

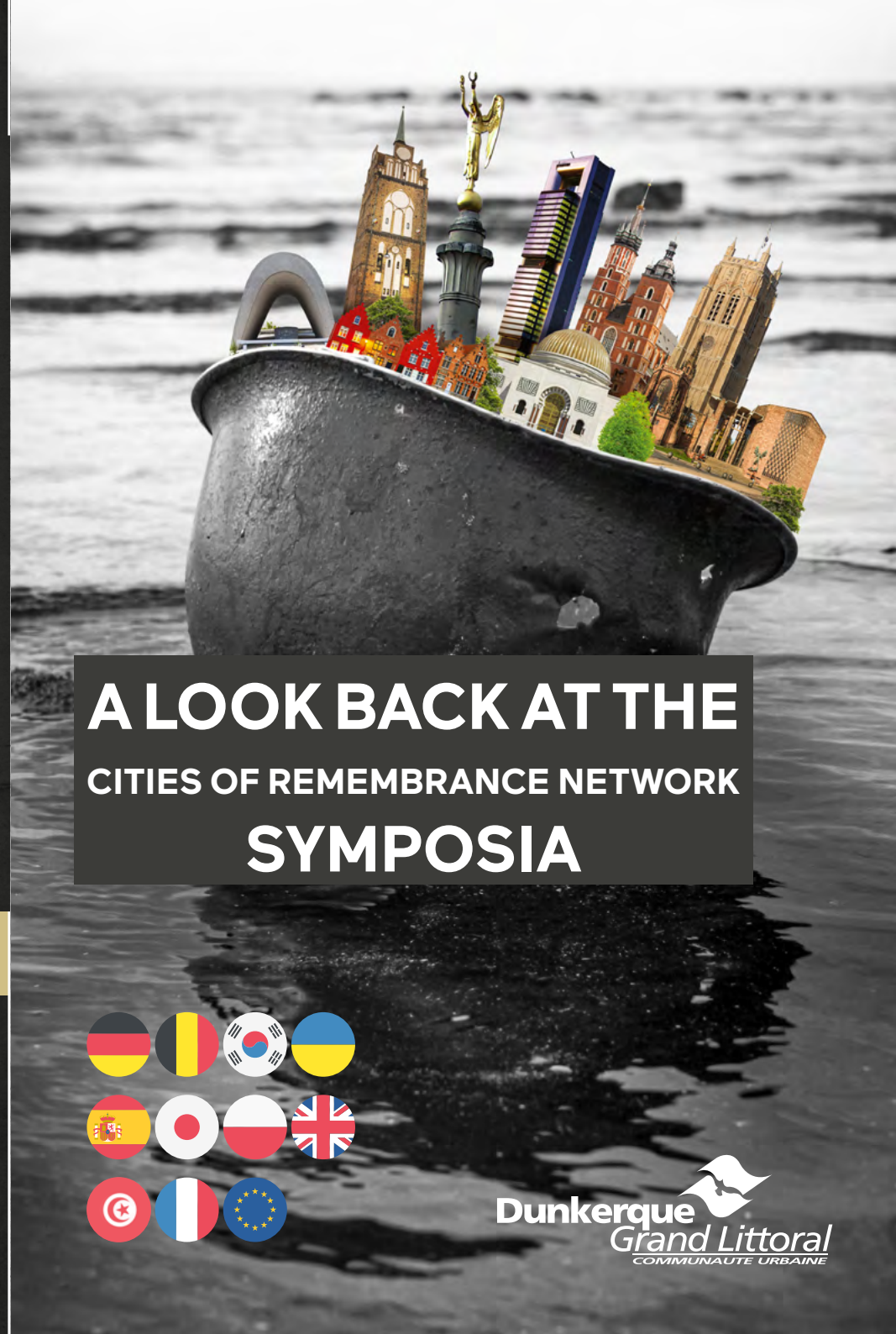
THE CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE NETWORK

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A LOOK BACK AT THE
CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE NETWORK
SYMPOSIA



