



KNOWING. DOING. PASSING IT ON.

German Nationwide Inventory
of Intangible Cultural Heritage

INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Intangible cultural heritage are vital cultural expressions which are born directly by human knowledge and skills. These include:

- oral traditions and expressions;
- performing arts;
- social practices, rituals and festive events; also forms of social self-organisation;
- knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;
- traditional craftsmanship

People play the key role in intangible cultural heritage. This lively form of our cultural heritage is passed on in the form of skills, abilities and knowledge, and it is constantly changing and perpetually re-created when practices and traditions are adapted to varying circumstances and times. It is the concrete practice of expression and its significance for the respective communities, groups and individuals, which counts in intangible cultural heritage.

Germany joined the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) in 2013.

SELECTION PROCESS

The first round of calls for the nationwide inventory of intangible cultural heritage took place from 3 May to 30 November 2013. Communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals who practice a form of cultural expression within the definition of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, were invited to participate in the process by submitting proposals.

128 submissions were received by the 16 federal states until the end of November 2013. A pre-selection was made by mid-April 2014. 83 files were forwarded to an expert committee at the German Commission for UNESCO. The expert committee has conducted a detailed technical evaluation and made selection recommendations. In December 2014, the 27 recommended items were confirmed by consensus by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the states in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media.

In the coming years, the inventory will grow continually.



CHOIR MUSIC IN GERMAN AMATEUR CHOIRS

Amateur choirs form the core of the musical tradition, musical life and the cultivation of music in Germany. People from all classes of society of all groups and of different nationalities find themselves in numerous choral societies with differing musical emphases. As the original form of artistic expression, singing mobilises the vitality of the human being and has the effect of establishing an identity. Firmly connected with the amateur choirs is the cultivation of a wide repertoire of choral music. The origin of the amateur choirs goes back ca. one thousand years and is to be found in a religious environment. In the late 18th and in the 19th Century, the lay choirs then formed the main focal point of the bourgeois cultivation of music.

As the original form of artistic expression, singing mobilises the vitality of the human being and has the effect of establishing an identity.

Through being disentangled from the feudal environment they made an important contribution to the democracy movement in Germany. The lay choirs of today form the basis of music's audiences, are the breeding ground for future generations and stage performances of all kinds. At least 60,000 choirs are currently registered with the Bundesvereinigung Deutscher Chorverbände (Federal German Choirs' Association), which organise more than 300,000 concerts annually for an audience of ca. 60 million listeners. They stand for a diversity in the world of the choir that is unpatrolled and has global contacts.



SAXON BOYS' CHOIRS

In many parts of Germany there are boys' choirs with a long tradition and of outstanding quality. From as long ago as the 13th Century three boys' choirs have existed in Saxony: the Thomanerchor of St. Thomas' Church in Leipzig, the "Kreuzchor" of the Kreuzkirche in Dresden and the "Dresdner Kapellknaben" of the Cathedral (former court chapel) in Dresden.

The particular sound of the boys' choirs had been cultivated by the 16th Century under the sponsorship of electoral Saxon rulers by high-ranking musicians such as Heinrich Schütz and Johann Sebastian Bach, who composed works especially for them. The three boys' choirs are still particularly obliged to their former choirmasters and conductors to this day. Their repertoire is supplemented by new works composed for the respective choir. All three choirs maintain boarding schools in which, at any given time, between 100 and 150 active singers aged between ten and 19 are instructed and trained. The singers are selected according to their talent without any confessional or religious preconditions. The boys' choirs attract tens of thousands of listeners to their performances every year. The choirs are an important component of the musical lives of their cities and also enjoy international renown.

The singers are selected according to their talent without any confessional or religious preconditions.



