on cross-border workers in section 7.5.

57 | See section 6.6.

taken from the finance and telecommunications sector as well as from the cultural capital year *Luxembourg 2007*, we will in the following illustrate how advertising in Luxembourg can serve as an interdiscourse with identity-forming potential.

Examples of Advertising from the Finance and Telecommunications Sector

In terms of enterprises respectively clients, the advertising discourse in Luxembourg is marked by a mixture of state institutions and ministries, major international corporations, national enterprises and local companies. They distinguish themselves primarily by the budgets set aside for advertising measures, by the nationality structure of the employees which shows itself in preferences for certain styles of communication and in the choice of language, as well as by the competitive situation, because, depending on their size, enterprises either operate only on the domestic market or also internationally. Luxembourg's market as such is a very small one and accordingly highly competitive in some sectors. The qualitative survey conducted among Luxembourg's resident population has shown that a number of enterprises (mainly Luxembourgish companies) and their brands constitute symbols for Luxembourg as well as Luxembourg's economy, and are also absorbed collectively in the process. The enterprises, respectively the brands and their advertisements, are described as 'typical' for Luxembourg and for Luxembourgish advertising. This can be interpreted as an identity-based appropriation. The reasons given frequently state personal preferences, traditional and national embeddedness as well as efficiency and prominence of advertising. Interviewees mentioned, for instance, the National Savings Bank, *Banque et Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat* (BCEE). It has been present in Luxembourg for over 150 years and by now embodies the Luxembourgish bank *par excellence*. With its policy of proximity to the people, it was able to establish an image of trust from which it profited particularly during the financial crisis of 2008. Not infrequently tourists confuse its headquarters in Luxembourg City with the grand-ducal Palace on account of its imposing appearance and its tall tower. By integrating the building into its company logo the bank has, since decades, emphasised its "*Verankerung und Geschichte in der Gesellschaft Luxemburgs*"[58] (Jungblut 2007: 290). This makes it one of the few financial institutions which in their message unambiguously highlight the financial centre Luxembourg. "*Seule la BCEE perdure et laisse une trace visible, tant architecturale (par son bâtiment plateau Bourbon) qu'à travers son logo (le même bâtiment avec le pont Adolphe)*"[59] (Auxenfants 2007: 230).

58 | Personal translation: "Anchoredness in the history and society of Luxembourg".

59 | Personal translation: "Only the BCEE survives and leaves a visible trace, architecturally (by its building on the Plateau Bourbon) as well as by its logo (the same building with the Adolphe Bridge)".

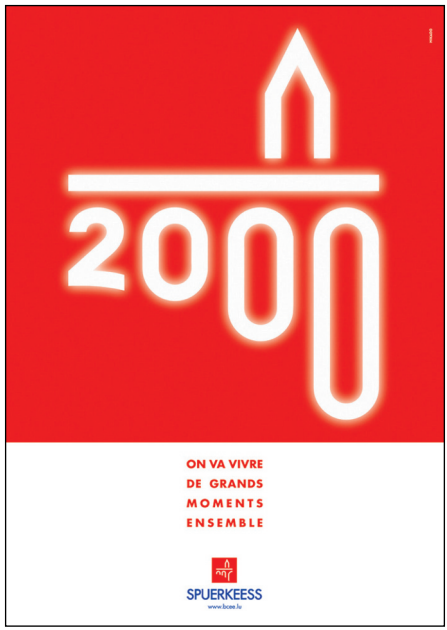

Figure 4: BCEE ad (Mikado, Luxembourg). Modified BCEE logo commemorating the turn of the century 1999/2000.

Figure 5: BGL ad (Mikado, Luxembourg).

However, besides local savers and investors, the cross-border workers are also important customers for the banks. They are courted with special cross-border worker offers, tailor-made to personal requirements and specific legal frameworks. Comparable to the slogan "*Wir machen den Weg frei*"[60] of the German *Volks- und Raiffeisenbanken*, Luxembourgish institutes advertise their ability to remove border-related obstacles and to offer cross-border banking services. The ad of the *Banque Générale du Luxembourg* (BGL), which has meanwhile merged with the *BNP Paribas*, integrates several symbols simultaneously: the national colours, with red providing a red carpet, the typical businessman and the archway which is open to both sides. Here, too, the path is cleared, boundaries are lifted which here not only involves financial but also of physical boundaries. The new *BGL BNP Parisbas* (since 21.9.2009), according to its own press release, unites in its name "*die tiefe nationale Verwurzelung von BGL als auch [...] die Solidität und das internationale Renommee von BNP Parisbas*"[61] while emphasising its position in today's society with the slogan "*Die Bank für eine Welt im Wandel*".[62]

Other service sectors, too, work with collective symbols with reference to Luxembourgish peculiarities. The mobile phone provider *LuxGSM* promoted its roaming offer by means of the collective symbol of the 'bridge'. The Pont Adolphe is shown as a national counterpart to the bridge of the 25th of April (Ponte 25 de Abril) in Portugal[63] and, at the same time, is its linear complement.

The bridge as a symbol of connection establishes the link to the product as well as the link to the consumers, in this case the Portuguese residents of Luxembourg. The image of the bridge is used on the assumption that the consumers are familiar with it, thus creating a disposition for a positive perception. Both the bridge and the mobile telecommunication establishes a connection between two places. Even without being familiar with the specific bridges, the ad can be understood, which underlines the bridge's function as a collective symbole.

60 | Personal translation: "We clear the path".

61 | Personal translation: "The profound national embeddedness of BGL as well as [...] the soundness and international reputation of BNP Parisbas".

62 | Personal translation: "The bank for a changing world".

63 | The bridge connects Almada with Lisbon. A landmark, although hardly discernible, is the Christo-Rei-statue in the background. At first glance, the bridge could easily be mistaken for the Golden Gate Bridge. This produces a sort of twofold meaning: If the specific national coding (Luxembourg/Portugal) is recognised, the ad, beyond the general symbolic meaning of the bridge, develops a potential added value in terms of national identification. If, however, it acts 'only' as Golden Gate Bridge or any nameless bridge, it serves as a general symbol for connections.

Figure 6: Ad for LuxGSM/Vodafone (Advantage, Luxembourg).

Communication and Identification in *Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007*

A further example will serve to illustrate how Luxembourg is being represented graphically and textually. The cultural capital year *Luxemburg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007* was organised in the Grand Duchy and the surrounding Greater Region. As far as marketing communication and, in particular, advertising for this event were concerned, the goal was to identify Luxembourg in the context of the Greater Region by a process of attribution. "The Greater Region, laboratory of Europe" was the unifying leitmotif of Luxemburg 2007 and, at the same time, also an indication of the problems involved in its development and realisation (see Luxembourg 2007: 4-8). The image of the European laboratory could therefore also be utilised in a metaphorical sense in many areas of the cultural capital year and became the connecting collective symbol for the Greater Region. In addition to the usual difficulties which such big events can pose, the organisers saw themselves faced with the major challenge of integrating four countries, five regions and three languages into a coherent whole. "In these circumstances, the normal process of creating a coherent and accepted corporate identity became a major issue" (Luxembourg 2007: 53). One major goal of the marketing and communication operations was to construct a new (greater) regional 'identity' and the 'cultural identity' of the region. They were part of a superordinate strategy which, however, did not exist independently of specific contents, meaning the individual events and actions. In the eyes of the organisers the project was "*[dennoch] nicht nur ein Kulturfestival, sondern auch eine Standortpositionierung für die Großregion im europäischen Wettbewerb*"[64] (Garcia 2004: 5). The aim here was to emphasise Luxembourg's position as the 'motor' of Luxemburg 2007

64 | Personal translation: "*[The project]* was not merely a cultural festival; it also allowed the Greater Region to position itself in the context of European competition".

(see Luxembourg 2007: 53). For Luxembourg in particular, communication had the purpose to extend the image of how the Grand Duchy was perceived abroad beyond the clichés of 'financial centre', 'banks', 'Juncker' and 'petrol'. "Like the citizens of every capital, Luxembourgers sometimes tend to think they are the hub of the universe. Luxembourg may be strong on the financial and political map, but a fairly improbable cultural epicenter" (Luxembourg 2007: 100). From the outset it was clear that an image change is a protracted process that cannot be achieved by one event alone – even if it is a major one like the cultural capital year. Even if a comprehensive image change has not been achieved, it was at least possible to indicate the direction for future developments and Luxembourg was at least able to record a slight improvement in terms of the connection between cultural tourism and Luxembourg. The press campaign was summed up in the following words: "For once, Luxembourg had international media coverage unrelated to banks or Mr. *[sic!]* Juncker" (Luxembourg 2007: 77).