Dunkerque
Grand Littoral
COMMUNAUTE URBAINE





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MAP OF REMEMBRANCE CITIES

Bizerte **TUNISIA**

Bucha **UKRAINE**
associate city

Caen **FRANCE**

Coventry **UNITED KINGDOM**

Dunkirk **FRANCE**
2016 and 2019 symposia

Gdansk **POLAND**

Guernica **SPAIN**

Hiroshima **JAPAN**
city of the Mayors for Peace network

Hwaseong **SOUTH KOREA**

Krefeld **GERMANY**

Le Havre **FRANCE**

Oradour-sur-Glane **FRANCE**
2024 symposium

Ouistreham **FRANCE**

Rostock **GERMANY**
2018 symposium

Saint-Nazaire **FRANCE**

Saint Petersburg **RUSSIA**

Szczecin **POLAND**

Volgograd **RUSSIA**
2017 symposium

Ypres **BELGIUM**

**before the Russian-Ukrainian conflict of February 2022*





GENERAL
PRESENTATION 2016|2019

A LOOK BACK AT FOUR EDITIONS OF THE "CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE NETWORK SYMPOSIUM"

The Cities of Remembrance have nurtured a deep and loyal dialogue within the network, mainly around initiatives driven by and for young people, through four symposia since 2016.

Organised upon the initiative of the international Cities of Remembrance network, officially created in 2016 in Dunkirk, the symposia bring together a dozen French, European and international cities who share a past heavily marked by the global conflicts of the 20th century: Saint Petersburg, Volgograd (Russia), Dunkirk, Oradour-sur-Glane, Caen, Ouistreham, Le Havre and Saint-Nazaire (France), Ypres (Belgium), Guernica (Spain), Rostock (Germany), Bizerte (Tunisia), Coventry (United Kingdom), Gdansk, Szczecin (Poland), Hwaseong (South Korea) and Hiroshima (Japan).

Based on their unique history, these cities have been reconstructed in a spirit of solidarity, peace, resilience, innovation and capacity for action, which we find reflected in the topics addressed during these exceptional events and meetings:

- Development, reconstruction and urban-planning
- Culture, heritage, remembrance tourism and territorial attractiveness
- The resurgence of nationalist feeling
- The diplomacy of cities in the contemporary world: experiences and perspectives of international cooperation
- Remembrance and the lessons of the Second World War through the eyes of young people
- Art and Remembrance
- Young people in search of Europe

2017

A LOOK BACK AT THE FIRST CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE SYMPOSIUM

27 MAY 2016
IN DUNKIRK



On 27 May 2016, Patrice Vergriete, Mayor of Dunkirk and president of the Greater Dunkirk Council, welcomed the first European and international Cities of Remembrance symposium at the Kursaal. This brought to a close a month packed full of exhibitions, workshops, conferences and visits to remembrance sites, mobilising the entire Dunkirk territory.

What made this symposium so unique was that it brought together cities who had all been partially or totally destroyed during the two great world wars of 1914–1918 and 1939–1945. In particular, representatives from the cities of

Ypres (Belgium), Rostock (Germany), Gdansk (Poland), Guernica (Spain), Saint Petersburg (Russia), Volgograd (Russia), Bizerte (Tunisia), Caen (France), Oradour-sur-Glane (France), Hiroshima (Japan) and, of course, Dunkirk, were all present.

The aim was to commit the network to reflection and debate based on the recognition of the experiences and specificities of these cities, so heavily affected by the two last global conflicts.

Three round tables were organised:

- Development, reconstruction and urban-planning,
- Culture, heritage, remembrance tourism and territorial attractiveness,
- The resurgence of nationalist feeling.

ROUND TABLE NO 1: DEVELOPMENT, RECONSTRUCTION AND URBAN-PLANNING

Civil populations remained under the rubble long after the armistices were signed. These victims, poorly housed or homeless, therefore turned to their respective states to improve their living conditions in places requiring total reconstruction. The advent of the concept of total war in 39–45, or the pursuit of victory at any price and by any means, placed urban spaces at the heart of the warring parties' strategic objectives. Following these conflicts, reconstruction represented a paradoxical moment in the history of our cities: while the inhabitants legitimately asked that the memory of their lost city be preserved, urban-planners saw the opportunity to carry out large-scale transformations that an ordinary situation would never allow.

