

2019 Annual Workshop of the  
European Network on Death Rituals  
Fribourg, 4 March 2019

*MATERIAL CULTURES AND SPACES OF REMEMBRANCE.*

*A STUDY OF CEMETERIES IN LUXEMBOURG IN THE  
CONTEXT OF THE GREATER REGION*

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Institute for History, University of Luxembourg,



# Context



Area: 2,586.40 km<sup>2</sup>  
Population: 600,000  
Languages: Luxembourgish  
French  
German  
Portuguese  
English

Non-nationals: 48 % (2018)

State Conventions with

- Catholic Church
- Protestant Churches
- Orthodox Churches
- Jewish Congregation
- Muslim Shoura



Area of interregional cooperation  
Between France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg (11.5 million inhab.)

# Project

## Material Cultures and Spaces of Remembrance.

### A Study of Cemeteries in Luxembourg in the Context of the Greater Region

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Co-funded:



UNIVERSITÉ DU LUXEMBOURG  
Unité de Recherche  
Identités, Politiques, Sociétés, Espaces (IPSE)



Fonds National de la  
Recherche Luxembourg

**Project duration:** 36 months (2015-2018)

#### Team (University of Luxembourg)

Dr Elisabeth Boesen

Assoc. Prof. Geoffrey Caruso

Assoc. Prof. Sonja Kmec (PI)

Dr Thomas Kolnberger (coord.)

Dr / PhD cand. Christoph Streb (48 months)

Dr Aline Schiltz (5 months)

Dr Wolfgang Schmid (5 months)

#### Areas of expertise

Ethnology and Social Anthropology

Quantitative Geography

Cultural Studies and History

History and Historical Geography

Business Administration / Historical Archaeology

Cultural Geography

Art History

#### Scientific Board

Dr Thorsten Benkel

Universität Passau, D

Prof. Anne Carol

Université Aix-Marseilles, F

Dr David Petts

University of Durham, UK

Prof. Jean-Paul Lehnens

Université du Luxembourg

Dr Robert L. Philippart

Université catholique de Louvain, B

Dr Julie Rugg

University of York, UK

Visual Sociology, Sociology of Death

History of the Body

Archaeology

Historical Demography

Art History

Cemetery Research

# Typical Luxembourghish? – Spot the difference

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All pictures taken in Walferdange (L) except below left in Speicher (D)

## Parallel trends towards petrification & re-greening

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Photo: Publicity picture,  
Le Jardin merveilleux sàrl.



Photo: Urban garden at Campus Belval,  
Center for Ecological Learning Luxembourg asbl.



# Research questions

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Why do cemeteries in Luxembourg look the way they do?

How did the materiality and design change over time and why?

What are the differences between urban/periurban/rural settings; sites with an industrial/agricultural past; migration backgrounds?

What does a cross-border comparison with Germany, France and Belgium reveal?

What is the impact of cremation?

What challenges do cemetery managers and funeral undertakers face?

How are new trends and wishes of “clients” met?

# Data collection

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Contemporary  
archaeology

Spatial Analysis  
(ArcGis)

Ethnography

History

Architecture

Visual Studies

Cemetery Survey Tool (photographs and data of ALL grave plots in 12 cemeteries)

Expert interviews with cemetery and crematory administrators, stone masons, funeral undertakers, priests, secular associations

Ethnographic interviews with grave owners and tenders

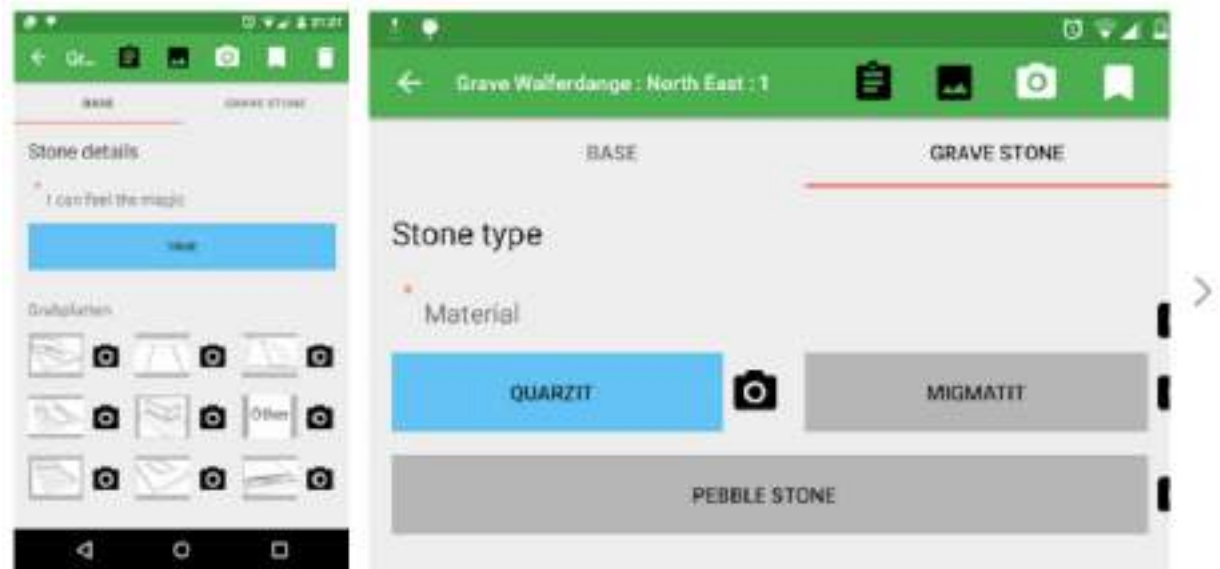
National cemetery legislation in comparison

Local and national archives: rules & regulations; conflicts & resolutions

Architectural plans, built and unbuilt environment (side-focus on German and US military cemeteries)