As a logo and therefore as a visual identity of the cultural capital year 2007, the 'Blue Deer' was chosen, suggested by the Luxembourg agency Bizart as their entry for the logo competition. The deer, it was said, would be able to connect the different parts of the Greater Region, based on the following considerations:

> During the creation process, we tried to represent the impressive woods and large landscapes of the Greater Region, the nature which doesn't change from one country to the other. Of course there was this ironic touch in our graphical approach. Luxembourg is not London, Paris or New York. The blue deer represents in a very humble way the energy and the ambition of Luxembourg and the Greater Region to develop cultural life without ignoring the past of the 'terroir'[65].

The Blue Deer surprises with its unusual colour and, as an animal, it transcends the borders of the countries. Therefore, surprise and border-crossing – two central elements of the cultural capital concept – were united in one logo[66]. The varied discussions[67] surrounding the choice of the logo led to increased attention being paid to the event itself but also to its visual object of identification, the deer. Thanks to a multitude of banners, posters and blue steel sculptures, it established itself in Luxembourg as *the* symbol of *Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007*[68].

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65 | http://www.bizart.lu (13.10.2009)

66 | See http://www.granderegion.net/de/news/2005/03/20050311-2/index.html (16.12.2009)

67 | "The whole local press was scandalised and the audience just felt ridiculous to be identified by a primitive animal" (http://www.bizart.lu, 13.10.2009).

68 | "And then... after a few months, people discovered the humour and the fun of the logo, shame turned into pride... the blue deer which allowed 1000 and 1 interpretations

Figure 7: The Blue Deer, logo of the cultural capital year Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007.

Beyond Luxembourg's borders, awareness of the cultural capital year was rather low, which, according to the concluding report, was due to several factors: the geographic expansion, the large number of involved partners, the three languages which loaded the already full programme even more, the programmatic marketing approach of equal treatment[69], and the comparatively late emphasis on beacon projects (Luxembourg 2007: 65). The communication strategy was very specific regarding the choice of the media being primarily geared towards the domestic audience. The media schedule which was also developed by a Luxembourg agency, had a budget of two million euros, yet scheduled only 10 % for international advertising (see Luxembourg 2007: 54). One of the principal reasons for this was the cost factor 'multilingualism' since the great majority of publications were published in three languages, German, French and English. This also explains why roughly 70 % of the media investments were allocated to the print sector (see Luxembourg 2007: 56-7). In Luxembourg, integrating newspapers, radio and television into the project was particularly successful. All in all, a large variety of media and means of communication were utilised.

In the field of PR, two main campaigns were launched, one for business customers and one for the general public. For the Luxembourg retail trade, the campaign "We support 2007" was initiated, aimed in particular at the tourism sector. 345 companies participated. For the visible identification with *Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007*, they received a sticker with the slogan of the campaign and the Blue Deer logo, as well as a package with decoration material featuring the corporate design of the cultural

became one of the strongest brands Luxembourg had ever seen" (http://www.bizart.lu, 20.02.2010).

69 | Such an equal treatment was complicated particularly by the fact that the events and venues differed greatly in type and nature making it difficult to incorporate them under a common conceptual roof. The superordinate concept aside, the events primarily stood for themselves with each one requiring its own specific marketing.

capital year. The Blue Deer was frequently used by commercial sponsors during marketing campaigns, in this way visualising their identification with the event. Some domestic companies developed special products or altered them with a view to *Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007*. The mineral water company *Rosport* identified its *Rosport Blue* with the Blue Deer, the winemaking cooperative *Domaines de Vinsmoselle* launched a new product, the *Blu-Blu-Deer* sparkling wine and the porcelain maker *Villeroy & Boch* produced cups bearing the deer logo (see Luxembourg 2007: 75). In this way, the purchase and consumption of these products and many other merchandising articles provided people with a multidimensional identification with the event.

In addition to the simple marking of this major event with the aid of the uniform design featuring the striking blue colour coding and the deer, we will now seek to examine some other ways how interdiscursive, respectively metaphorical forms of expression were established within the framework of *Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007*, providing further possibilities for association. An analysis of selected advertising and information material[70] serves to reveal the degree of characteristic representation of Luxembourg in images and words. Here, too, it is primarily a matter of attribution processes. What, according to this information and advertising material, constitutes Luxembourg's 'identity'? Which main focuses are established? Can we see a departure from the stereotype and progress towards new aspects, including culture as a translocal medium? In the symbolism of the imagery or graphic representation of the Grand Duchy, two larger complexes seem to emerge which can, in turn, be arranged into smaller, thematically distinguishable sub-complexes: 'Tradition' and 'Modernism'.

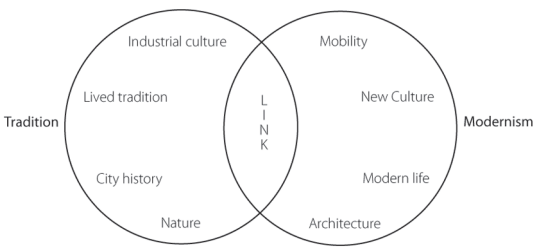

Figure 8: Complexes of Luxembourg representations.

The complex 'tradition' incorporates the following areas (in brackets examples of the images which can be assigned to the corresponding areas): Industrial culture

70 | The following leaflets were taken into account: "*Tourisme Tourismus*", "*Mobil(e) 2007*", "*Panorama 2007*", "*Luxembourg et Grande Région, Capitale européenne de la culture*", "*LuxembourgCard 2007*", "*Luxembourg and Greater Region, European Capital of Culture 2007*", "*Trans(ident)city*", "*explorator*", "*Avant-Programme. Nouveaux espaces – Lieux insolites*", "*Luxemburg und Großregion Kulturhauptstadt Europas 2007*".

(industrial facilities in Belval), history of the town and the fortress[71] (*Bockfiels/Kasematten*), nature (waterway), practiced traditions (Schober fair, large funfair of Luxembourg City). These areas are visualised in the examples mentioned above and others. 'Modernism' constitutes a second complex. It can be divided into the following subareas: Mobility (TGV connection to Paris), new culture concepts (long night of the museums), architecture (red bridge[72]), modern living/leisure activities (Cocque sports and event centre). Some images cannot be clearly assigned to either category and can therefore be seen as a representation of the connection between tradition and modernity, respectively transition. This includes, for example, an image with the perspective '*Bockfiels, Dräi Eechelen, Mudam, Kirchberg*'[73], which visualises the chronology of development, of the joining of the old with the new.

Several brochures also include maps of the Greater Region[74]. They exist in two different versions. One features solely the Greater Region intersected by the various regional and national borders, while the other displays the Greater Region on the European map, where it is shown as one coherent unit without borders.

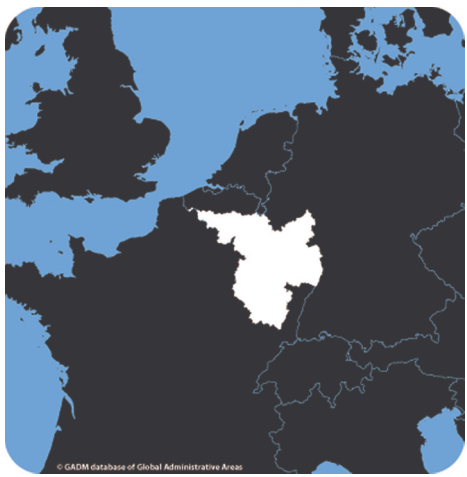

Figure 9: The Greater Region – without borders and in the heart of 'the core of Europe', as this map seems to suggest.

71 | See also section 6.2.

72 | Important bridge connection between Luxembourg city and the commercial and EU quarter of Kirchberg.

73 | While the *Bockfiels* is thought to have been the first location of a fortification dating fom the year 963, the Kirchberg with its bank and EU buildings represents modern Luxembourg. Here, we can also find the *Mudam*, the *Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean*. Between the two stands the rebuilt fort called *Dräi Eechelen*.

74 | "*Tourisme Tourismus*", "*Mobil(e) 2007*", "*Luxembourg et Grande Région, Capitale européenne de la culture*", "*Luxembourg and Greater Region, European Capital of Culture 2007*", "*explorator*", "*Luxemburg und Großregion Kulturhauptstadt Europas 2007*".