PARTICIPANTS:

- **Makarov Serguey:** president of the Commission for the Protection of Historic Monuments, Saint Petersburg.
- **Pouille Emmanuel:** urban-planner
- **Sadry Benoît:** municipal councillor – Oradour-sur-Glane

In light of the protean history of European and global reconstruction, and as the reconstructed cities forget some of the negative representations that have long tarnished their reputations, these actions, as well as the following debates, have allowed us to better understand the urban forms of reconstructed cities, as well as the contemporary public policies implemented which have given rise to different development approaches and practices from one country to another.

ROUND TABLE NO 2: CULTURE, HERITAGE, REMEMBRANCE TOURISM AND TERRITORIAL ATTRACTIVENESS

The local areas surrounding Cities of Remembrance are endowed with unusual cultural heritage, marking their singularity in terms of attractiveness and tourism.

This heritage, a "living" witness of history, represents an essential asset that should be taken advantage of in order to reinforce the attractiveness of the territories in question and identify tourist issues. Though the active promotion of local cultural heritage should not be limited to its architectural components and sites of remembrance, it is nonetheless vital with regard to the potential and economic benefits created.

The destroyed cities have seen highly disparate fates in their respective reconstructions. How have these impacted the revitalisation of the local area's production base and attractiveness?

Social and societal aspects also represent a key issue for the cities in question: how can awareness be raised among local inhabitants of the heritage left behind by the war? Public actors play a major role in promoting citizens' positive reappropriation of their own history. How can we use remembrance to (re)create a link between a territory and its inhabitants, making constructive use of the past? Can this be a tool for building identity?

PARTICIPANTS:

- **Shimma Miho:** peace ambassador – Hiroshima
- **Berger Christian:** Hauts-de-France Regional Tourism Committee

This round table addressed questions linked to our remembrance, used as a dynamic process that should allow us to look to the future and build a virtuous circle within which cultural heritage, tourist promotion, territorial attractiveness and the promotion of a culture of peace are interdependent.

**ROUND TABLE NO 3:
THE RESURGENCE OF NATIONALIST
FEELING**

In Europe, nationalist movements and far-right parties have seen a rise in power, the likes of which have not been seen since the end of the Second World War. Over 70 years ago, nationalism, racism and anti-Semitism set the European continent on fire. After a half-century building a democratic and pacific Europe, over the last decade we have seen the development of an opposite movement.

How can states stem the rise of nationalism and Euroscepticism within our societies? Part of the response lies in our ability to resolve the so-called "identity" and socio-economic crises affecting our populations.

How can we promote the values of openness and diversity today? How do we avoid populist movements exploiting a fear of foreigners to gain votes?

Regarding their electoral victories in several countries across Europe, it seems that the entire continent is drifting apart, though regional particularities and specific heritages remain.

How do these movements seduce populations, and young people in particular? What are the stakes for our citizens and where can this lead us?

PARTICIPANTS:

- **Andrey Kosolapov:** mayor of Volgograd (Russia)
- **Roland Methling:** mayor of Rostock (Germany)
- **Alexandre Dessingué:** writer, teacher and expert researcher on the topic (France)
- **Michel Cibot:** general minister of the AFCDPESP - Mayors for Peace network (France)

Within a context marked by the rise of far-right populist political parties across Europe, this round table demonstrated the central role of the European Union in the reconstruction and preservation of the continent's collective memory. By learning from the past errors of nationalist and populist movements, and drawing lessons from the many conflicts that have shaken

Europe over the years, the European Union positions itself as a key actor in the pursuit of sustainable solutions aiming to guarantee stability, harmony and reconciliation across the old continent. By promoting a shared vision of history and encouraging intercultural dialogue, Europe actively contributes to forging a unified European identity, based on the values of peace, respect for human rights and diversity. By supporting educational, cultural and commemorative initiatives, it works to preserve collective memory in order to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past, building a better future for European citizens.