SINGING THE SONGS OF THE GERMAN LABOUR MOVEMENT

In the context of actions of the labour movement, typical songs have been sung since the 19th Century. The singing of these songs is on the one hand an expression of the discrimination and suppression of those dependent upon their wages and on the other of their resistance and confidence in the future. The songs often have a positive relationship to transnational solidarity and the striving for peace between nations. Many of them are translations from other languages, such as “The International” or “Bella Ciao”. The songs of the labour movement attained a high level of artistic development in the German-speaking cultural area due to musically innovative adaptations and further developments by Kurt Weill, Hanns Eisler and Bertolt Brecht.

The songs often have a positive relationship to transnational solidarity and the striving for peace between nations.

The singing of the songs of the German labour movement has been forbidden and suppressed for long periods of German history. After the Second World War this tradition had to be rediscovered and reclaimed anew by the labour movement. Today, still, the practice is characterised by a great vitality that, whilst being ignored by the media to a large extent, is expressed at meetings or on the occasion of strikes and other trade union confrontations as well as in the composition of new songs.



MODERN DANCE – STYLES AND WAYS OF IMPARTING RHYTHM AND FREE DANCE MOVEMENT

The styles and ways of imparting rhythm and free dance movement, known collectively as “Modern Dance”, originated at the beginning of the 20th Century in the German-speaking world. Dance protagonists such as Rosalia Chladek, Rudolf von Laban, Mary Wigman, Gret Palucca, Maja Lex or Kurt Jooss were, inspired by the Life Reform Movement and the discussions being conducted amongst the artistic avant-garde, searching for modern, free and expressive forms of expression of the body. With the development of innovative choreographic approaches and methods of teaching they exercise to this day an influence upon modern stage dancing and dancing pedagogy.

Using extremely refined methods of body awareness and experimental-explorative and process-oriented methods of teaching the various dancing styles and teaching traditions are nowadays part of basic dance training. They frequently also find inclusion in the development of choreographies for contemporary dance theatre. Free dance has not simply revolutionised the art of dancing on stage but has also, in its own special way, dedicated itself to the artistic activities and training of lay people, e.g. by way of dancing choirs. The active popular range of dance instruction offers in modern expressive dancing is directed at target groups of all ages, in schools of artistic dancing, dance studios or non-educational facilities.

Free dance has not simply revolutionised the art of dancing on stage but has also, in its own special way, dedicated itself to the artistic activities and training of lay people, e.g. by way of dancing choirs.



12



THE GERMAN THEATRE AND ORCHESTRA LANDSCAPE

In Germany there are more than 100 theatres and symphony orchestras. The German theatrical and orchestral landscape is characterised by an extraordinary diversity of artistic forms of expression consisting of: acting, puppet theatre, opera, operetta, musical, dance, concerts and performing events of different kinds. Theatrical and orchestral art open up rare areas beyond the necessity of rational activities and are characterised by emotional experiences, common activities and lively exchange. The relationship between players and the audience is constantly being redefined anew. This is what makes the theatre and the concert an event of playfully experiencing, feeling and conceiving the world and a lively object of dialogue.

Theatrical and orchestral performances with and for people of different origins and different social classes make a significant contribution towards cultural education and handing down of memories. The theatrical ensembles and orchestras and those participating therein see themselves as socio-political and aesthetic co-designers of our community. Their quality lies in their ability to react flexibly to new social, cultural, political developments and problems, also in the shape of new dramaturgies, aesthetics and forms of theatre.

The relationship between players and the audience is constantly being redefined anew.



LOW GERMAN THEATRE

The Low German Theatre is the main pillar of Low German culture. Its peculiar character results from the combination of theatre and the local dialect: Low German exists primarily as a spoken language and is restricted to usage in social units such as families, friends, neighbourhoods and colleagues.

In combination with the forms of expression to be found in the theatre, this local language is lent an artistic dimension. Theatre in the local language is a theatre of nearness. This is what creates its peculiar charm for actors and audiences alike. Currently ca. 4,500 groups of players are upholding the tradition of the Low German Theatre. The overwhelming majority of them are small municipal companies in the rural areas of North Germany. In addition, there are also two professionally run Low German Theatre Companies in Hamburg and Schwerin. On the one hand the repertoires consist of a whole range of classic pieces, but most of the plays performed by the small companies are written by the ensembles themselves. In this way they directly reflect the social reality of their municipalities. The Low German Theatre has a central role to play regarding the stabilisation of the Low German language.