The pretension to being a region that offers employment across borders or opportunities for creative (cultural) work uninhibited by boundaries is expressed here symbolically in cartographic terms. To the beholder, the following is suggested: the Greater Region is well and truly a really large region in the centre of Europe and has uniform features. The operationalisation of the space takes place by means of iconic or symbolic coding in the sense of an attribution process (see Dünne 2008: 50). Here, it is not only a matter of the illustration of social contexts within a given space and/or the depiction of existing territories, but the cartography fulfills both functions. Therefore, the map is a sort of medium for "*Welterzeugung*"[75] (Dünne 2008: 52). And, in the age of globalisation, it is also an aid for providing individuals as well as groups with an overview in the midst of processes that are far from clear. From this could follow the preservation of individual and collective capacity to act in the political sense of the term (see Dünne 2008: 53). The Greater Region as a sphere of action, at least at a socio-economical level, is to a large extent a reality, albeit partly only on a small scale and not comprehensively. At a cultural level, *Luxembourg 2007* should contribute important stimuli.

Let us now turn our attention to the texts of the brochures. These relate to the illustrations, but also point to other images and symbols which can meanwhile be identified as collective symbols, not only for Luxembourg but presumably also for the Greater Region. We will take a closer look at two larger discursive units: 'border' and 'Europe'. The cultural capital tour 2007 is described as a 'cross-border experience'. The "*Blick über den Tellerrand*"[76] implies this crossing of borders which already looks back on a certain tradition in the region, in fact on "*2000 Jahre wechselvolle, geteilte Geschichte(n)*"[77]. Consequently, the crossing of borders is also described as a 'communal' action. Besides the notion of the crossing, we can also find the aspect of boundlessness which, conversely, would make a crossing of borders impossible because borders no longer exist. It is in this context that one should see the claim to "place the 'unified' Greater Region on the European map" (which cartographically has already been done). The transborder cultural programme is introduced as a unifying project in which borders are to be seen "*nicht als Hindernisse, sondern (als) Beitrag zur Dynamik*".[78]

There are many commonalities between the transborder discourse and the European discourse, which is dealt with in a very specific manner regarding Luxembourg and the Greater Region. Linguistic-symbolic representations of Luxembourg play a central role: "*Europa kompakt*"[79], "*(im) Herz(en) Europas*"[80], "mix of communities, cultural identities and emotions", "European Laboratory",

75 | Personal translation: "Creating the world".

76 | Personal translation: "Looking over the rim of the (proverbial) teacup".

77 | Personal translation: "2000 years of eventful and shared history and stories".

78 | Personal translation: "Not as obstacles but as contributing to dynamism".

79 | Personal translation: "Compact version of Europe".

80 | Personal translation: "(In) the heart of Europe".

"*eine Hauptstadt Europas*".[81] The significance of the space is underlined by using the symbolism of the heart which not only clarifies the geographical position, but also implies that the heart is the central element of a body[82]. The symbolism of the laboratory relates to the mixture of cultures as well as to the "compact version of Europe", because these are the two attributes that define the laboratory setting in Luxembourg and its surroundings. In this context, allusions to the traditional attributes 'international banks' and 'European quarter' seem unavoidable.

In addition and in analogy to the analysis of the visual symbolism, it is worth giving some attention to textual representations that mark a sort of transition or are located at interfaces. For instance, there is mention of the old and new as being "in harmony" or the *Mudam* art museum is described as a connection between the old and the new. In the comments dealing with the Dudelange steel factory, the following quote is a good example: "*Stahlschmelze als 'Schmelztiegel' für Mentalitäten und Kulturen*".[83]

This, in its effects, positive representation of a situation that appears to be exemplary in every way is the result of a rigorous and consistent implementation of the conceptual objectives for *Luxembourg 2007*. The outcome is a reduced use of customary symbols and clichés which cannot be entirely abandoned since without them an effective characterisation of Luxembourg presumably would not work beyond the region. They are joined to new, and different, surfaces of identification and connection at whose argumentational key points culture can become an effective medium of identification.

New Options for 'We' Identity in Luxembourg's Advertising Discourse?

Marketing communication in Luxembourg, typical examples of which were discussed above relating to advertising in the (financial) service sector and communication in the framework of *Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007*, employs, in certain cases, concepts which characterise the Grand Duchy in terms of an attribution process by means of a specific iconographic and written language. Here, symbolisms are brought into play which can be identified as collective symbols because they are also evident in other interdiscourses, such as in the journalistic discourse[84]. Their utilisation permits the construction of a uniform discursive space. In terms of an appropriation process, this facilitates the association of individuals or groups with the images and the symbolisms conveyed by them. Whereas examples from the private sector tend to rely on classical semantics (tradition, trust etc.), communication relating to *Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007*, by contrast, attempts to induce an image

81 | Personal translation: "A European capital".

82 | See section 6.2 and 5.6.

83 | Personal translation: "Steel melt as a 'crucible' for mentalities and cultures."

84 | See section 6.2.

change by combining familiar/classical images with new ones (tradition/modernism, border/Europe). It would be a worthwile task for future investigations to examine the question to what extent Luxembourg's advertising discourse has been and is absorbing new images and symbolisms that distinguish themselves from the traditional ones. If this amounted to an image change, it could indeed indicate a re-orientation in the notion of a 'Luxembourg identity'.

6.5 Decontextualising and Deconstructing Representations of Identity: an Analysis of the Works of Seven Photographers

The emergence of an inter-/national artistic milieu, which has coincided with the opening of new spaces for contemporary art, and the creation of European art events in Luxembourg offer ample opportunities for studying questions on the (de) construction and decontextualisation of attributed and appropriated identities in the framework of visual and linguistic representations. A number of major cultural events, such as 'Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007', as well as specific commissions linked to questions of Luxembourg's cultural identity, such as the project in the *Mudam*[85] (*Portraits du Luxembourg*), or initiatives by some cities (*Portraits d'une Région, Moins de la Photo*, etc.), have influenced the choice of works that illustrate the artists' positions.

The current situation, a result of artistic and photographic education based on mobility, interdisciplinarity and the decompartmentalisation of artistic expression, shows the importance of photography's role in scrutinising representations within contemporary art.

The works by the seven photographers from Luxembourg and other countries, who were chosen on the merit of their artistic competence and standing, are set in the context of the loss of artistic, cultural, political, social and identity-related reference points. The dissolution of borders and the increasing importance of the circulation of ideas, that have proven conducive for the flourishing of multiculturality and even transculturality, have had a disruptive effect on the representations connected with this discourse. Rather than bringing a specific locality into focus, the analysed images show both a contextual approach and an international openness that take into account issues relating to the medium of photography and its equivocal relationship to reality.

Today's photographic practice no longer restricts itself to recording reality, thereby going beyond the stage of faithful representation. Concerning this process of metamorphosis, we concur with Philippe Dubois, who noted that, "*la photographie*

85 | *Musée d'Art moderne Grand-Duc Jean.*

est moins un contact (un indice) qu'un mouvement vers le contact (fiction)"[86] (Dubois 1983, as quoted by Labelle and Bonaccorsi 2005).

With the photographers whose work we analysed, their relation to the real lies in the sphere between indexicality and iconicity, the *print* only being the point of departure from which the photographic idea develops. This idea is also linked to the contexts of production and circulation; it determines the photograph's auratic dimension and requires a process of creative interpretation, which involves the viewers' significant participation in the sphere between physical image and mental projection.

Drawing on specific examples of photography produced within institutional contexts, this study seeks to identify the particularities and singularities that are possible in the interrelationship between attributed and appropriated identities. For the purposes of this study we chose seven photographers of international standing whose commissioned works have been presented in recent exhibitions and publications, notably in connection with the cultural year 2007.

In terms of methodology, we chose four strands of analysis relating to the images' production, description/analysis, reception/diffusion as well as the correspondence and comparison between them. By using *interdiscursive* references and borrowings, this interaction between the authors and their works, encourages the debate with the viewer in a hermeneutic approach. We identified the following themes from the corpus of selected images:

1. Middle-class *vanitas*[87], consumer society, clichés, stereotypes;
2. Anachronisms, resistance to progress, timelessness;
3. Decontextualisation of symbols, questioning of identity-forming referents.

We have arranged the themes and the authors based on their differences and complementarities, with a particular emphasis on the comparison between photographers of different nationalities.

Enacting Clichés and Stereotypes

Our first thematic category shows how an English artist and a Luxembourgish artist interpret, in entirely different visual languages, clichés and stereotypes by means of locations and enactments of consumption.

Invited for *Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007*, Martin Parr (born 1952) contributed the series *Luxembourg 2006/Assorted Cocktail*

86 | Personal translation: "Photography is less a contact (an indication) than a movement towards contact (fiction)".

87 | We use the term *vanitas* here in the sense of an expression of superficial vanity and transitoriness, as well as of triviality and complacency, particularly in connection with a consumer-oriented way of life.