Today, it seems normal and even taken for granted that European citizens have been living in peace for seventy years, but do they know that this is in no case the norm? It is worth reminding ourselves that, until the last world war, a war broke out every two or three generations on the European continent.

2017

A LOOK BACK AT THE SECOND CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE SYMPOSIUM

10 MAY 2017
IN VOLGOGRAD*

*formerly Stalingrad

The second European and international Cities of Remembrance symposium took place on 10 May 2017 in the Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad) management institution in Russia. The delegations from Dunkirk (France), Oradour-sur-Glane (France), Rostock (Germany), Hiroshima (Japan), Guernica (Spain) and Cologne (Germany), as well as the representatives of the AFCDP (association of Mayors for Peace) and the International Association of Peace-Messenger Cities were welcomed there by the mayor of Volgograd, Andrey Kosolapov.

To start things off, the participants were invited to explore the "**Battle of Stalingrad**" panorama museum, retracing what was without a doubt the deadliest battle of the Second World War, with over 800,000 Soviet deaths (soldiers and civilians) and 400,000 German deaths, between 17 July 1942 and 2 February 1943. This battle also symbolises one of the first major setbacks faced by the Nazi army and a first step towards their final defeat.

Four round tables were organised:

- The diplomacy of cities in the contemporary world,
- Remembrance and youth,
- Memorial heritage and territorial attractiveness,
- The place of urban-planning and architecture in reconstruction.

**ROUND TABLE NO 1:
THE DIPLOMACY OF CITIES
IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**

The first round table, dedicated to the diplomacy of cities in the contemporary world and the experiences and perspectives of international cooperation was hosted by Andrey Kosolapov, mayor of Volgograd; Yury Starovatykh, president of the Volgograd Foundation for Peace; Roland Methling, mayor of Rostock; Dusan Stojanovic, deputy secretary general of the International Association of Peace-Messenger Cities; and Michel Cibot, French research director for the Mayors for Peace network.

This allowed them to discuss the heritage of the Second World War in contemporary international relations and to highlight the role of the diplomacy of peoples in contemporary conflict reduction. They also discussed the diplomacy of cities (and the evolution of their prerogatives over the years) and the role of local governments in the creation of conditions for the development of the diplomacy of peoples.

ROUND TABLE NO 2: REMEMBRANCE AND YOUTH

The second round table, dedicated to the remembrance and lessons of the Second World War through the eyes of young people, enjoyed the presence of experts Karola Fings, assistant director of the Cologne Centre for History and the Documentation of National Socialism; Victor Hadjiavraams, president of the International Association of Peace-Messenger Cities and Mayor of Morphou (Cyprus); Elena Oleynikova, resident member of the Russian Academy of Humanitarian Sciences; Ilya Morozov, doctor of political sciences in Volgograd; Aleksander Epifanov, doctor of legal sciences in Volgograd; Sergey Sidorov, doctor of historic sciences in Volgograd; Nicolay Bolotov, doctor of historic sciences in Volgograd; and Elena Ogarkova, assistant professor to the Russian language chair at the University of Volgograd.

They discussed questions related to the transformation of European ideologies, social democracy and national socialism. They also highlighted the role of youth as the major victim of the Second World War, immunity against Nazism in Russia, and resistance against Nazism developed in Germany and, more generally, across Europe. The issues of nationalism, Nazism and xenophobia were addressed, based on a desire to better understand these complex

concepts, in order to better identify and combat them.

ROUND TABLE NO 3: MEMORIAL HERITAGE AND TERRITORIAL ATTRACTIVENESS

The third round table, dedicated to culture, heritage, remembrance tourism and territorial attractiveness welcomed experts Patrice Vergriete, mayor of Dunkirk; Miho Shimma, peace ambassador in Hiroshima; Aleksey Novikov, director of the Centre for Patriotic and Promotional Activities in Volgograd; Aleksander Bazhenov, director of the "Straraja Sarepta" historic, ethnographic and architectural museum estate in Volgograd; Irina Kareva, Volgograd municipal councillor; Sergey Sena, architect and member of the Russian Union of Architects; Fiodor Ermolov, curator of the sculptor Petr Malkov's studio-museum; and Olga Malgov, assistant director of the Volgograd Museum of Fine Arts.