Theatre in the local language is a theatre of nearness.



THE PASSION PLAYS OF OBERAMMERGAU

When the Bavarian village of Oberammergau was afflicted by the Plague in 1633, its inhabitants pledged to perform passion plays every ten years. They have been true to their oath for nearly 400 years now. In those passion plays the last five days of the life of Jesus are presented in the course of a performance lasting several hours. All those participating, from the actors, the choir and the orchestra to the ushers are local residents. The technical and manual shaping of the performances is also implemented by people from Oberammergau. In 2010 half of the population were involved in the realisation and more than 500,000 spectators from all over the world came to the performances. Due to the constant work being performed on the text, stage, props, music and acting the tradition has remained lively throughout the centuries and over many a generation.

In 2010 half of the population were involved in the realisation and more than 500,000 spectators from all over the world came to the performances.

The trademarks of the passion plays are the combination of loyalty to tradition and openness for the present day that is made possible by the dialogue between the generations, religious persuasions, representatives of orthodoxy and the modern. An experience uniting the peoples of the world has thus grown out of the Oberammergau passion plays. It is characterised by the passion of the people of Oberammergau themselves, who adapt their lives to the rhythm of the decades.



PETER-AND-PAUL-FESTIVAL IN BRETTEEN

The Peter-and-Paul-Festival in Bretten (Baden-Württemberg) takes place every year on the weekend following the Church Day of St. Peter-and-St. Paul under the motto “Eine Stadt lebt ihre Geschichte” (A city makes its history come alive). Almost 4,000 women, men and children present various episodes from the city’s history wearing historical costumes. The main focus is on the besieging of the city by the Duke of Württemberg, Ulrich, in the year 1504. On the Friday the spectators see how the people of Bretten armed themselves in their defence; on the Saturday how the successful sally was prepared and implemented and on the Sunday how the people of Bretten celebrated their success, for example during the great festival procession. Monday, as the last day of the festival, lives from the spontaneity of the participants and a leisurely finale featuring jugglers.

Almost 4,000 women, men and children present various episodes from the city’s history wearing historical costumes.

The festival also includes the presentation of the tradition of the militia, the “Peter-and-Paul-Shooting”, the appearance of the two Bretten marching bands and the shepherds’ run. Singers, musicians, jugglers, fire acrobats and spontaneous scenes played out at various sites throughout the Old City ensure that boredom does not stand a chance. Throughout the entire weekend there are also a number of events aimed specifically at children. Up to as many as 140,000 visitors participate in the festival.



MALCHOW FOLK FAIR

The Folk Fair in Malchow, 160 years old, is the oldest homeland festival in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. It was the first folk festival that was celebrated independently from the Church as a worldly event and was therefore considered to be a sign of independence. Organised by citizens for citizens, the fair has always served the purpose of cultural education and community solidarity. Companies, sports and cultural societies plus many citizens of Malchow and the surrounding areas participate in the great festival procession. Every year a manifold programme of events is organised, whereof music is an essential component.

One example is the “Musikalische Wecken” (Musical Waking), whereby the inhabitants of the various city districts are roused from their sleep by parades of musicians and brass bands. Highlights of the festival are the parade of boats with decorated and illuminated vessels and the ensuing firework display accompanied by classical music. To commonly take time out from daily life in a good mood and to be able to laugh together are import aspects of Malchow’s folk fair. Thanks to the Malchow folk fair traditions are upheld, passed on and at the same time continuously re-shaped. The creative spirit of each individual is reflected in the costumes, decorated boats and various stage presentations.

To commonly take time out from daily life in a good mood and to be able to laugh together are import aspects of Malchow’s folk fair.