(commissioned by Coordination 2007, in collaboration with *Magnum Photos*) which depicts scenes from everyday life. As he has done in other countries and cities before, he searched for significant situations in Luxembourg's 'typical' places: vernissages, restaurants, confectioneries, shop windows, single-family homes, and small gardens. At first glance, these photographs taken during his travels appear to be random snapshots, but a closer look reveals that Parr has mastered what Cartier-Bresson calls the "*instant décisif*"[88] in the composition of these images. This can be observed in the entire series, which is characterised by a mixture of shots shaped by the immediacy of the situation and personal projections inherent in the artist's photographic language.

Figure 10: Martin Parr, Luxembourg 2006/Assorted Cocktail © *Martin Parr/Magnum Photos.*

In the photograph of the hands (fig. 10), we can see how Parr, choosing an impromptu situation, deconstructs the image, opening it up to multiple visual and iconic interpretations. Compared to the peasant women's coarse and work-worn hands in Russell Lee's "*photographie humaniste*" (*Family of Man*)[89], which unequivocally subscribes to a monosemantic iconography, Parr's composition underscores the dualities of natural/artificial, true/false, strong/fragile. Details such as the gold jewellery or the sleeves' fur hem contrast ironically with the black-and-white zigzag pattern of the artificial fingernails and the bandaid on the right hand's index finger. The shallow depth of field, the close-up format and the downward angle allow the

88 | Personal translation: "Decisive moment".

89 | Even though Martin Parr stated his interest for the *Family of Man* exhibition, his own artistic stance is quite distinctive in that he emphasises, through the framing, the colours and the lighting, the ironic and caustic side of his approach.

photographer to focus on the somewhat stereotypical gesture of hands holding a wallet, as a metonymous substitution of consumer society.

Figure 11: Martin Parr, Luxembourg 2006/Assorted Cocktail
© Martin Parr/Magnum Photos.

In associating this photograph with the photograph LUX (fig. 11), on which we see a detail of a sign post[90]. Parr illustrates the triviality of luxury, by reinforcing the cliché of Luxembourg as a country of artificial and superficial values. The chosen detail from an object referring to the word Luxembourg, is significant to Parr's approach. With his partial views and his focus on suggestive details, he seeks to give the viewers food for thought.

This stance of contemplating and observing is stimulated by enhancing the symbolic elements that echo iconographic references, and by establishing formal and thematic links within the series *Luxembourg 2006/Assorted Cocktail*.

In this series, the human presence is often limited to the specific active or inactive parts of the body in banal contexts that acquire their significance in the overall picture. The hands in Parr's photographs have different, sometimes ambiguous meanings. This contrast of contents and forms is all the more important as it constantly creates associations with real situations and attributed identities: one photo shows work-worn hands that have been given an exaggerated significance by the conspicuous artificial nails, while on another wee see truncated hands whereby the steep angle emphasises the lack of communication. On this last picture (fig. 12), the fur hat in the foreground appears to metaphorically fill the void between the fork and knife.

90 | The two photographs were featured on the same page of a leaflet released for the exhibition *Luxembourg 2006/Assorted Cocktail* as part of *Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture.*

Figure 12: Martin Parr, Luxembourg 2006/Assorted Cocktail © *Martin Parr/ Magnum Photos.*

Rather than observe the stereotypes in real situations, the Luxembourgish artist Jeanine Unsen creates depictions that are the result of a long process of searching, during which she gathers countless accessories that become a theatre of artificial situations, where Luxembourgish tourist knick-knacks and human subjects are assembled to form the elements of photographic paintings.

In her series *Odd, small and beautiful*, commissioned in 2009 by Luxembourg City, Unsen speaks of Luxembourgish identities in an expressive, vivid language that permits, due to the exaggeration of the depiction, a certain detachment and, at the same time, a feeling of appropriation, due to the accumulation of mementos, suggesting potential personification. The artist integrates identity-forming representations in scenographic contexts and portraits that complement the scene with their stereotypical dimension.

With kitschy consumer objects representing collective national symbols (images of the Palace, the Grand Ducal couple, the coat of arms, Adolph Bridge, plates imprinted with *Banque et Caisse d'Epargne de l'Etat*[91], glasses, wallpaper, etc.) she develops what she calls a "*nostalgie critique*"[92], i.e. a vision that is both caustic and nostalgic.

Il y a quelque chose des traditions villageoises en moi qui perdure et que je ne ridiculise aucunement, mais que je relève à travers mes mises en scène photographiques. Chaque

91 | Luxembourg's State Savings Bank.

92 | Personal translation: "Critical nostalgia".

accessoire me rappelle en quelque sorte mon enfance alors que paradoxalement ces objets sont fabriqués en tant que souvenirs pour les touristes[93] (di Felice 2009).

Figures 13-16: Jeanine Unsen, Odd, small and beautiful*, 2009 © Jeanine Unsen. Courtesy MHVL.*

93 | Personal translation: "There is something of a village tradition in me that prevails and that I don't ridicule at all, but that I reveal through my photography. Each accessory reminds me somehow of my childhood, although paradoxically these objects are made as souvenirs for tourists".

The figures represented in the four photographs by Unsen (a heterosexual couple, a homosexual couple, and two portraits of women, fig. 13-16) belong to the scenery of this artificial universe. By adopting a fictional character, the photographs question the clichés through mementos representing symbols that are intended to be moved (e.g. postcards and knick-knacks with images of the Grand Duke, the Adolphe Bridge, etc. generally acquired in remembrance of the place), but re-integrating them into an artificial everyday context.

Whereas Parr draws his inspiration from Luxembourg's reality when taking his photographs in his own particular style (geared more towards the alienation of behaviour and the universality of contexts than national differentiations of identity – images of Madonnas in Luxembourg and in Mexico, images of consumption in Mexico, Luxembourg, Ireland, etc.), Unsen reconstructs situations in artificial Luxembourgish contexts that directly refer to symbolic representations.

In presenting his photographs as *vanitas* that express middle-class archetypes found in different countries, Parr allows us to interpret scenes that contain both particularities and universalities regarding the Luxembourgish context. Thus the photographs *Luxembourg 2006/Assorted Cocktail* show the vision a 'foreign' artist has of Luxembourg – with characteristics shared within the same middle class everywhere as the central theme running through his work – but also allows Luxembourgers to discover in these stereotypical images a reflection of their own notions of identity.

Current Representations of a Bygone Era

The second thematic category is concerned with the representation of past and present in today's Luxembourg in the black-and-white works of Luxembourgish photographer Yvon Lambert ("*photographie humaniste*") and French photographer Valérie Belin ("*photographie plasticienne*").

With the series *Derniers feux*[94], commissioned by the city of Esch-sur-Alzette, Yvon Lambert retraces the final days of operation of blast furnace B at Esch-Belval, thereby paying tribute to the Minette region as a place of remembrance that shows the energy of work in a poetic and sacral ambience (fig. 17 and 18).

We only ever get to see partial views of the blast furnace, while innumerable details (pipes, gloves, bolts, funnels, casting samples, chutes, etc.) contrast with the dark backgrounds and the blurred sections of the black-and-white photographs. The dramatic lighting underscores the sublimation of the worker's movement (*flou-bougée*) (see Lorgé 1998) and establishes the metaphysical relationship between man and his work environment, which is aesthetised by the photographer.

94 | These photographs were taken in August 1997 at the latest. Blast Furnace B at the Joint Steelworks of Burbach, Eich and Dommeldange (ARBED), the last blast furnace of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, was shut down on 28 August 1997 at 19:00 hours.

Figure 17: Yvon Lambert, Coulée et granulation de laitier[95] *1997 © Yvon Lambert.*

Figure 18: Yvon Lambert, Nettoyage des bleeders[96] *1997 © Yvon Lambert.*

Lambert chooses a photographic language (composed framing, saturation of black, lighting contrasts, etc.) that reflects *"la force plastique d'un environnement à priori plus soucieux de productivité que d'esthétique"*[97] (Lambert, 1998: 3), that an entire region identifies with. In choosing this type of black-and-white photography, he attempts to confer timelessness to a bygone era.

In the series *Differdange – à la rencontre d'un lieu*, commissioned by the city of Differdange and created between 2003 and 2005, we again encounter this anachronistic attitude and Lambert's way of neutralising temporality with his work techniques (slowness, reconnaissance, documentation, etc.) and his photographic style that marks all of his projects (fig. 20-22).

In an interview with journalist Thierry Hick, Lambert says: *"… J'ai aussi voulu montrer que cette industrie reste toujours d'actualité dans la région. Mes photos sont un trait d'union entre le passé et le présent"*.[98] Hick continues: *"Dans son travail, le photographe, un 'Minettsdapp'*[99]*, part à la recherche de son identité, mais aussi de ses racines. Une recherche valable tant pour l'artiste que pour le visiteur"*[100] (Hick 2003: 9).