Experimental eyetracking and interviewees commenting on their viewing experience

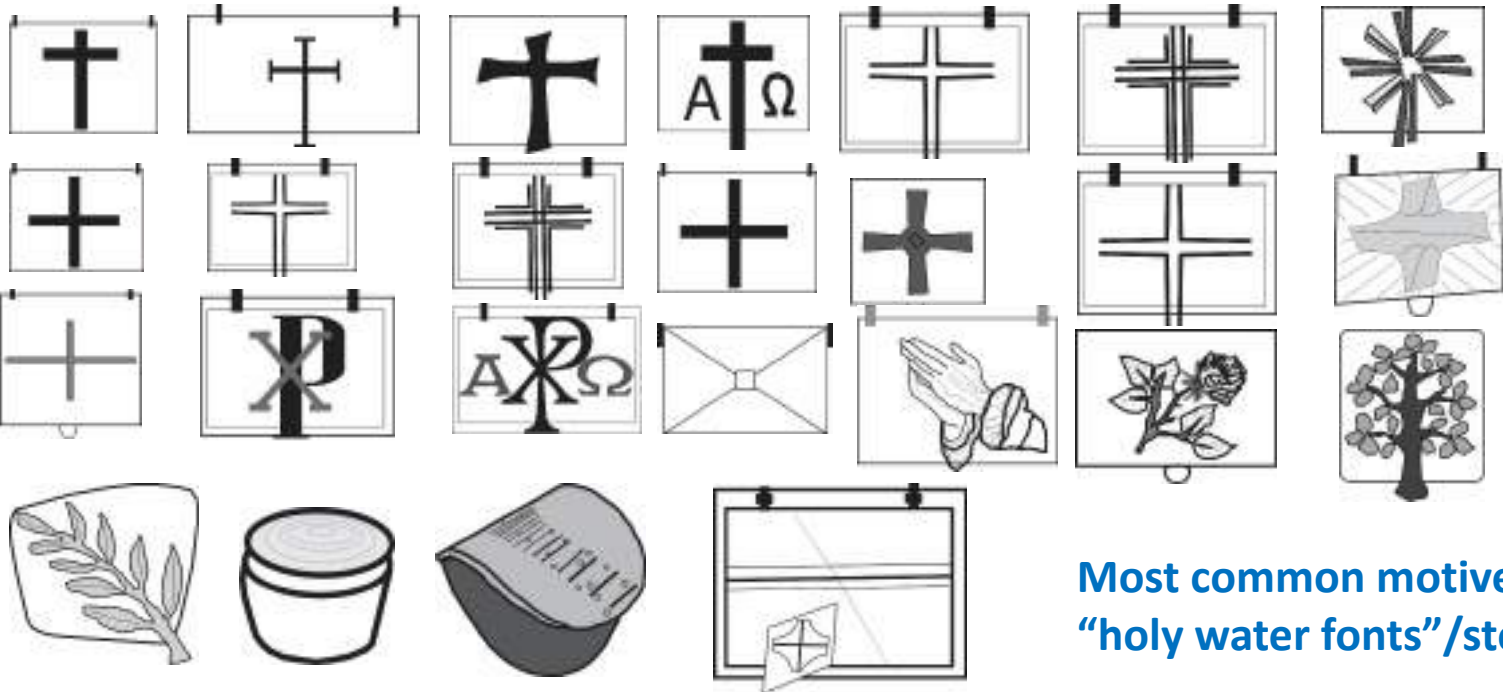
# Cemetery Survey Tool



Downloadable at <https://transmortality.uni.lu/Survey-Tool>  
Free application for android smartphones at Google Play



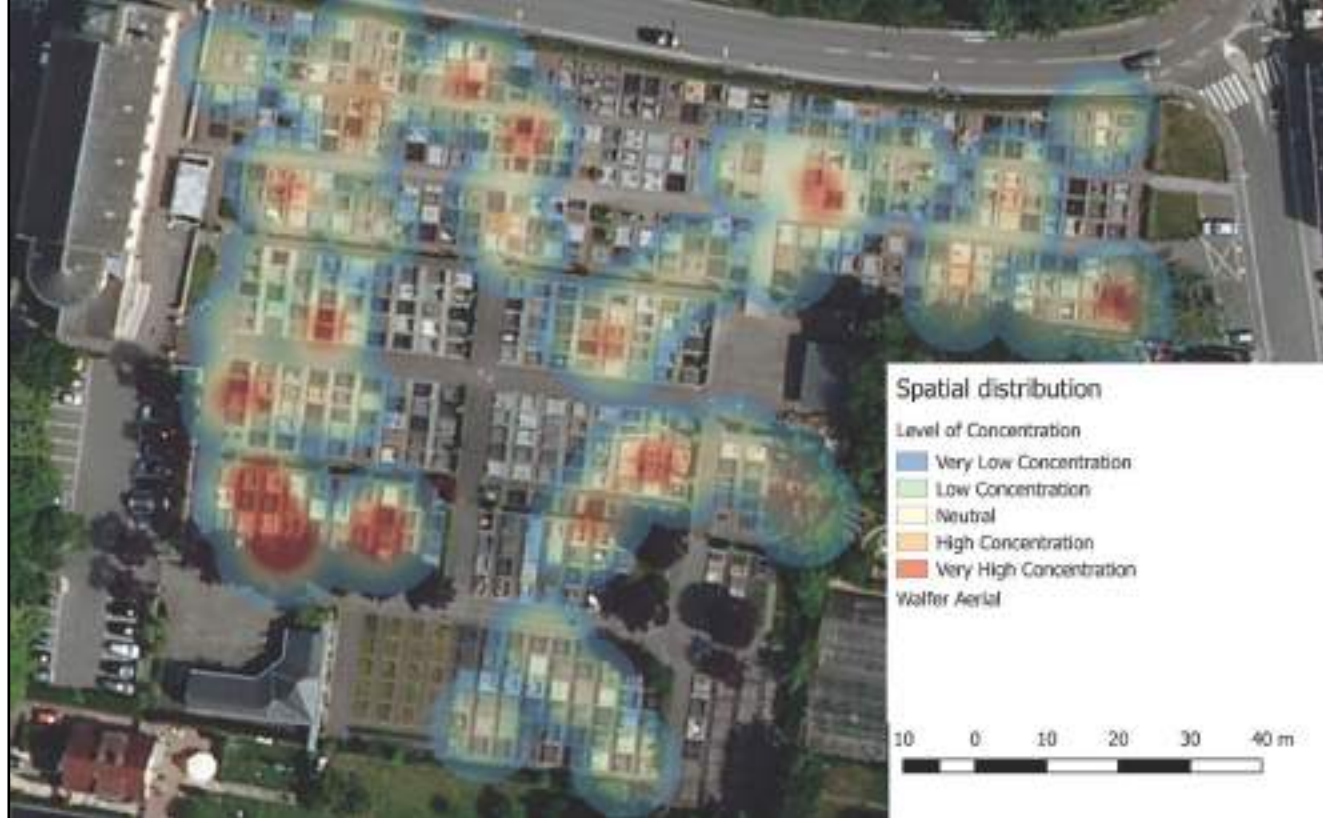
The “production of space”  
by local producers (stone masons and artisanal foundries)



Most common motives of  
“holy water fonts”/stoups

# Detect clusters and neighbouring effects





## Output:

- A. Graas, A methodological example to detect and analyse patterns of spatial association in a micro-scale environment. Master thesis (2018).
- C. K. Streb, PhD thesis (2015-2019)
- C. K. Streb, T. Kolnberger and S. Kmec, The material culture of burial and its microgeography: A Luxembourg cemetery as a methodological example of an object-centred approach to quantitative material culture studies, in: *Journal of Material Culture* (accepted).