Its participants reflected on several significant memorial aspects of the heritage of cities, such as remembrance tourism and the patriotic education of young people. The role of remembrance tourism in the context of international cooperation between cities was also addressed, highlighting its role in the promotion of dialogue and mutual understanding

between nations. Events tourism was discussed as an essential factor in territorial attractiveness, underlining how events can attract visitors and revitalise the local economy. With regard to the impact of tourist infrastructure on cities' development, emphasis was placed on the importance of investment in infrastructure to support the growth of the tourist sector and highlight heritage and remembrance sites.

ROUND TABLE NO 4: THE ROLE OF URBAN-PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE IN RECONSTRUCTION

The fourth round table was dedicated to development, reconstruction and urban-planning. Rich and varied debates were held between Benoît Sadry, municipal councillor in Oradour-sur-Glane; Ignacio Maria Gorrone Echevarrieta, municipal councillor in Guernica; Josef Dvonc, mayor of Nitra (Slovakia); Josef Trandzic, municipal councillor in Nitra; Edvin Petrov, director of the Volgograd urban and architectural department; Aleksey Antiufeev, urban sciences chair at the University of Volgograd; Vladimir Ostroborodov, professor of urban sciences at the University of Volgograd; and Galina Ptichnikova, professor of urban sciences at the University of Volgograd.

The debates highlighted key themes, such as the importance of innovation and traditions in forming the architectural environment of modern cities. The participants discussed the essential role of architectural structures in the construction of territorial identity, underlining the profound importance that they exercise on a community's cultural and historic expression. New conceptual solutions in the organisation of urban space were addressed through the exploration of innovative strategies for effective use of resources, aiming to improve residents' quality of life. The attendees shared their experiences and ideas on the means through which to optimise the layout of neighbourhoods, public spaces and infrastructure to promote harmonious social interaction and respond to the growth of inhabitants' needs. The impact of architectural monuments on the formation of social values was a key question within the debate. The participants debated the ways in which these emblematic elements could contribute to collective pride, community belonging and the transmission of cultural values. Examples of successes and challenges were shared, offering perspectives for the creation of a sustainable architectural heritage.



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2018

A LOOK BACK AT THE THIRD CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE SYMPOSIUM

30 MAY 2018
IN ROSTOCK

The third international Cities of Remembrance symposium took place on 30 May 2018 in Rostock, Germany. This event allowed us to mark the sustainable installation of this network, bringing together the cities and towns of Hiroshima, Ypres, Rostock, Gdansk, Saint Petersburg, Volgograd, Bizerte, Szczecin (Poland), Guernica, Caen, Ouistreham, Oradour-sur-Glane, Dunkirk and Hwaseong (South Korea).

It was opened by Dr Wolfgang Schareck, rector of the University of Rostock; Roland Methling, mayor of Rostock; and Patrice Vergriete, mayor of Dunkirk and president of the Greater Dunkirk Council.

All three reaffirmed their commitment to the network, whose values have been clearly demonstrated. This third edition once again demonstrated that the citizens and representatives of cities with a shared history can discuss, reflect and debate in order to develop projects for peace and remembrance.

After three years of existence and three symposia, the network's hope is to open itself up to young people even further in order to allow them to reappropriate their history and mobilise it for their future. To prepare the future and ensure peace, we must rely on the transmission of knowledge and education of future generations, creating strong links between peoples, working to build more prosperous and fairer societies and, above all, never forgetting where our societies have come from and what

they have suffered over the course of history. Bringing memory to life: this is the international Cities of Remembrance network's commitment for tomorrow. It is in this context and with a desire to include young people that the Dunkirk delegation has also mobilised young people volunteering in the civic service and high-school students, accompanied by their German and history teachers.