95 | Personal translation: "Wetting and granulating the slag".

96 | Personal translation: "Cleaning the bleeders".

97 | Personal translation: "The palpable power of an environment inherently more concerned with productivity than with aesthetics".

98 | Personal translation: "…I've also wanted to show how this industry is still relevant in the region. My photos are a link between past and present".

99 | *Minettsdapp* refers to a resident of the Minette region

100 | Personal translation: "In his work, the photographer, a *Minettsdapp*, goes in search of his identity, but also his roots. A worthwhile search both for the artist and for the visitor".

Figure 19: Yvon Lambert, Differdange, Arcelor-aciérie[101]*, 2003* © *Yvon Lambert.*

The image of Differdange that Lambert suggests shows little, apparently insignificant things and unspectacular situations, rather than 'postcard' representations of the town.

The play between past and present in the photographs (fig. 20 and 21) *Differdange, Grand-Rue 2003* and *Differdange, rue Michel Rodange 2004* is remarkable. Despite the contrasts illustrating the changes in this region, these images show the artist's nostalgic affection for his origins.

Figure 20: Yvon Lambert, Differdange, Grand-Rue*, 2003* © *Yvon Lambert.*

Figure 21: Yvon Lambert, Differdange, rue Michel Rodange*, 2004* © *Yvon Lambert.*

Figure 22: Yvon Lambert, Differdange, Café Chez Quim*, 2004* © *Yvon Lambert.*

While we can observe a certain symbiosis between the photographer and his environment in the photographs described here, the series *Vitrines du Luxembourg*

101 | Differdange, Arcelor steelworks.

(2003, fig. 23 and 24) by French artist Valérie Belin reveals, by contrast, a significant degree of conceptual detachment. This series, commissioned by the *Mudam* in 2002 as part of a project entitled *Portraits du Luxembourg*, is composed of seven large contemporary prints in black and white, representing seven antiquated looking shop windows in Luxembourg City exhibiting old-fashioned clothing and accessories in window displays reminiscent of the 1960s.

Figures 23-24: Valérie Belin, Vitrines du Luxembourg*, 2003 © Valerie Belin. Courtesy Mudam.*

Belin has gone in search of places where the past is still present. She achieves this by avoiding the common and stereotype motifs that would normally be used for a portrait of Luxembourg. The photographs of objects representing the Luxembourg of old, mirror the city of today and explore the hidden identity aspects of a city in transition.

Despite the apparent similarities of Lambert's and Belin's shop windows, they are diametrically opposed in that the photographer of *Differdange – à la rencontre d'un lieu* creates a space of projection where his personal biography (*Minettsdapp*) mix with the appropriated identities of the viewer, while the photographer of *Vitrines du Luxembourg* seems to erect a screen on which the dualities of past/present, old/new and interior/exterior are projected.

By placing the residents of the Minette region at the centre of his work, Lambert creates images that facilitate the viewer's identification and complicity with the place – in contrast to Belin, who substitutes mannequins and clothing for people, creating an image of detachment that leaves little room for identity-forming notions.

Decontextualisations

Coming to our third theme, the decontextualisation of emblems, we will attempt to explore the symbolic places represented in the photographs of Andrés Lejona, Marco Godinho and Joël Tettamanti.

To mark the occasion of the national holiday on 23 June, when the Grand Duke's birthday is celebrated, a series by the Spanish photographer Andrés Lejona, a resident of Luxembourg since the mid 1960s, was published in the magazine *Rendez-Vous*[102], entitled *F(en)êt(r)es Nationales* (fig. 25-27). The series presents ten colour photographs of shop windows in the capital that show the Grand Ducal couple in official or family photos, partly in window displays especially arranged for the national holiday.

Like Martin Parr, Lejona draws his inspiration from Luxembourgish reality, in this particular instance the national holiday, isolating the national symbols with tight framings and, by combining them with other details, making them appear grotesque. The photo of the Grand Ducal couple, sometimes set in a conventional window display (clothing, toys, etc.), sometimes integrated into a sophisticated staging (flag of Luxembourg, the red lion from the national coat of arms – fig. 27) is the *leitmotif* that dominates the centre of these images.

Figures 25-27: Andrés Lejona, F(en)êt(r)es Nationales*, 2009 © Andrés Lejona. Courtesy* Rendez-Vous.

Positioned between critical thinking and sympathy, the photographer has shown a fine sense of humour in creating this series, which is a tribute to the Luxembourgers while at the same time questioning the cult around the Grand Duke. One of the images shows the Grand Ducal couple as if they were part of a fairy-tale world (Snow White, Tintin, the Smurfs, etc.), ridiculing the depiction of monarchist veneration (fig. 25), whereas in another, the photograph of the couple finds itself

102 | Lejona, Andrés. 2009. F(en)êt(r)es nationales. Rendez-Vous. City Magazine Luxembourg 6: 46-57.

trapped between the shop window and the metal security gate (fig. 26), suggesting the ambiguity between protection and imprisonment.

Through the interplay of the picture in the picture, successive image planes and reflections, Lejona creates a subtle detachment in relation to the 'representations of national identity'. Even if these photographs were taken within the framework of a national holiday, they are characteristic of Lejona's search for the unusual, which permits an alienation of real situations and aims to decontextualise the representations.

With the work *Le guide mental du Luxembourg* (2007) (fig. 28-31), commissioned by the Luxembourg City Historical Museum for 'Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007', Portuguese-born Luxembourg artist Marco Godinho presents a photographic installation composed of horizontal photo strips on the topic of migration and population movements in Luxembourg.

Figure 28: Marco Godinho, Le guide mental du Luxembourg*, 2007 © Marco Godinho Courtesy MHVL.*

From digital photographs, Godhino created a panoramic collage (fig. 29-31) in which he transfers, repeats and shifts symbols, emblems and signals in order to blur the lines of identification. He explores identity referents in order to deconstruct them and compare them to different processes of transculturality, examining among other things the notions of territory, borders and geographic belonging.

L'œuvre se lit comme une carte d'un monde où les trajectoires reflètent les flux migratoires, pose la question du multiculturalisme, de l'immigration au Luxembourg et reflète l'essence même de la mobilité et des échanges interculturels, entre passé, présent et avenir[103] (Damiani n.d.).

103 | Personal translation: "The work can be read like a map of the world, where the trajectories reflect migration flows, posing the question of multiculturality, of migration to Luxembourg, and reflects the very essence of mobility and intercultural exchanges, between past, present and future".

Figure 29-31: Details.

If Godhino's work of fiction illustrates the notion of topographical displacement, the series *LUX 2005* (fig. 32 and 33), created as part of the commission *Portraits du Luxembourg*, by Joël Tettamanti shows how decontextualisation is produced by means of post-industrial landscapes in the Minette region, which connect the traces of past and present.

Chosen by the Swiss photographer of Italian origin because of his identification with an area where immigration has played a big role, the Minette region reflects, for him, a specific regional identity that he has sought to capture in its process of change.

Figures 32-33: Joël Tettamanti, LUX 2005*, 2005 © Joël Tettamanti Courtesy MUDAM.*

These large photographic tableaus with their almost abstract forms and colours symbolising the region (red earth) tell of sites fallen into decline and reveal the footprints of an era.

As in a palimpsest, these photographs show the traces of destruction and reconstruction of these sites that are witnesses to an industrial past associated with the cultural identity of a region in transition.

In this third thematic series then, we can distinguish the humorous and ironic alienation of symbols in Lejona's compositions and Godhino's collages on the one hand, and the temporal and spatial shift in the photographic tableaus of Tettamanti on the other.

Conclusions

To summarise, we have seen that the Spanish photographer Lejona's occasionally caustic usage of national identity representations corresponds with the accumulation of symbols in the living pictures of Luxembourg artist Unsen, even if the works differ in their poietic perspectives. In his take on the representations of the Grand Ducal couple as the symbol of the nation, Lejona creates detachment, but also in his search for the unusual and the shift of emphasis within real situations. By contrast, Unsen distances herself from these representative images, constructing interiors where emblems are reduced to decorative elements.

There are also correspondences between Tettamanti's post-industrial landscapes and Belin's 'anachronistic' windows, created by the decontextualisation and spatio-temporal shifts leading to the loss of appropriated identity referents. The

urban reflections symbolising a past that is still present are juxtaposed with the palimpsests signifying the marks of transition in post-industrial landscapes.