# Historical analysis

## International conventions

## National laws & regulations

Funeral regulations of  
the Catholic Church

23 prairial an XII (12 juin **1804**) – Décret imperial sur les sépultures

4 thermidor an XIII (23 juillet **1805**) – Décret relative  
aux autorisations des officiers de l'état civil sur les inhumations

20 août **1814**. Arr. du Gouverneur general  
concernant la police des inhumations

Ban on cremation **1886**

Arr. gd. 14 février **1913** réglant le transport des cadavres

L. 17 novembre **1958** concernant l'autopsie, le moulage,  
ainsi que l'utilisation de cadavres humains dans un intérêt  
scientifique ou thérapeutique

1er août **1972** – Loi portant réglementation de l'inhumation et  
de l'incinération des dépouilles mortelles

Second Vatican Council  
**1962-65**

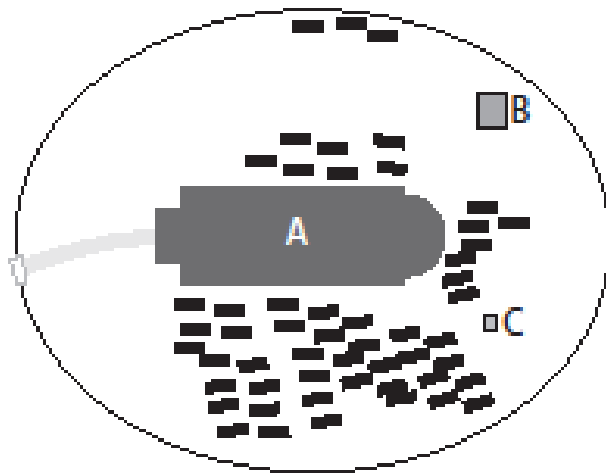
18 octobre **1972** – Règlement gd. relative à la creation et au fonctionnement  
d'un four crématoire

Accord sur le transfert des  
corps des personnes  
décédées, signé à  
Strasbourg, le 26 octobre  
**1973**

8 juillet **1976** – Arr. gd. autorisant un syndicat de communes ayant pour objet  
la construction, l'entretien et l'exploitation d'un crématoire sur base inter-  
communal (S.I.C.E.C.)

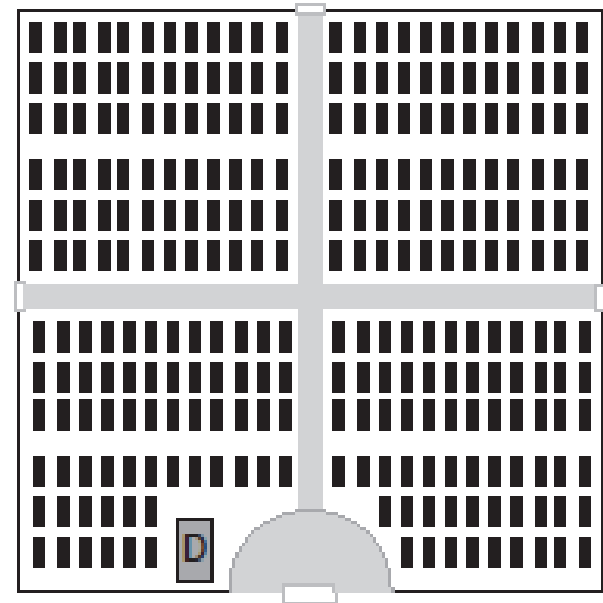
21 juin **1978** – Règlement gd. relative à la dispersion des cendres

Churchyard



- A Parish Church
- B Ossuary
- C High Cross
- D Morgue

Cemetery



**Output:**

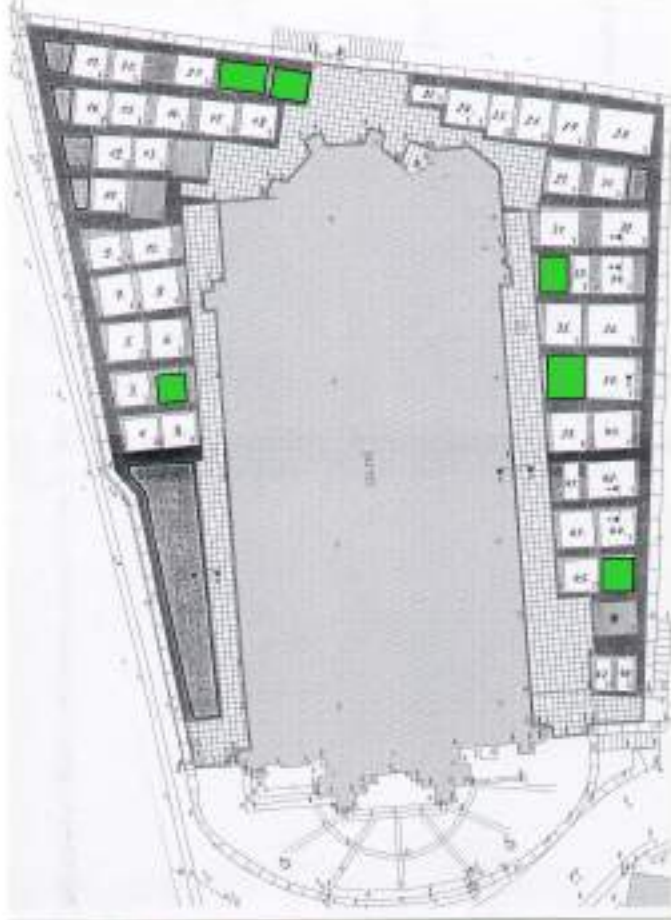
- T. Kolnberger, Cemeteries and urban form: a historico-geographical approach, in: *Journal of Urban Morphology* 22/2 (2018), p. 119-139.