SWABIAN-ALEMANNIC CARNIVAL

The Swabian-Alemannic carnival, known in the vernacular as “Fasnet”, in its multifarious forms, is actively cultivated by wide sections of the population. Every year on the seventh weekend before Easter this is celebrated in numerous communities in Baden-Württemberg and beyond. The customs reveal numerous local variants but all have the same origin: proven to have existed since the 13th Century as a threshold festival before the Easter fasting period, the “Fast-Nacht” was at first a pure orgy of eating and drinking in the context of which, over the course of time, more and more forms of conviviality such as music, dance and theatrical-mimetic elements sprang up.

Every year on the seventh weekend before Easter this is celebrated in numerous communities in Baden-Württemberg and beyond.

The complete veiling and masking of the participants became the trademark of the festivities. The temporal beginning of the Fasnet is Twelfth Night, on which fools’ utensils are dusted down. The first main day is the “Dirty (or: fat) Thursday”, three days prior to Shrovetide Sunday. The events come to their climax on Shrovetide Monday and Tuesday with their spectacular processions. In the night of Ash Wednesday all foolery comes to an end. The knowledge of the exercising of the custom is part of the cultural memory of the region.



THE “RHINELAND CARNIVAL” IN ALL ITS LOCAL VARIANTS

For many people in the Rhineland – from North Rhine-Westphalia to the Rhineland-Palatinate – the Carnival, as a community-strengthening festival, is an important element of their lives. This festival, which can be traced back to the beginning of the 13th Century, defines itself as a threshold to the pre-Easter fasting period. Since the 15th Century the social order has been symbolically questioned in the form of fools’ masks and costumes. The bourgeois form of Carnival began its development at the beginning of the 19th Century. The beginning of the Carnival season is the presentation of the princely couple on November 11th. The so-called “Carnival Session” begins on Twelfth Night; the “Weiberfastnacht” (Women’s Carnival) marks the beginning of the street carnival.

Since the 15th Century the social order has been symbolically questioned in the form of fools’ masks and costumes.

The highlight is the procession held on Shrovetide Monday in imitation of the many thousands of years’ old rulers’ processions. Important elements of this complex of customs are Carnival Sessions, masked balls and the cries of “Alaaf” or “Helau”. Songs and so-called Büttenreden (rhyming carnival speeches) are characterised by local dialects and frequently take up political subjects. In times of social upheavals the Carnival constantly provided important impulses and proved itself to be an integrating force for people of all ages, all social classes and origins. To be “jeck” (nuts) together and disguise oneself is just as much a part of the Carnival as is voluntary work and social commitment throughout the year.



FALCONRY

Falconry, also known as hawking, is the art of hunting of wild game in its natural habitat using trained birds of prey. The training, i.e. taming and dressing, plus the introducing of a bird of prey to hunting by the falconer is a sensitive process, in which the bird of prey slowly and by way of exclusively positive experiences and rewards becomes accustomed to the falconer. This demands a lot of patience and sensitivity from the falconers.

Although the art of falconry is at least 3,500 years old, the basic principles thereof have essentially remained the same. Technical and medical progress and the ethological knowledge we possess today enable a practice in line with modern ideas of animal welfare. It is impossible to learn the art of falconry purely by way of theoretical studies as one is handling live animals. Common hawking and the passing on and spreading of falconry, ornithological and historical knowledge both orally and through the media, supported by scientific projects, make active contributions to the protection of birds of prey and public relations.

Although the art of falconry is at least 3,500 years old, the basic principles thereof have essentially remained the same.



SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND FESTIVALS OF THE LUSATIAN SORBS OVER THE COURSE OF A YEAR

The Lusatian Sorbs are an ethnic minority in the eastern part of Germany, consisting of ca. 60,000 persons. The Sorbs are distinguished not only by their own language but also by peculiarities in their material and immaterial culture. Spread throughout the entire year ca. 30 festivals are celebrated such as the community assembly Woklapnica/”Abklopfen des alten Jahres”, (brushing off the Old Year), the Vogelhochzeit (Marriage of the Birds) and the Shrovetide festival “Zapust” as well as Easter Riding and the Christ child at Christmas time. The customs and festivals in the course of the year are important features of Sorbian identity and their cultural self-realisation. They are shaped by people of all generations. The Sorbs see their customs and festivals not merely as traditional events but also as a part of modern life.