This third symposium was focused on the experiences and comparative views of remembrance museums, fundamental spaces for the education of young generations.

Patrice Vergriete spoke at length about the renovation and extension underwent by the *"Dunkirk 1940-Operation Dynamo"* museum between 2017 and 2018, managed by the *"Mémorial du Souvenir"* association. This renovation and the implementation of an immersive application allowing visitors to relive the Battle of Dunkirk and Operation Dynamo form part of a desire to modernise and strengthen the attractiveness of memorial sites, adapting them to new tourist practices.

As part of the remembrance-tourism development policy to which the Greater Dunkirk Council has been committed since 2016, this modernisation was essential for a number of reasons. On the one hand, to create a veritable hub around remembrance and the heritage of the Second World War which could act as a vector for economic and tourist revitalisation. On the other hand, in order to respond to an influx of

tourists – especially British tourists – and the increased interest in this museum following the global release of Christopher Nolan's film *Dunkirk*, dedicated to Operation Dynamo.

With a desire to open itself up even further to young citizens, the symposium ended with a *"discovery café"* on young people as ambassadors of peace and citizenship.



2019

A LOOK BACK AT THE FOURTH CITIES OF REMEMBRANCE SYMPOSIUM

28 MAY 2019
IN DUNKIRK

As part of the events to commemorate the 79th anniversary of Operation Dynamo, the Greater Dunkirk Council organised the fourth international Cities of Remembrance symposium on 28 May 2019.

Saint Petersburg (Russia), Oradour-sur-Glane, Caen, Le Havre and Saint-Nazaire (France), Ypres (Belgium), Rostock (Germany), Bizerte (Tunisa) and Coventry (United Kingdom)

Transmitting the duty of remembrance

Loyal to their ambition to deliver a message of peace to the world and to young generations for three years, the Cities of Remembrance have been able to nurture a deep dialogue between their partner cities, mainly around actions carried out by young people. Young people from Dunkirk enjoyed the opportunity to work with their counterparts in Guernica and Rostock. New exchanges have been planned alongside the symposium, with one of its main themes being *"Young people in search of Europe"*, granting pride of place to young generations in the understanding of remembrance issues.

To support citizens, and particularly young people, in their remembrance efforts the European Cities of Remembrance – Memory prize was launched. Created in partnership with the Maison de l'Europe, it awards initiatives led by inhabitants working for to preserve the heritage and history of Cities of Remembrance network partners. This prize forms part of the network's mission to work for peace and closer ties between European and world citizens, to transmit the duty of remembrance to more young people and to shine a light on the future.

A minute of silence was observed in memory of the mayor of Gdansk, Pawel Adamowicz, assassinated at the start of 2019.

ROUND TABLE NO 1: ART AND REMEMBRANCE

For as long as men have existed, and across the world, there has been war. This war destroys everything in its way – cities, entire swathes of land, countries, but also human, innocent lives, dying in despicable conditions. In all artistic fields, artists – who have experienced or are aware of the horror of war – have conveyed their reactions, feelings and emotions, as well as their vision and message through their works. These works are all the more important as they help to permanently anchor war in our collective memory, in the hope that such horrors are never repeated. The artwork allows the artist to freeze what memory cannot keep intact and, as a result, to participate in the duty of remembrance. In some cases, it also allows them to denounce, criticise and offer an act of commitment.

Regardless of the format adopted by the work (sculpture, painting, drawing, film, music, photography, modern art) in addressing the topic of war, its aim is in part to give voice to the memory of the lost and fight oblivion. Whether the representation of an event staged by an artist or the recreation of a memory, the artwork becomes a subject of appropriation, allowing the populations of our cities and territories to remember, while also allowing the artist to represent and revisit memory across various artistic supports.

In Dunkirk, Le Sablier, created by artist Séverine Hubard and inaugurated in July 2017, represents the waiting time of thousands of soldiers who, during Operation Dynamo, waited on the beaches before re-embarking for England. This hourglass (sablier) also symbolises the possibility of overturning, transforming a defeat into a victory. This is *"The Spirit of Dunkirk"*. How can we make art and remembrance issues of cultural and citizen appropriation in our territories? How

is artistic production experienced in times of war? How can the artist revisit and bring sites of remembrance back to life? This round table sought to shed light on and offer responses to past experiences and future projects.