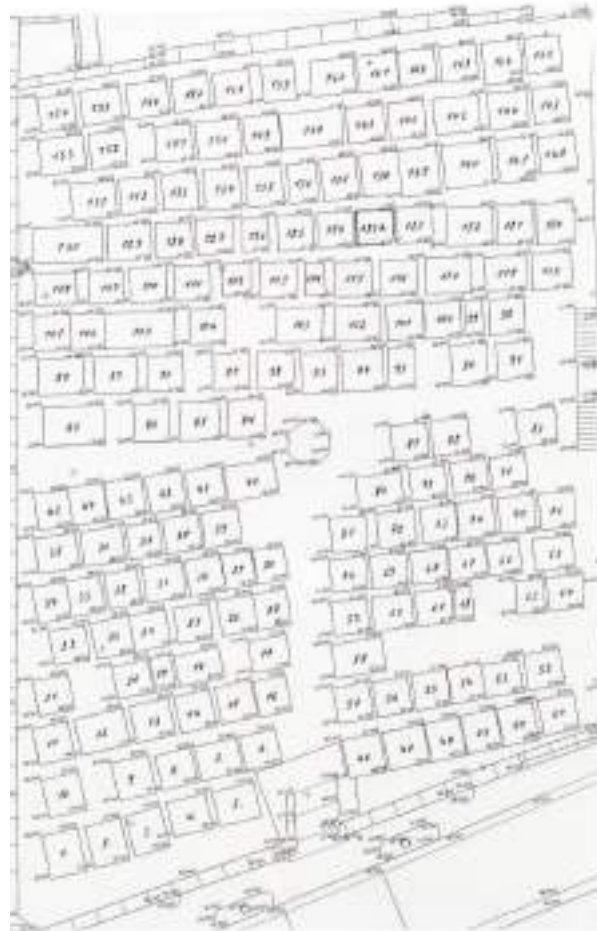
Example: Cemetery extensions over time in Steinsel (L)



Cimetière de Steinsel  
Champ 1

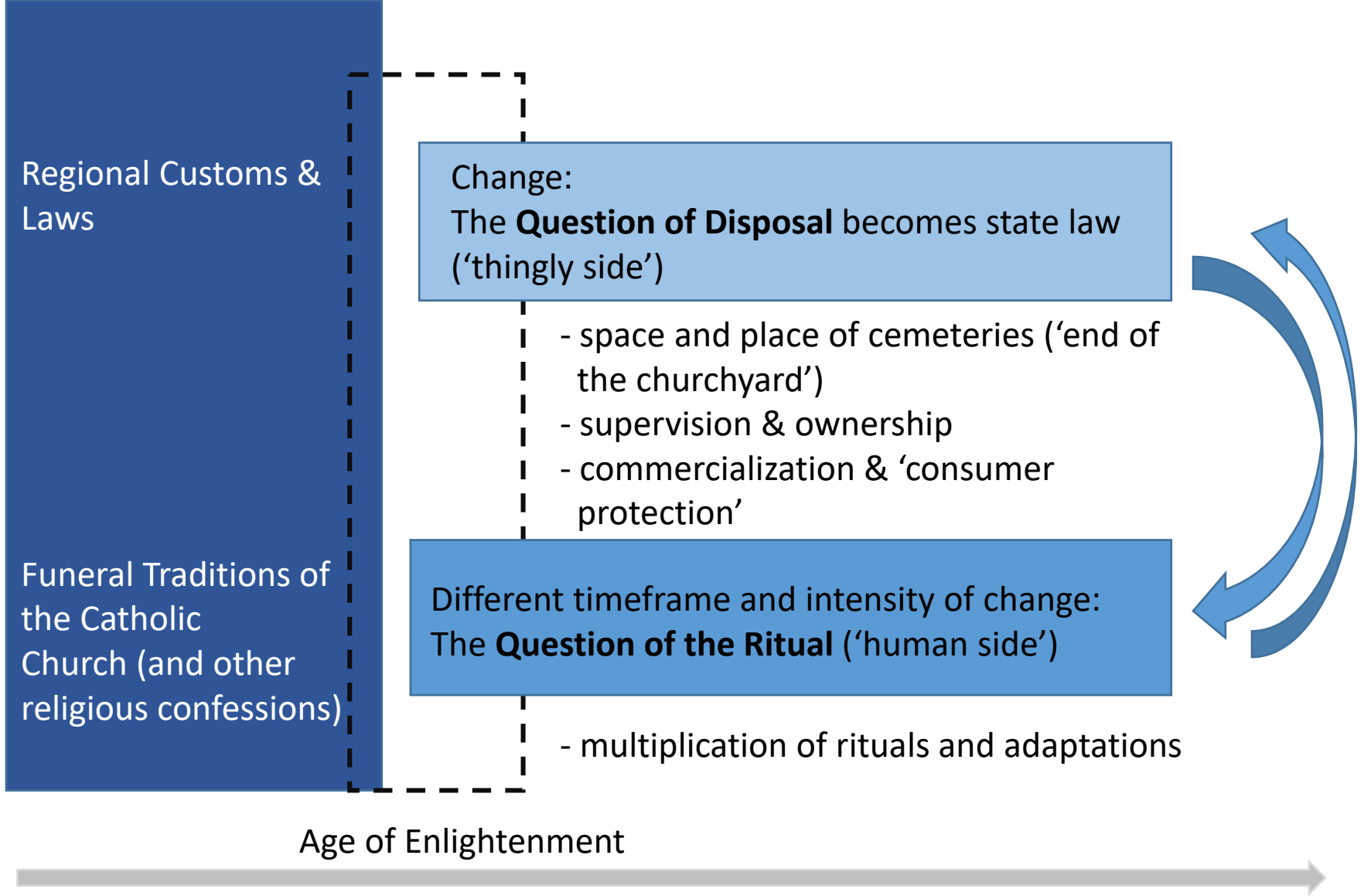


Cimetière de Steinsel  
Champ 2



Cimetière de Steinsel  
Champ 3





**Output:**

T. Kolnberger, Zwischen Mensch und Ding, in: H. P. Hahn / F. Neumann (eds.), *Dinge als Herausforderung: Kontexte, Umgangsweisen und Umwertungen von Objekten*. Bielefeld: transcript verlag, 2018, p. 327-348.

# “Kulturkampf” over dead bodies?

Example: Confessional conflict in Lamadelaine (L), 1880s.