As the Sorbs do not live in a single, self-contained settlement area, the traditions and festivals today are frequently practised by mixed bearer groups. They are accordingly also to be understood as integrating regional practices. The majority of the customs are practised across Federal State boundaries, in Saxony and Brandenburg. However, over the course of time regional differences between Lower and Upper Lusatia have come into being.

The customs and festivals in the course of the year are important features of Sorbian identity and their cultural self-realisation.



BIIKE BURNING

The so-called “Biikebrennen” is a common spring or Shrovetide fire celebrated by the Frisians by way of which evil spirits are to be driven away and the newly sown seed protected. Every year on February 21st in Schleswig-Holstein on the Islands of Sylt, Amrum and Föhr, on the non-dike protected isles and many parts of the North Friesian mainland more than 60 fire signals, so-called “Biiken”, are lit. Following the cry “Tjen di Biiki ön!” (“Set the Biike alight!”) the fires blaze visibly over a long distance. Usually they are accompanied by fiery speeches in the Frisian dialect on topics of the past or the politics of the day. Other events take place around the Biikebrennen: inter alia theatrical plays are performed in the Frisian language or a Kinderbiiken (Children’s Biiken) is organised in schools. A meeting of the “Frasche Rät” (Frisian Council) is also held.

Every year on February 21st in Schleswig-Holstein on the Islands of Sylt, Amrum and Föhr, on the non-dike protected isles and many parts of the North Friesian mainland more than 60 fire signals, so-called “Biiken”, are lit.

Originally the sailors gathered together every year since ca. 1760 on February 22nd in Keitum to discuss their departure to the larger ports and conclude hiring contracts for the new fishing season. From this the Keitum schoolmaster C.P. Hansen developed around 1830 the tradition of sending the sailors off on their whaling trips. In its modern form the Biikebrennen is considered to be the national festival of the Frisians.



LIME TREE FAIR LIMMERSDORF

The lime-tree fair of the village of Limmersdorf embodies a centuries-old and originally widespread custom that is today only cultivated in a few places in Upper Franconia (Bavaria) and Thuringia. At the focus of a lime-tree fair stands the often ancient dance lime tree of the municipality in question. Festively dressed “Kerwaburschen” (young lads) dance with their “Kerwasmadla” (young maidens) round dances and waltzes accompanied by dance-band music on a podium in the crown of the tree. Genuine dance lime trees are distinguished by a precisely pruned growth of their branches. The branches are pruned and cropped in such a way that they form a “tree hall” and are able to support a platform for dancing upon. Dance lime trees are thus not only a natural monument but at the same time a historic monument that fulfils a cultural purpose.

At the focus of a lime-tree fair stands the often ancient dance lime tree of the municipality in question.

The dance lime tree in Limmersdorf has been danced upon without interruption since at least 1729. The lime tree fair is a lively tradition and one that plays a decisive role in characterizing the village. It is the undisputed social highlight of the life of the village. Almost every inhabitant of the village is involved in the preparations for the festival which take up the whole year. A number of associations, sponsorship circles and private persons ensure that this cultural form is passed on to future generations.



DEALING WITH THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELN

The story of the Pied Piper of Hameln is one of the most well-known German folk tales. The form of the story that is known today, with the linking of the departure of the children from Hameln with the motif of the Pied Piper originated in the 16th Century. The story is told by people all over the world and is considered to be a source of inspiration for many artists. But nowhere is the dealing with this story carried on in such density and diversity as in Hameln and the Weserbergland Region (Lower Saxony). The Pied Piper is omnipresent in the city and helps create a sense of identity. Every year in summer the citizens of Hameln perform the Pied Piper Open Air Festival and a musical. Every 25 years the Pied Piper Anniversary is celebrated with a great street procession.