Whereas Godhino, in deconstructing Luxembourg's significant landscapes, does not take an outright stand but creates a space of questioning obliging the viewers to adopt a reflexive stance towards their own identities, Parr, in his familiar photographic style, lays the emphasis on the behaviour patterns of the Luxembourgers, by comparing vulgarity, superficiality and lux(ury). Closer to reality, the series *Luxembourg 2006/Assorted Cocktail* by Parr appears to mirror the image of Luxembourgish society as it is often perceived in the form of collective clichés and analysed in subsections 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4. However, Parr's particular photographic language, with its fragmented views and its focus on suggestive details, allows us to go beyond this stereotypical perspective and encourages us to take a closer look, provoking a rupture with the identification process inherent in these images.

Without discounting the effect they might have on the construction of identities in Luxembourg, more importantly, the photographs discussed here reveal the significance of each artist's notions about identity attributions. By drawing their inspiration from similar situations and contexts, the artists recreate a personalised universe where different types of reproduced, constructed, re-appropriated or attributed images come together, questioning the representations as much through the image within an image technique (*mise en abyme*) as through the deconstructions of identity discourses. Instead of submitting the different representations to objective scrutiny, the artists *avoid* the national context and express their dissenting views in visual constructions, which they transpose into a personal formal language.

There is no doubt that all these examples of photographs that were created in a specific contemporary artistic context *sketch*, in various degrees and manners, the question of appropriated and attributed identities, but rather than assign a significant role to the construction of identities, they offer a space for questioning and reflection in relation to our own identities, which find themselves increasingly deconstructed from one image to the next.

6.6 The Representation of Italian Immigrants in the Exhibition Catalogue *Retour de Babel*

As already outlined in section 6.2, the major event *Luxembourg and Greater Region – European Capital of Culture 2007* as an interdiscursive event provided the opportunity to renegotiate different collective symbols. In this context, the term 'European laboratory' assigned to this cross-border region is of fundamental significance. It refers, among other things, to the 'multicultural' composition of Luxembourg society in which the foreign population exceeds 40 %. In the light of this, it is no surprise that the coordinating body of the event, in 2007, decided

to make 'migration' the central theme. Both in the historiographic and in the political discourse of the last decades Luxembourg society has been defined as 'open' and 'integration-friendly'. Frequent reference is made to historic 'phases' of immigration and emigration movements in order to emphazise Luxembourg's international and traditionally multicultural character. The exhibition *Retour de Babel* was, according to the organisers, the main event of the 'European Capital of Culture 2007' on the subject of 'migration' and was on display over several months in the former ironworks of the city of Dudelange. In offering a comprehensive picture as possible of the immigration and emigration movements in Luxembourg, the aim was not only to erect a memorial to the migrants, but also to sensitise the audience to the various forms of migration. In the following we will inquire how and whether collective identity is attributed to Italian immigrants in the catalogue *Retour de Babel*.

Migration in Luxembourg

Historical overview

The image, still widespread among the population, of Luxembourg as a poor emigration country up to the time of industrialisation and since then as a rich immigration country, has long been called into questioned by the findings of historical studies, but also by various articles in the catalogue *Retour de Babel* (see Pauly 1986; Reuter/Ruiz 2008). According to the prevailing public discourse[104], the history of Luxembourg as a country of immigration does not begin until the 1890s in connection with the (so-called) 'first immigration wave' of Italians looking for work during the industrialisation. Historians have however proven that the first Italian industrial workers already came to Luxembourg via Lorraine from the 1870s onwards, in search of employment mainly in the steel industry. Evidence has also shown that there was work migration in Luxembourg already in medieval times (Reuter 1995). Sedentariness is declared a myth and migration the norm (Hahn 2008: 16). It was only the demarcations of the nation states that turned people into 'indigenous and foreigners'. Bilateral agreements between Portugal and Yugoslavia (1972) as well as familial and local networks explain the conspicuous presence of Italian and Portuguese migrants in Luxembourg.

The Italian immigration wave continued into the early 1960s, after which Portuguese immigration increased. Male immigrants mainly included steel workers and construction workers, but also freelancers, above all craftsmen and grocers (Gallo 1992). The major part of the female immigrants were wives who

104 | E.g. in *Histoire du Luxembourg. Le destin européen d'un 'petit pays'*, one can read the following: "En s'industrialisant, le Luxembourg, de pays rural pauvre et donc d'émigration, se transforme en terre d'immigration" (Trausch 2003: 268). Personal translation: "At the outset a poor rural country typified by emigration, Luxembourg transformed itself, in the course of its industrialisation, into a territory for immigration".

followed their husbands after some years; many of them were employed as shop assistants, cleaners and partly also as blue-collar workers in industry. Today, Italian immigration is low and comprises, above all, highly skilled employees who work in the banks and EU institutions (Langers 1999).

Political Discourses on Immigration in Luxembourg

In Luxembourg it was recognised considerably earlier, at least at the political level, than in the two big neighbouring countries France and Germany that the country is a 'country of immigration' and consequently that immigrants were not 'guest workers' but people who had come to Luxembourg to stay and now belonged to its society. This perception is revealed in many different political discourses, particularly on the occasion of international state visits, or in general on the subject of 'Europe', which time and time again emphasise the multiculturalism and traditional openness of the Luxembourgers. Nevertheless, this representation has but little effect on, firstly, concrete measures for a better co-existence or for a conscious integration policy and secondly on a broader recognition within society of Luxembourg as a 'country of immigration'.

However, at least since end of the 1970s, parts of the civil society have been concerning themselves with the issue of immigration in Luxembourg. For instance, in 1978, the *Association de soutien aux travailleurs immigrés* (ASTI) was founded, followed by the *Comité de liaison des associations étrangères* (CLAE) (1985) and *Centre de documentation sur les migrations humaines* (CDMH) (1996), to name but the largest organisations. While these may have different aims and political motivations, they have one thing in common in that they are committed to the recognition of migrants in Luxembourg.

It was indeed the two last-named organisations, which, together with the municipality of Dudelange, also prepared the exhibition *Retour de Babel* which aimed at showing the different phases and forms of migration in Luxembourg.

We will deal here mainly with the representation of Italian immigrants in the exhibition catalogue *Retour de Babel* because there is a 'master narrative'[105] about Italian immigration, related to history and recollections, to which one can compare these representations. The image of Italian immigrants outlined in the 'master narrative' attributes to them a collective identity which is based on the image of the steel worker and the notion of successful integration.

Discourses on Italian Immigration in Luxembourg

In order to examine discourses on Italian immigration, political speeches, publications as well as the activities and contents of the websites[106] of different

105 | Also known as 'Meta' or 'Grand Narrative'. One can define the 'Master Narrative' as the main image conveyed by public historical experience (see Lyotard 1979).

106 | www.italiani.lu, www.passaparola.info

organisations were reviewed. The catalogue *Retour de Babel* is also to be understood as a generator of these discourses.

Consensus discourse or 'Master Narrative': Italian immigrants are perceived primarily as steel workers[107] whose labour has contributed to industrialisation and with it to the wealth of Luxembourg. This image appears in the introductory text of the catalogue; however, it is also being conveyed at a political level. Until recently, reference to this was made in speeches of the head of state, the head of government as well as the President of the Italian Republic during his official state visit to Luxembourg. A publication entitled *Il Centenario* (Gallo 1992), which celebrated the centenary of Italian immigration in Luxembourg, is a further important generator and carrier of the consensus discourse. The 'master narrative' is capable of consent because a majority of the population can identify with the image of wealth generated by industrialisation – and therefore also by the labour of the Italian immigrants. Besides this 'Master Narrative', we were able to identify two further discourses in references on Italian immigration in Luxembourg.

The marginal left-wing discourse or anti-fascist discourse is based on episodes from the interwar period that have only partly been scientifically analysed. The catalogue *Retour de Babel* makes it visible, not only by the representation of the Italians it portrays but also by its scientific articles which examine events within the anti-fascist movements or the Resistance. This discourse is supported by some historians and politically left-wing public figures: Denis Scuto, Henry Wehenkel, Marcel Lorenzini and others. Since the image of the politically committed (Italian) antifascist does not, for political and ideological reasons due to the connection between Italian antifascism and the Communist party, have an identity-creating potential for the majority of society this discourse remains marginal.