ANLux (Archives Nationales de Luxembourg) H7-2B



Section separated by a quickset hedge



Grave of the Protestant



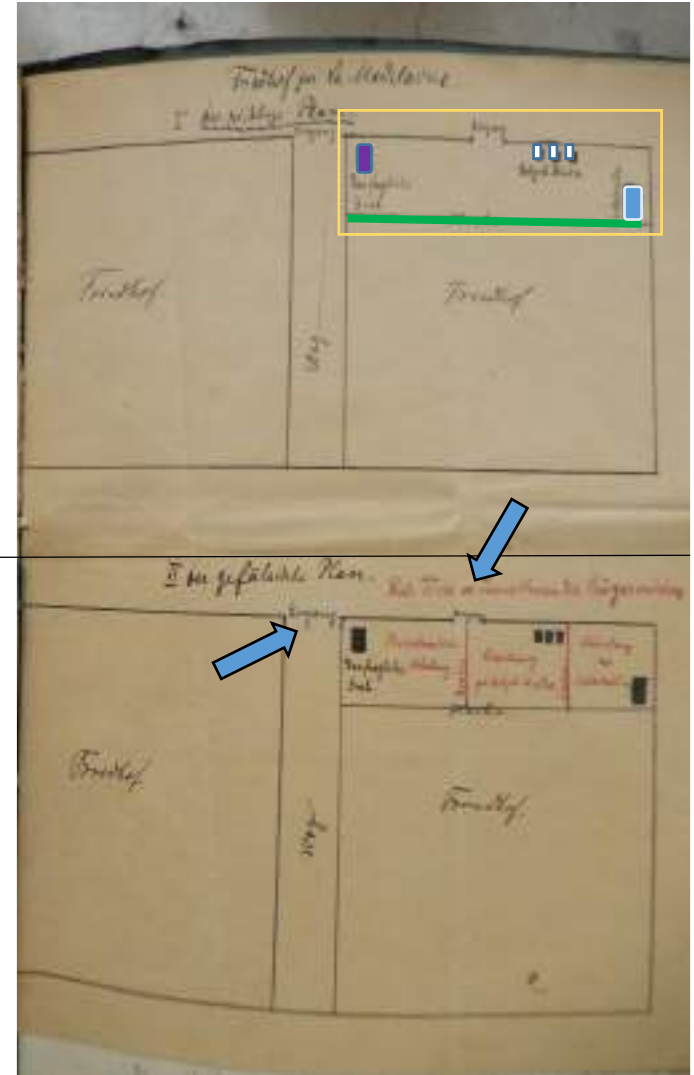
Graves of unbaptized infants



Grave of a suicidal

## Output:

- T. Kolnberger, Funerary Culture and Modernisation in the State of Luxembourg (1800-2000)”, *Revue Belge de Philologie et d’Histoire / Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis*, 95/4 (2017), p. 213-238.
- W. Schmid, Friedhofskonflikte im Kulturkampf, in: *Der Prümer Landbote* 38/1 (2019), p. 4-17.
- A. Cheng, “Anything but religious”. The evolution of civil funeral in Luxembourg. In: *Hémecht. Revue d’histoire luxembourgeoise* (submitted)



## Military cemeteries



German military cemetery in Clausen



American military cemetery in Hamm

### Output:

- T. Kolnberger, Tote Soldaten und ihre Gräber: Kriegs- und Militärfriedhöfe des Ersten Weltkrieges in Luxemburg 1914-1918, in: *Éischte Weltkrich. Remembering the Great War in Luxembourg* (2018) [Virtual exhibition] URL: <http://ww1.lu/resources>

+ 2 contributions in BOOK (by T. Kolnberger and A. Clayden)

## The (Re)Introduction of Cremation – the single most influential innovation

“Im ward – gemäß seinem ausdrücklichen Willen – als Mitglied des Hollericher Feuerbestattungs=Vereins – das traurige Privileg, der erste Luxemburger zu sein, dessen Leichnam im Mainzer Crematorium verbrannt wurde. Seine Asche wurde nach deren Zurücksendung ziviler auf dem Kirchhofe von Hollerich beigesetzt.”