Everywhere in Hameln one finds ornaments that relate to the Pied Piper. A continuous creative confrontation with the diversely interpreted history of the saga is being carried on. It is reflected inter alia in the name of the “Pied Piper prize for Literature”, the logos of the city and numerous local associations. Its anchoring in the consciousness of the population is also revealed in a number of private initiatives.

*A continuous creative
confrontation with the
diversely interpreted
history of the saga is
being carried on.*



SALT PANNERS' FRATERNITY IN THE VALLEY OF HALLE

The salt-panners' fraternity in the valley of Halle can look back on a tradition of salt boiling that is more than 1,000 years old. Since 1491 the salt panners have verifiably been organised in their own fraternity, the members of which are known as "Halloren". Initially a religiously orientated union, the fraternity soon developed into a social labour and living community. The history and founding of the City of Halle/Saale in the State of Saxony-Anhalt is closely tied to the Halloren, as they owed their prosperity to the brine springs and salt deposits to be found in the settlement area. The Halloren define the population's sense of identity to this day.

Salt boiling as their former source of income remains to this day the basis for the life of the fraternity. Inhabitants and guests are able to acquaint themselves with the traditional boiling techniques according to the panning process at regular demonstrations. Family cohesion and a good relationship between old and young still enjoy high standing in the fraternity. Today the fraternity is composed of members from all classes of the population, who are united by their awareness of their historical heritage and the desire to preserve a unique tradition.

Salt boiling as their former source of income remains to this day the basis for the life of the fraternity.



38



THE IDEA AND PRACTICE OF COOPERATIVES

The idea of the cooperative is an interdenominational model of bourgeois self-help, self-administration and self-responsibility on the basis of co-operations that is open to all who are interested. Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch and Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen founded the first cooperatives in the middle of the 19th Century based upon ethical values such as solidarity, honesty and responsibility. The cooperative idea was soon taken up by actors on both a regional and global plain and soon encompassed large social circles.

To broad circles of society the idea of the cooperative opened up new possibilities for social participation and has proven itself till this day to be extremely dynamic and influential. It found and still finds applications in many walks of life such as work, finances, diet or housing. These are associations with an indeterminate number of members and common business operations who promote individual commitment outside the boundaries of any private or state economic forms. The respective purpose that can serve social, cultural and economic interests is defined in the statute of a cooperative. The idea of the cooperative was maintained and pursued further even under adverse conditions such as the era of National Socialism and during the division of Germany. Today, cooperatives in Germany have more than 21 million members. Worldwide there are 800 million members of cooperatives in more than 100 countries.

To broad circles of society the idea of the cooperative opened up new possibilities for social participation and has proven itself till this day to be extremely dynamic and influential.



GERMAN BREAD CULTURE

All over the world, German bread is valued for its unique diversity. The knowledge of raw materials, baking procedures and the awareness of tradition is passed on from generation to generation by the master and journeymen to the apprentice. In the baking craft, centuries-old traditions are united with the latest insights and practices. The regional diversity of the types of bread in Germany is of historical origin and is founded upon the particular soil and climatic conditions as well as upon the political, historical and geographical developments. Due to the scarcity of resources, times of need, environmental influences and wars the bakers were required to display creativity and resourcefulness time and time again.

The appreciation of bread occupies an outstanding status in family and domestic environments and in the social exchange. The common consumption of bread often lends its name to convivial get-togethers such as the evening meal (German “Abendbrot”, literally “evening bread”). Bread is also a central component of customs and figures of speech in the Christian and bourgeois context: in the Eucharist bread symbolises the body of Christ, the Harvest Festival Bread is deemed to be the embodiment of thanks for a rich harvest. New neighbours are often presented with bread and salt upon moving in order to wish them happiness and prosperity.

The common consumption of bread often lends its name to convivial get-togethers such as the evening meal (German “Abendbrot”, literally “evening bread”).