Moderation: Dunkirk history and archaeology society – Olivier Veermersh, historian Screening of extracts from the Corsaire TV report dedicated to Séverine Hubard, the artist behind the Sablier sculpture.

PARTICIPANTS:

- Linda Bigham, mayor of Coventry (United Kingdom)
- Werner Thomas, assistant director for Culture, Monuments and Museums, Rostock (Germany)
- Michel Tomasek, deputy mayor of Dunkirk, culture officer and vice-president of the PRISME network
- Articles and testimonials from artists Fabien Marques, artist and photographer, and Benjamin Bassimon, artist having produced Japanese prints with the Sacré-Cœur middle school in Saint-Pol-sur-Mer



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**ROUND TABLE NO 2
YOUNG PEOPLE IN SEARCH OF
EUROPE**

The future of our societies, and of our countries, as well as our continent, is inextricably linked to the development of young people. In this period of European elections (26 May), it is the very future of Europe that is at stake and it remains more essential than ever to boldly affirm that such future cannot be constructed without the involvement of young people.

Attachment to the European Union, whose origin is often justified by the need to stop war after the disasters of the first half of the 20th century, does not rely on the same mechanism for younger generations as it does for older generations. Speaking about peace is not enough today, young people's commitment goes further: more and more, they proclaim a European citizenship as well as a feeling of common belonging.

Paradoxically, part of this youth, often representing a bulwark against eurosceptic movements and governments driven by nationalist ideas, demonstrate a growing desire for Europe. Many of them share a wish for a new Europe, based more heavily on the values on which it was founded, such as solidarity, liberty and social justice. Despite major advances and

the creation of tools and initiatives promoting mobility and interculturality, with the Erasmus exchange programme in particular – a great success across the continent for over 30 years – young Europeans today appear to lack direction and are searching for their place in a society that sometimes destines them for great difficulties (job insecurity, unemployment). It is vital that we address the questions of education, employment and democracy, as it is these issues that will shape young people and give them a sense of European citizenship in the long term.

What is the place of young people in our European societies? How can European remembrance influence young peoples' feeling of belonging? How can European young people strengthen our democracies and become ambassadors for the ideas of tolerance and peace?

The European Union, in tandem with member states as well as, and above all, local authorities, plays a fundamental role in young people's integration within European society, while offering them perspectives because, make no mistake about: it is young people who will perpetuate the European project.

Moderation: Christophe Chaillou, director general of the French Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (AFCCRE)

Screening of a clip from a film made by young people at the Dunkirk agricultural school (winning project of the national "Heirs of remembrance" programme organised by the Ministry of the Armed Forces.)

PARTICIPANTS:

- **Lacroix Philippe**, mayor of Oradour-sur-Glane
- **Jegouzo Isabelle**, head of the European Commission's Representation in France
- Round table carried out in interaction with young peoples' testimonies
- With Maurice Baran, a great witness of the Second World War

With the European elections looming in France, this round table hopes to reaffirm that Europe's future can only be ensured with the involvement of young people. The attendees reflected on the role of young people within our European societies, the way in which European remembrance can influence young peoples' feeling of belonging and how European young people can strengthen our democracies and become ambassadors for the ideas of tolerance and peace. This round table offered young people of all backgrounds the chance to give their opinion on the topic.

Since 2016, the cities of the network have nurtured a constant and deep dialogue between themselves. Each year, they take part in the events organised (international symposia, youth exchanges, etc.) with the goal of ensuring that remembrance of the events of the past continues to guide the present and can inspire future generations, leading them to build a shared future. The organisation of the fifth international Cities of Remembrance symposium by Oradour-sur-Glane and the National Association of the families of Oradour Martyrs follows in this strengthened desire to promote remembrance, peace and, above all, to involve young people.





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