Pfarrer Martin Blum, in: *Ons Hémecht* 21/1 (1916), p. 25

First Cremation of a Luxembourger: 1910  
First Cremation in Luxembourg: 1995



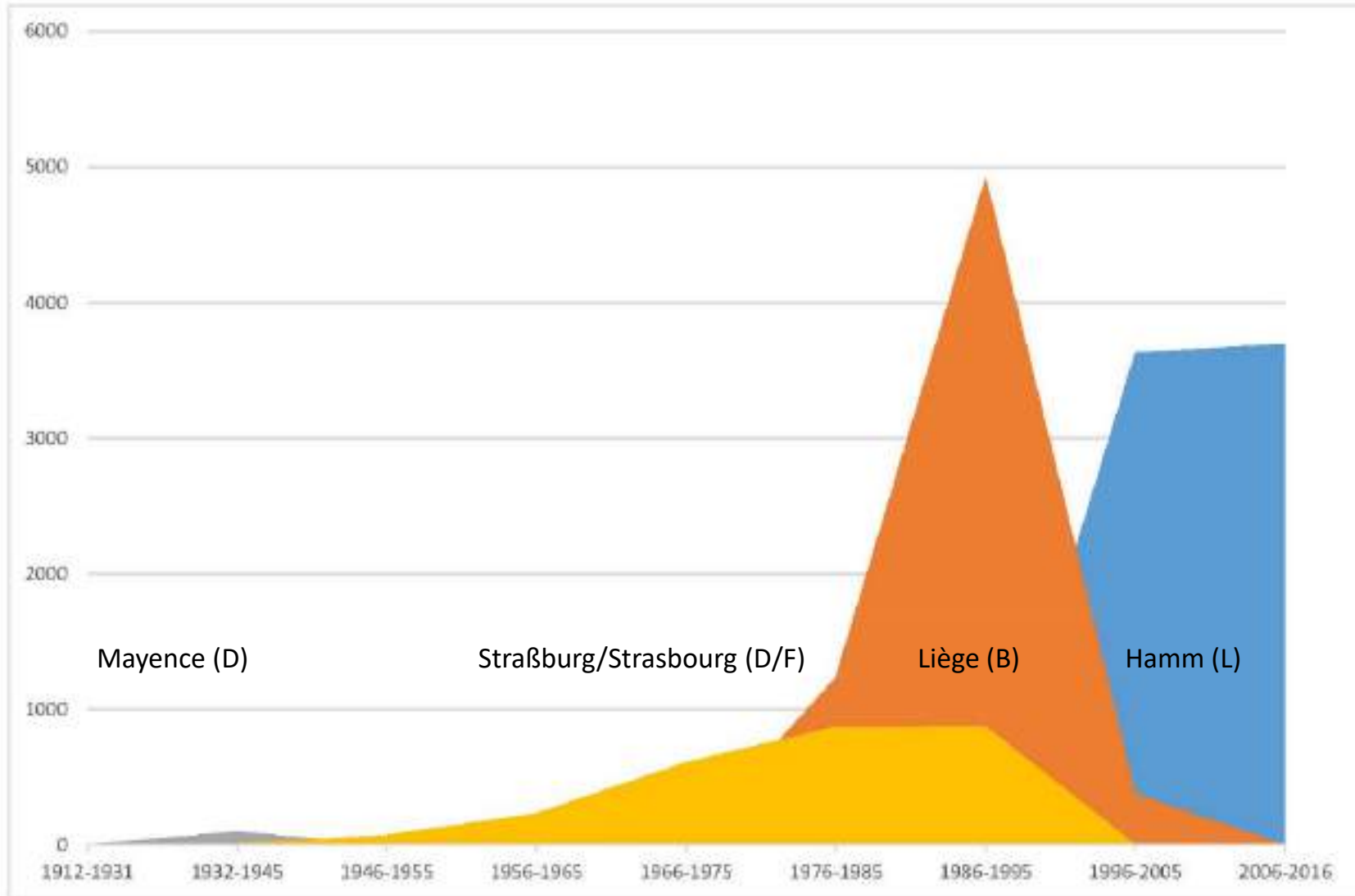
Krematorium Mainz, establ. 1903



Krematorium Luxemburg-Hamm, opened in 1995

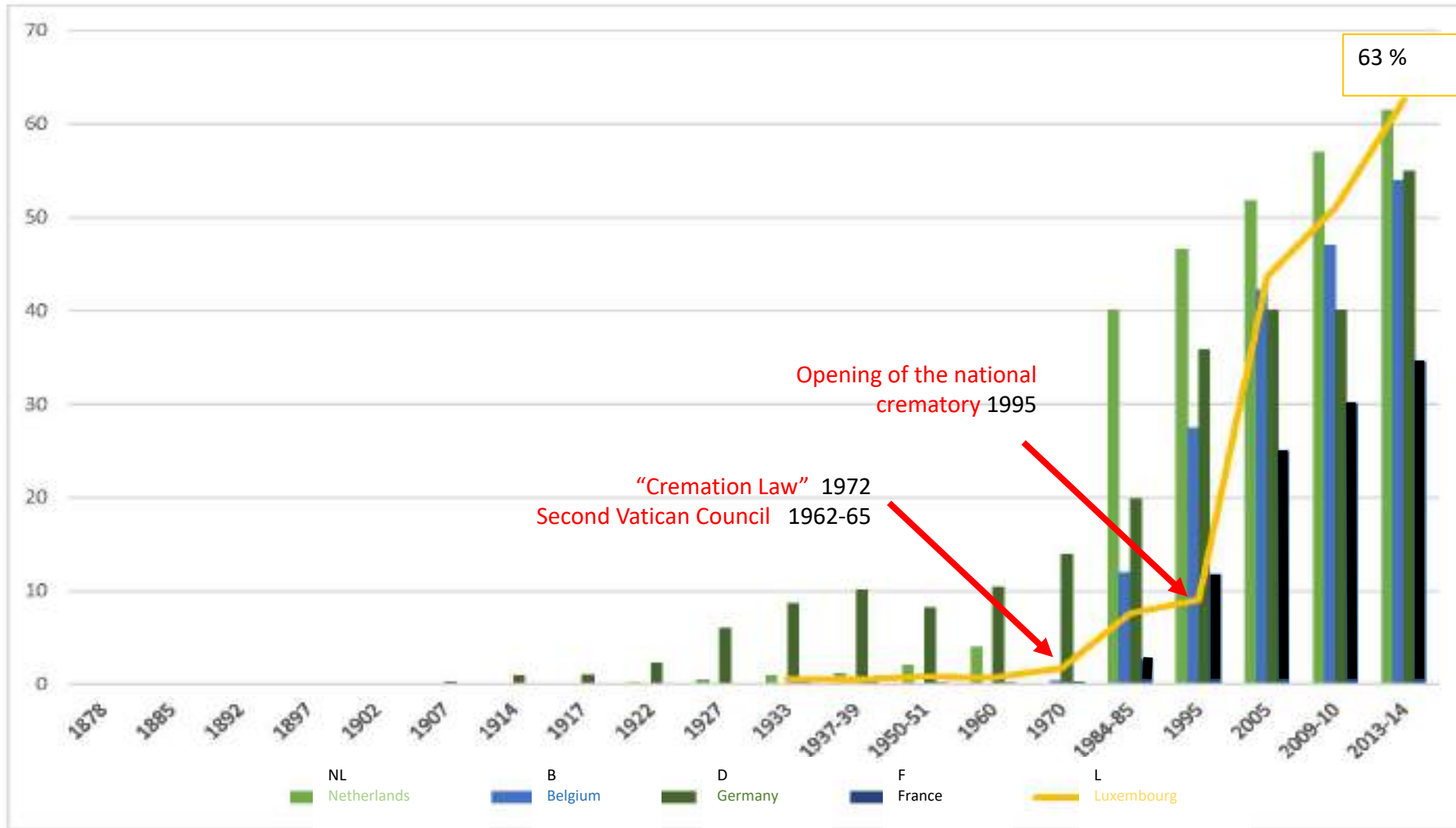


# Post-mortem mobility



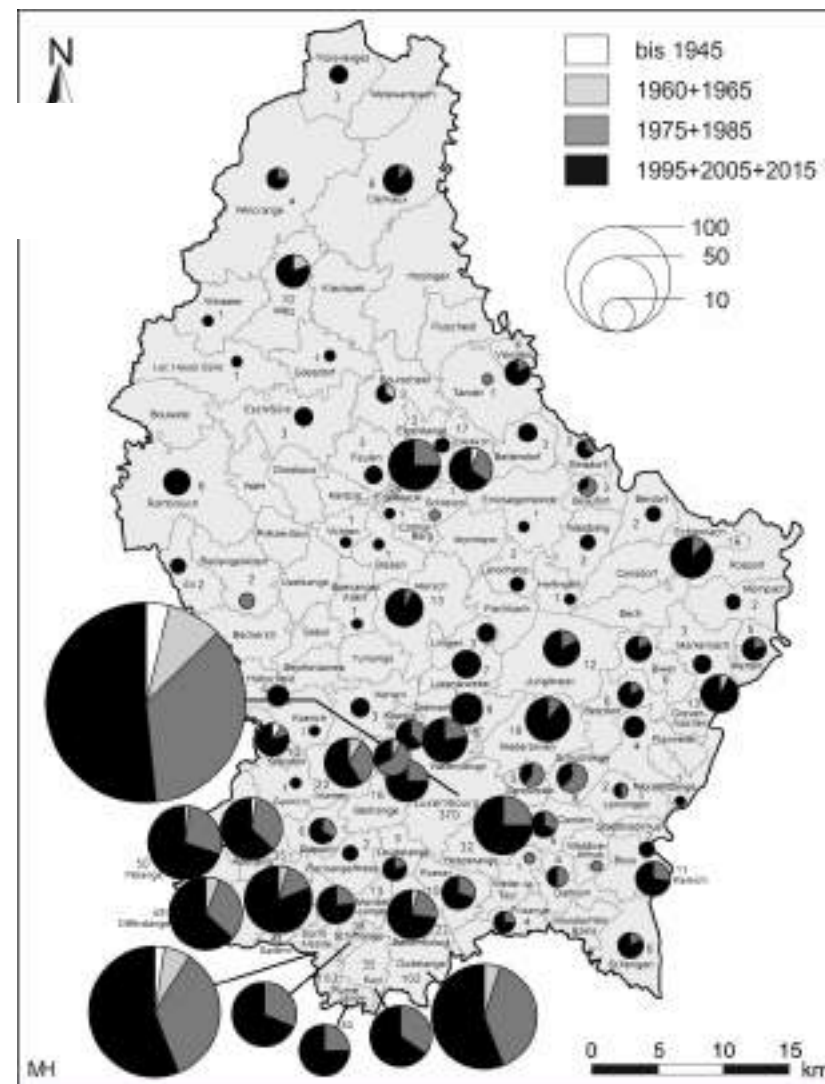
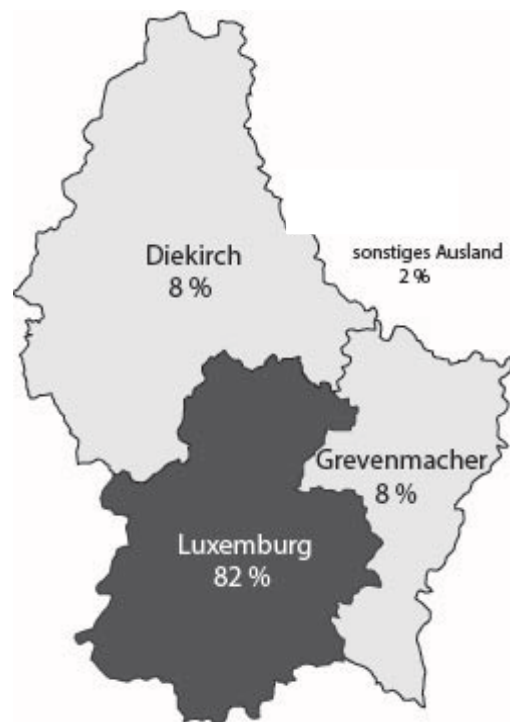


# Cremation: Percentage proportion/burials in selected countries



## Spatial/regional distribution of cremation

N to S: 100 km – 1h20min/car drive

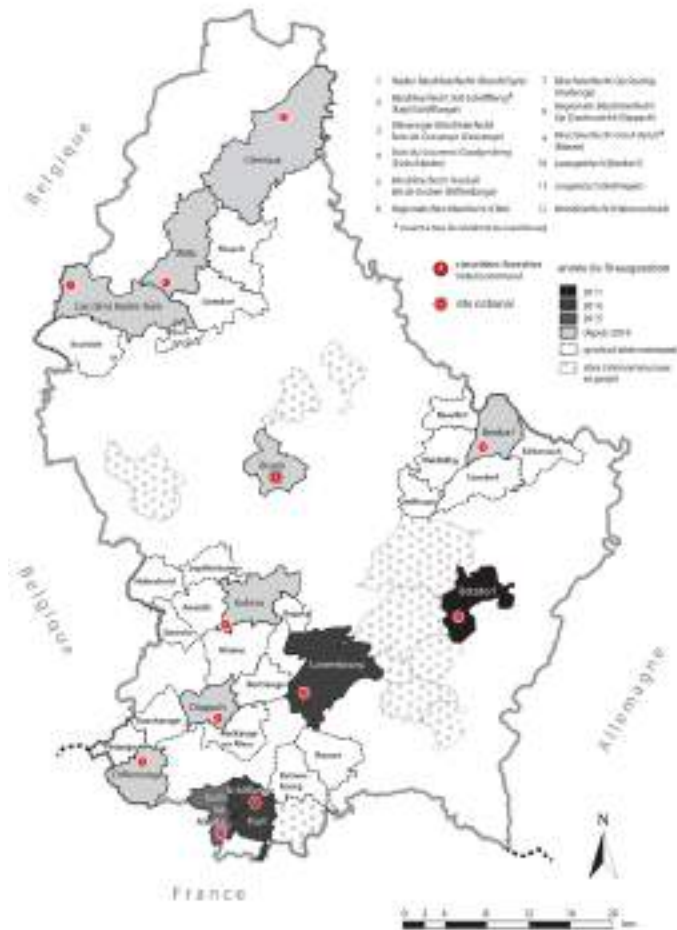


### Output:

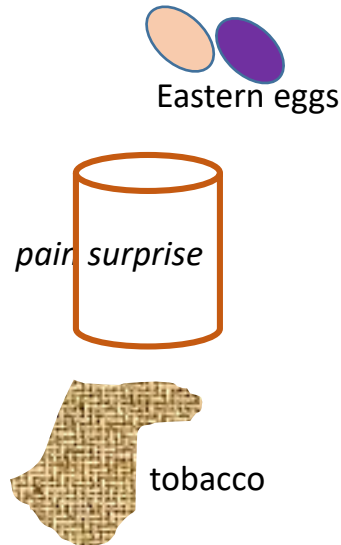
- T. Kolnberger, Thomas Kolnberger, Von Flamma zum Flamarium. Zur Geschichte der Feuerbestattung im Großherzogtum Luxemburg, 1900-2015, in: *Hémecht. Revue d'Histoire luxembourgeoise* 69/2 (2017), p. 205-232 + 2 contributions in BOOK (by T. Kolnberger and S. Heinz)

# Interviews and site analysis

## New trend: Woodland cemeteries (*Bäschkierfechter*)



Example: Roodt-sur-Syre (April 2017)



Roodt-sur-Syre (April 2017)

## Output:

- S. Kmec and T. Kolnberger, „Dann eben in die Natur damit“ – Der neue Trend der Waldbestattung in Luxemburg: Geschichte, Beweggründe und ökologische Auswirkungen, in: Kulturökologie und ökologische Kulturen in der Großregion, ed. by Sébastien Thiltges, Christiane Solte-Gresser (Studien zu Literatur, Kultur und Umwelt). Bern: Peter Lang, forthcoming.