The cultural discourse ignores the image of the worker in favour of that of Italian culture (Roman Empire, republics, artists, composers, etc.). This discourse originated in the 1970s, at a time when the immigration of Italian labourers was replaced by the influx of highly-qualified Italian employees. Generally, the supporters of this discourse are the following organisations: *Amitiés italo-luxembourgeoises* and *italiani.lu*, which organises an annual *Miss-Italia-Luxemburg-Wettbewerb*[108], and the *Istituto italiano di cultura*, which has close ties with the Italian embassy. Another generator of the cultural discourse is the organisation *Convivium* which places special emphasis on a Luxembourgish-Italian culture. Even though the discourses of the different organisations diverge regarding contents, the focus with all of them is on culture and less on historical events, as is the case with the discourses mentioned above.

107 | In a speech delivered by HRH The Grand Duke during a banquet in honour of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Italy and Madame Giorgio Napolitano (2 February 2009). Grand-Ducal court of Luxembourg, 28 Decembre 2009. http://www.monarchie.lu/fr/Presse/Discours/2009/02/VisiteEtat_Italie/index.html.

108 | Personal translation: "Miss Italia – Luxembourg Contest".

The *Retour de Babel* Exhibition

The exhibition titled *Retour de Babel* offered a historical overview of the various phenomena of immigration and emigration of Luxembourg within the framework of the 'cultural capital 2007'. The objective here was to show the diversity of migration, which is largely ignored by society.

The exhibition catalogue

The breakdown of the catalogue by topics reflects those of the exhibition: *Partir*[109] (Volume 1), *Arriver*[110] (Volume 2), *Rester, être*[111] (Volume 3). These verbs refer to migration *per se*: the reasons why one leaves one's country, how one copes in a new environment and, finally makes the decision to stay. Only the last verb is 'out of line' as it were, because '*être*' (being) describes a state and therefore does not necessarily fit into the processual representation of migration.

Besides portraits of immigrants from the various countries which were on show in the exhibition, the catalogue contains a great number of scientific articles which deal with a diversity topics concerning migration. Furthermore, the catalogue includes portraits of deceased historic celebrities like Victor Hugo who had found political asylum in Luxembourg, but also of lesser known people who immigrated to Luxembourg for political or economic reasons.

The Portraits

The total of 57 portraits includes eight Italians, all of them either immigrants or members of the so-called second generation[112]. These eight people were interviewed in Italian or in French. After the transcription the interviews, these

109 | Personal translation: "Leaving".

110 | Personal translation: "Arriving".

111 | Personal translation: "Staying, being".

112 | Miserini, Renato and Claudine Scherrer. 2007. Un choix de vie. In *Retour de Babel. Itinéraires, Mémoires et Citoyenneté,* ed. Antoinette Reuter and Jean-Philippe Ruiz. Gasperich: Retour de Babel a.s.b.l., vol. 1: 108-116. Malvetti, Mario and Claudine Scherrer. 2007. Plus on grandissait, plus on s'intégrait. In *Retour de Babel. Itinéraires, Mémoires et Citoyenneté,* ed. Antoinette Reuter and Jean-Philippe Ruiz. Gasperich: Retour de Babel a.s.b.l., vol. 2: 58-63. Plebani, Emidio and Kristel Pairoux. 2007. Pour qu'un pont résiste, il faut deux piliers. In *Retour de Babel. Itinéraires, Mémoires et Citoyenneté,* ed. Antoinette Reuter and Jean-Philippe Ruiz. Gasperich: Retour de Babel a.s.b.l., vol. 2: 154-161. Boggiani, Rosina and Claudine Scherrer. 2007. Je ne me suis jamais vraiment sentie étrangère. In *Retour de Babel. Itinéraires, Mémoires et Citoyenneté,* ed. Antoinette Reuter and Jean-Philippe Ruiz. Gasperich: Retour de Babel a.s.b.l., vol. 2: 190-196. Peruzzi, Raymond and Maria Louisa Caldognetto. 2007. A la maison des Romagnoli... In *Retour de Babel. Itinéraires, Mémoires et Citoyenneté,* ed. Antoinette Reuter and Jean-Philippe Ruiz. Gasperich: Retour de Babel a.s.b.l., vol. 2: 209-215. Piticco, Flora and Dominique Sander-Emram.

were partly translated, summarised and finally edited for the catalogue. However, this process, which is not unusual, also has as a consequence the insertion of several levels of interpretation, producing specific images of those portrayed. In other words: while it would go too far to say that this created stereotypes, certain features were more strongly emphasised than others. In this way, a shift took place from the representation of appropriated identities intended by the publishers of the catalogue to a representation of attributed identities, which can indeed sometimes be identical. The attribution takes place by the selection of interview headings and the subheadings which structure the respective texts and which, already in terms of layout, guide the reader's eye. However, the identity-creating image that is produced in this manner can also correspond to the self-image of the person interviewed.

In addition to the text, every portrait comprises one photograph taken especially for the exhibition, as well as several private photos and a personal object which is significant for the biography of the person portrayed. Finally, the migration paths with their respective stages are graphically illustrated.

The staged photographs

On those photographs that Andrés Lejona[113] took especially for the exhibition, we can see the following: the portrayed individuals, each standing in one corner of their living room that is orientated in the cardinal direction of their homeland. The photographer sees this corner as an 'arrow' pointing to the direction of origin of the portrayed ("*la direction de leur pays, de leurs origines*").

Thus, this corner establishes a context which is, however, not clearly recognizable for the beholder. In terms of space it is located behind the immigrated person, suggesting a symbolism that may be interpreted in the sense that the immigration is completed and the attachment to the native country and/or origin has been overcome. But this interpretation is called into question by the explanation of the photographer who intended this to mean an indication of a direction, which points more to nostalgia, ties with the native country, the inability to find closure on the past, dividedness of affiliation, multiculturality and return.

2007. J'ai la double âme. In *Retour de Babel. Itinéraires, Mémoires et Citoyenneté,* ed. Antoinette Reuter and Jean-Philippe Ruiz. Gasperich: Retour de Babel a.s.b.l., vol. 3: 67-73. Rech, Louis and Claudine Scherrer. 2007. Celui qui nie ses origines et son passé ne mérite pas l'avenir. In *Retour de Babel. Itinéraires, Mémoires et Citoyenneté,* ed. Antoinette Reuter and Jean-Philippe Ruiz. Gasperich: Retour de Babel a.s.b.l., vol. 3: 82-89. Rinaldis, Marinella and Kristel Pairoux. 2007. Quand on regarde les gens dans leur individualité, on ne regarde pas leur nationalité. In *Retour de Babel. Itinéraires, Mémoires et Citoyenneté,* ed. Antoinette Reuter and Jean-Philippe Ruiz. Gasperich: Retour de Babel a.s.b.l., vol. 3: 334-343.

113 | Also see section 6.5.

Italian Immigration in Luxembourg: New Perspectives

The representation of Italian immigration in the exhibition catalogue *Retour de Babel* reproduces a whole series of stereotypes. The most frequently mentioned ones are the extended family, Italian cuisine, football, Italian regional associations, multilingualism, the Catholic faith and Luxembourg as an 'American Dream' in terms of the opportunities immigrants are offered in Luxembourg. It will suffice to examine here only a few of these in more detail. These familiar *topoi* aside, one element stands out, namely the social and politically left-wing commitment of some of the portrayed or that of their relatives.

The aspects of the 'extended family' and in a more broad sense of 'Italians as a community' ("*Ils étaient nombreux, les Italiens*!"), linked with the idea of solidarity, are stressed, among other things, by one of the portrayed women, Rosina Boggiani, during her interview, when she describes the building of her house as a collective undertaking. The *Casa Grande* or *Casa dei Romagnoli*, a house in the working class neighbourhood of the city of Esch/Alzette, where several Italian families had lived over decades, is a symbol of the extended family and of the Italian community as a whole. Raymond Peruzzi, whose interview carries the title *A la casa dei Romagnoli…*, grew up there and regrets being virtually isolated from this community after moving to a small village. Mario Malvetti tells a similar story. Further examples of solidarity linked to places of residence can be found in Flora Piticco's testimony who mentions the solidarity in Brill street, and that of Louis Rech who grew up in the Italian quarter of Dudelange and refers to it as an "Italian island". These descriptions create the image of a close-knit immigrant community which keeps to itself. In addition to nostalgic recollections of Italy, another nostalgia becomes visible that is projected towards a community which has ceased to exist, and the kind of solidarity which has disappeared with it.

The image of the Italian community's co-existence in Luxembourg's society is closely associated with the notion of multilingualism, depicted here either as a positive dynamism or as a problem. Italians raised in Luxembourg generally take a positive view on multilingualism, regardless of potential difficulties at school, and see it as an integrating factor. Marinella Rinaldis is an exception here. She has complaints about, among other things, the educational system where children are taught literacy in German.