FINCH MANOEUVRE IN HARZ

In the form of the Finch manoeuvre in eight communities in the Harz Region of Saxony-Anhalt a traditional spring custom has been preserved that was originally widespread in Central Europe. At finch manoeuvres the singing capability of chaffinches is assessed and rewarded. Descriptions of this tradition date back to the 15th Century. Here, knowledge pertaining to the catching and upkeep as well as the breeding, nursing and training of the chaffinches to sing is handed down. Cultural bearers of the finch custom are the so-called “Finker” who are united in the individual societies of the communities in the Harz Region.

At finch manoeuvres the singing capability of chaffinches is assessed and rewarded.

The finch competitions are divided into two disciplines: the beauty class and the competitive class, which in turn is subdivided into the strength class and long-distance singing. The training of the exclusively male finches for the various disciplines takes place over a period of several weeks in open spaces and in forest areas. Due to the close contact with the bird the Finker have specialist knowledge of which even ornithologists are in part unaware. The knowledge and secrets connected with the finch custom have verifiably been handed down in individual families in many Harz villages for at least five generations. The finch competition is strongly anchored in the consciousness of the Harz population, inter alia by way of traditional folk songs.

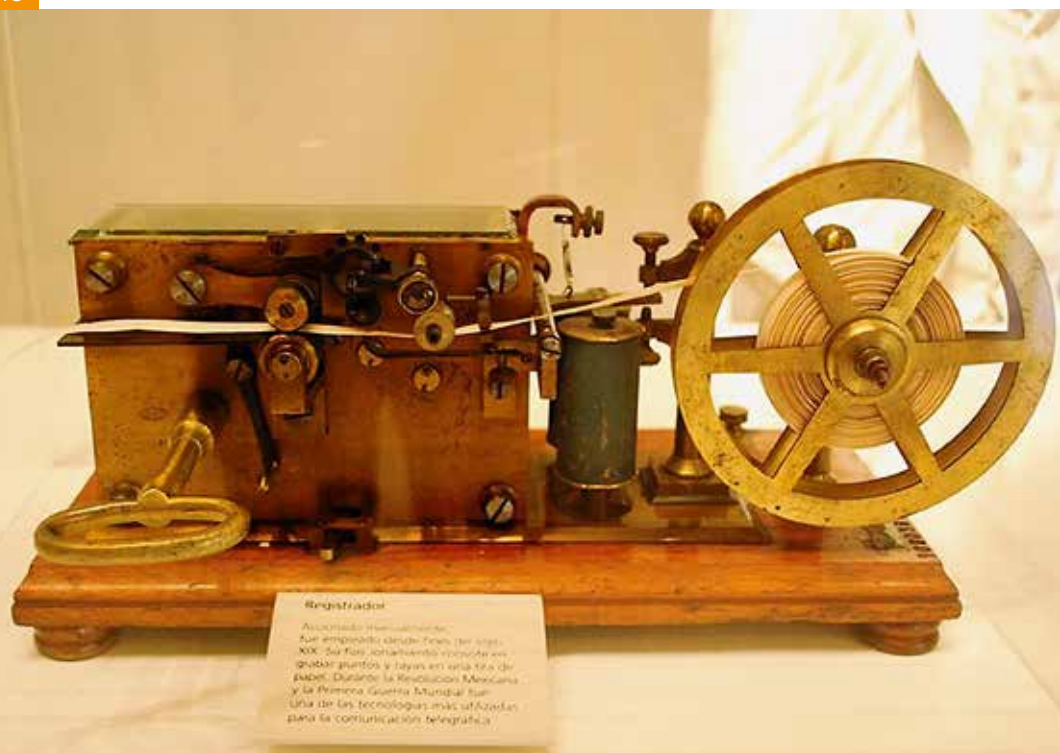


TIMBER RAFTING

The craft of rafting involves the transport of wood by waterway from areas rich in woodland to those in which it is scarcer. In the past rafting in Germany played an outstanding role in the meeting of the huge demand for wood in all walks of life within society. Craftsmanship and labour of the rafters decisively stamped the reality of the lives of many people. From the Middle Ages until the second half of the 20th Century rafting was practised commercially in Germany. The techniques were passed on over many generations in some families.