+ 1 contribution in BOOK (by S. Kmec)

+ on gravestones of Portuguese, Capverdians, Italians and Russians in Luxembourg: 5 contributions in BOOK (by A. Schiltz, E. Boesen, A. Reuter and I. Ganschow)

+ on Jewish and Muslim funeral practices and gravestones: 3 contributions in BOOK (by C. Marx / F. Moyse, P. Pierret and E. Pirenne)



# Eye-tracking and stimulated recall



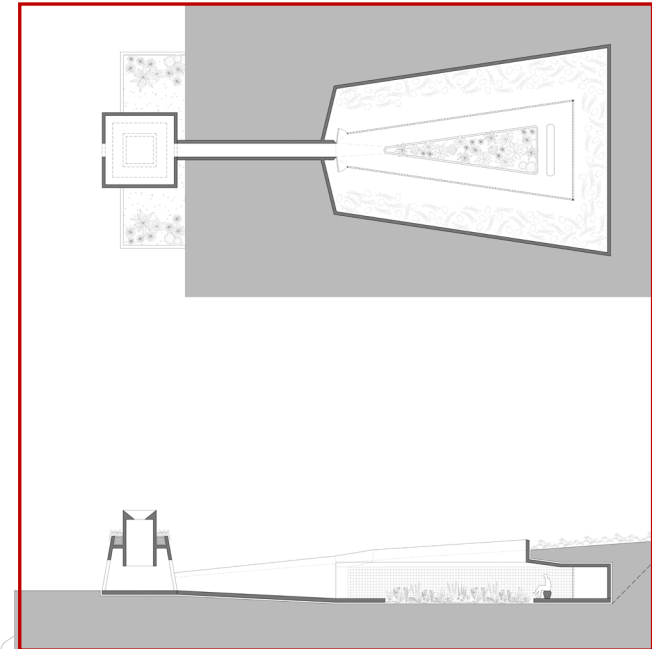
## Output:

- D. Schmitt / V. Blondeau / S. Kmec / T. Kolnberger / C. K. Streb: Cimetière communal de Walferdange au Luxembourg. Les défunts sous le regard des vivants, vivre l'hétérotopie du cimetière, in: *Des lieux pour penser: musées, bibliothèques, théâtres. Matériaux pour une discussion*, ed. by J. Botte et al. Paris: ICOM-ICOFOM, 2018, p. 264-268.

# Architecture and landscaping

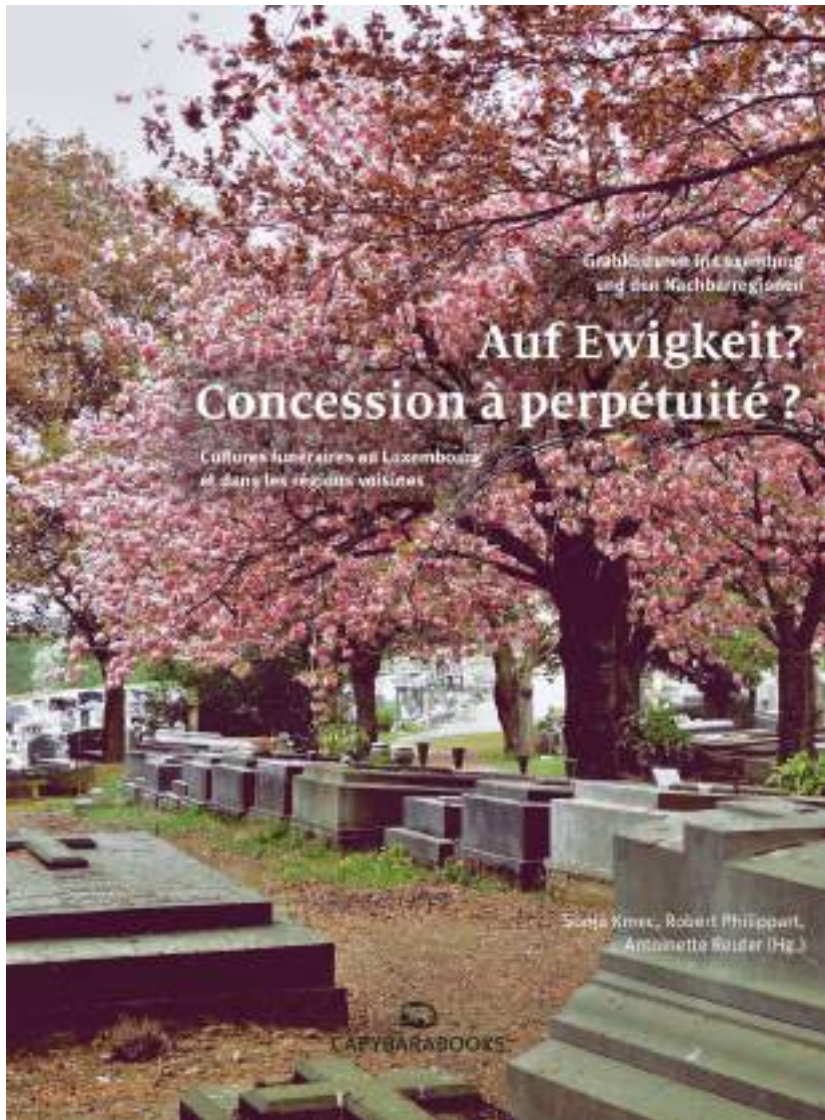
Consulting for a sustainable cemetery, with ossuary and non/transconfessional farewell hall with morgue and ritual ablution infrastructure

© Florian Hertweck, studio hertweck – architecture + urban design, Differdingen (L)



studio hertweck ARCHITECTURE URBAN DESIGN	
Projet Prof. Florian Hertweck, architecte Maribel Casas, architecte	
Noms de clients Commune de Steinsel	
Noms de l'ouvrage Extension du cimetière de Steinsel contribution d'un ossuaire et d'un columbarium	
Adresse Rue du cimetière 7313 Heisdorf	
Titre Plan général	
Date 6 octobre 2018	
échelle 1:250	dessiné ESQ
révisé 18STE	





## Forthcoming:

S. Kmec / A. Reuter / R. Philippart (eds.), *Ewige Ruhe? Grabkulturen in Luxemburg und den Nachbarregionen / Concession à perpétuité? Cultures funéraires au Luxembourg et dans les régions voisines*. Luxembourg: Capybara Books, oct. 2019 (700 p.; 50 contributions)

*Mortality* 24 (2019) (issue on materiality and spatiality of death, burial and commemoration, ed. by C.K. Streb and T. Kolnberger; 7 contributions)

C. K. Streb, *Funerary Practices in Germany*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing, forthcoming (2020)

T. Kolnberger, *Funerary Practices in Luxembourg*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing, forthcoming (2020)