The Italian cuisine is often mentioned as one of the cultural contributions of the Italians in Luxembourg. To former mayor Louis Rech, the Italian cuisine is the last surviving "tradition", and the last connection to the Italian origins. For Mario Malvetti, one of the portrayed already mentioned above, the Italian cuisine is a fundamental link not only to his own origins, but also to Italy as a whole and, above all, to the grandfather who, in 1924, brought with him from Italy the rolling pin that is used to make the dough for pasta.

What we have called here the 'American Dream' is the representation of Luxembourg as an open country which offered the immigrants incomparable

opportunities and quality of life. Rosina Boggiani, for instance, points out that those who had returned to Italy now wish they had stayed in Luxembourg. Renato Miserini relates that he decided to emigrate to Luxembourg once he had seen immigrants who had managed to build a house for themselves in Italy after having spent some years in Luxembourg. Despite her less favourable experiences, Marinella Rinaldis is also convinced that growing up in Luxembourg has spared her a "different fate" (Rinaldis/Pairoux 2007: 341).

The chapter *Rester, c'est s'engager*[114] contains the portraits of Louis Rech and Flora Piticco, his because of his activities as a trade unionist and politician, hers because of her involvement in various associations dealing with migration issues. Among the remaining eight portraitees, a total of six are either politically active, involved in charity organisations or related to people who are. In the light of such a high percentage, one might wonder by which criteria the interviewed Italian immigrants in the exhibition catalogue were chosen. For with this particular selection of portraitees the marginal left-wing discourse acquires a higher profile than it commonly has. For instance, Renato Miserini was also active as a trade unionist and in politics and helped establish the Luxembourg City section of the Italian Communist Party. Raymond Peruzzi, son of the resistance fighter Luigi Peruzzi, emphasises that he has not emulated his father in every single way, however, antifascism is still a major feature of his portrait. And father Emidio Plebani is, within the Catholic Church, a promoter of interculturalism and bringing together all communities.

In general, the eight portraits convey the impression of a progressive, successful 'integration'. In the majority of instances, this notion is linked to associations and clubs, a football club for example, or a singing association. However, in parallel with this representation, most portraits also raise the question of 'identity'. The connections between 'integration' and 'identity' have for each of the portrayed their own specific meaning. Flora Piticco, for instance, believes that the Italians are "integrated" but not "completely" so – they had assumed a Luxembourg mentality, she says, but their roots were still in Italy. Referring to herself, she calls this state "*double âme*", a "double soul". With the subheading *Nous étions des étrangers*[115], she continues to describe how, following the war, Italians became less and less the targets of xenophobic remarks. Favourable holiday memories of Luxembourgers visiting Italy, but also the influx of Italian employees working in European institutions, she feels, have contributed to a positive change in the way Luxembourgers perceive Italians. The title of the interview with Rosina Boggiani, *Je ne me suis jamais vraiment sentie étrangère*[116] is slightly misleading here. It suggests 'integration' but her remark about not feeling herself as a stranger does not refer to Luxembourg society but rather to her immediate environment, which was almost

114 | Personal translation: "Staying means committing oneself".

115 | Personal translation: "We were strangers".

116 | Personal translation: "I've never really felt a stranger".

exclusively Italian. This, in turn, raises the question what is actually meant when the integration of the Italian immigrant population is described as successful or 'good' in public statements.

Finally, let us turn our attention to three female portraits. The first impression, when merely looking at the photographs and the portrait titles, is that of a certain degree of stereotype. Rosina Boggiani, for instance, represents the typical image of the 'mother' which, however, is primarily generated by photographs that are exclusively family portraits. Besides this rather traditional image of the family-oriented 'Mamma', there is the emancipated, politically active woman, Flora Piticco, public information officer of the Organisation *Unione Donne Italiane*. The photographs show her at big rallies, with a microphone in her hand. This picture is complimented by the text which dwells on the hard life of blue-collar workers and on the experience of being a foreigner. The chapter *être*, finally, introduces Marinella Rinaldis. In contrast to the other women portrayed, who often make historical references, she does not present her biography in a larger framework. Except for a short reference to her grandparents, no element of the Italian immigration history comes into play. Precisely because she clearly positions herself in the present, remarks about experienced discrimination take on a particular importance. The portrayal of this young woman does not coincide with the public representation of 'good integration', and therefore her portrait on the subject *être*, which is presented schematically as goal and outcome of the successful migration process *partir*, *arriver*, *rester*, *être*, casts certain doubts on the positive model of Italian migration and integration in Luxembourg.

Conclusion

Besides the usual depiction of Italian immigration in Luxembourg, the exhibition catalogue *Retour de Babel* places special emphasis on political, social and union committedness. Accordingly, a greater emphasis than usual is being placed on the left-wing discourse, which is not due to the manner of representation so much as to the selection of the Italian immigrants interviewed.

The collective identity of Italians as successfully integrated workers attributed by the consensus discourse is, on the one hand, confirmed by details, on the other, however, it is also questioned by the important role assigned to the anti-fascist organisations and to social and political committedness.

The 'good integration' of the Italians as a part of their attributed collective identity is also being questioned by the fact that those portrayed differentiate their statements about their own integration and do not associate them directly with the question of their own identity. However, origins as well as social environment play

an important part in the self-image of the migrants and are often described, for instance, with the term "double identity", or "*double âme*".[117]

However, one must also bear in mind that it was a major concern of the exhibition organisers to provide a broader – and partly divergent – image than the traditional one of immigration in Luxembourg. In the remaining portraits, for instance, one encounters nationalities which as yet have gone unmentioned in the public discourse. The overall image of immigration in Luxembourg presented here therefore overcomes the established one that the country has of its immigrants: well-integrated Italians, a comparatively more difficult Portuguese immigration process, and immigrants from former Yugoslavia or in general from non-EU countries who, in parallel to a European illegalisation discourse, are increasingly being portrayed as criminals. The portraits in the exhibition catalogue counteract this discriminating discourse, among them the story of a woman who immigrated from Niš (Serbia) to Luxembourg via France long before the outbreak of the war; or that of a dancer from Brazil; of a mother with her child who both hide their heads in a box so as not to be recognised because they are living in Luxembourg without papers and hence, illegally. Moreover, with its generally large proportion of female portraits the exhibition catalogue breaks with the traditional representation of migration as male.

Furthermore, the variety shown in the catalogue reflects the collective symbol of 'European laboratory', even if the epithet is not explicitly mentioned. The presentation's structure itself suggests the image of an open nation, which manages to accommodate (almost) without discomfort its more than 40 % of foreign population.

6.7 Conclusions: National Identities in a Post-national Age?

Nations are "imagined communities" (Anderson 1991). To ensure a binding feeling of belonging, they depend on the imagery of the old and new media. Verbal and visual images have accumulated over a long period of time to form an extensive repository of collective symbols that nations draw on for reasons of recognition, profiling, for reasons of dissociation or polemics, but also motivated by the need for self-understanding and self-critical examination.

In the post-national, global age, major symbolic confrontations such as "profound Germans" versus "frivolous French" (see Florack) that were frequently a prelude to or a concomitant of actual power struggles, have fortunately lost their significance. Nevertheless, political-cultural acting, which continues to express itself on a national or regional scale, still depends on symbolic representations of identities. While it is true to say that increasing social differentiation, interconnectedness and

117 | Personal translation: "Double soul".

specialisation of society is pushing these identity discourses out of the the principal functional domains, the issue of cultural cohesion of a society organised in a clearly definable space like Luxembourg becomes all the more pressing.

Using examples from different fields of communication, from the print media, advertising, comics, art and art documentation and their respective addressees, the contributions on the subject 'Images and Identities' in Luxembourg have shown that the search for and the discussion of forms of clear and distinct collective identity patterns are part of everyday discourses in Luxembourg. However, this does not signify that these collective identity images are an everyday occurrence. They are capable of attracting a large amount of attention without being continuously present. In order to be generated and perceived at all, they require external mediatic impulses (the cultural capital year, the Arcelor/Mittal debate, the bank discussion, advertising campaigns etc.) which are sometimes hard to anticipate. This makes positive identity attribution difficult and identity appropriations, which often are only present in negative form, unclear. One can suspect here an underlying basic uneasiness in dealing with schematisations, which are particularly dependent on images and symbols, and assignation of identities to a national whole. In the 20th century, notions of collective identities have been thoroughly discredited.

Nowadays, with an accelerated shift of media attention, interest in identity images generated by a particular event seems to fade away as rapidly as the event itself. The mechanism of mediatic application of national identity symbols determines the dynamic relationship between appropriated and attributed identities in Luxembourg. Even in the post-national age of image campaigns, it is as difficult to reinvent collective identity symbols as it is to simply perpetuate the traditional ones.

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