Since the end of commercial rafting, touristic rafting is today becoming increasingly widespread. By way of rafting festivals and raft journeys the knowledge of this age-old craft is kept alive in the public memory. Members of rafting associations impart rafting as a part of the cultural heritage of the region, for example during project days and weeks at schools and nurseries. During the educational activities, children and adolescents but also older persons are informed about the significance of the raw material wood and its availability in the past and the present.

By way of rafting festivals and raft journeys the knowledge of this age-old craft is kept alive in the public memory.



MORSE TELEGRAPHY

In the mid 1830s Samuel F. B. Morse initiated in the form of the development of the Morse telegraphy the age of electrical communications. By means of shorter and longer signalling elements messages could be sent as so-called Morse signals without materials, at first only wire-bound and then, from the end of the 19th Century, without wires via radio waves, the whole world over. For a period of ca. seventy years telecommunication was only possible by way of transmission methods using the Morse code. The Morse alphabet, in the form still officially and globally widespread to this day, was invented a good 150 years ago by the German Clemens Gerke.

This art of broadcasting messages by way of Morse telegraphy was and still is only possible if one has specialist knowledge and skills. It is a type of intercultural form of culture and communication that overcomes the barriers of time and space. The transmission of messages by way of the Morse code is nowadays no longer necessary for technological, economic and military reasons. But in the shape of the amateur radio enthusiasts there does still exist a circle of persons who are dedicated to passing on the art of Morse. In amateur radio, the rules and linguistic customs from Morse telegraphy are handed down and the function, significance and application of Morse telegraphy are brought to life in our day and age.

This art of broadcasting messages by way of Morse telegraphy was and still is only possible if one has specialist knowledge and skills.



ORGAN CONSTRUCTION AND ORGAN MUSIC

The nurture of organ culture in Germany is particularly rich and lively. Moreover, it is characterised by a high degree of artistic capability. In the field of organ construction knowledge of dealing with nature, traditional handicraft and innovative technology have always gone hand in hand. Every organ is adapted to the acoustic conditions of the room in which it stands – be it a concert hall, church or salon – and is thus a unique specimen. The regionally shadowed organ landscape which, historically speaking, has been growing since the Baroque era, still characterises Germany today.

There has always been a creative mutual influence between the developments in organ construction and in organ music. A rich array of composition and performance practices as well as manifold educational opportunities for organists at institutes of higher education and in church institutions also characterise the organ landscape in Germany. The culture of organ construction and organ music presents itself today in the shape of, nationwide, 50,000 organs, 400 organ constructing companies with ca. 1,800 employees, 180 apprentices and 3,500 professional and tens of thousands of honorary organists. The nurturing of organ culture is a cross-state art and crafts form which has an important basis in Germany and is being handed down continuously.

The regionally shadowed organ landscape which, historically speaking, has been growing since the Baroque era, still characterises Germany today.



CHARCOAL BURNER'S CRAFT AND TAR DISTILLERY

The carbonisation of wood is one of the oldest handicraft techniques known to man. Despite the different processing techniques worldwide, which have developed over several millennia, the actual technical process itself, the thermal transformation of biomass, has remained the same. Fuels are generated hereby which are mainly of solid (charcoal), but sometimes also of liquid (wood tar) or gaseous consistencies (wood gas).

The carbonisation of wood was the basis of many technical and industrial developments. Charcoal, for example, is necessary for the smelting of ore, the processing of iron and the manufacturing of gun powder. Wood tar and pitch were required in large quantities in order to make ships seaworthy. Since the beginning of the 20th Century engines may be driven using wood gas. Today, science worldwide is using the ancient knowledge gained from charcoal burning to tackle humanity's energy problems. The European Charcoal Burners' Association is committed to the preservation of the charcoal burner's craft and the old technologies in order that future generations may be able to master this craft and hand it on to others.

The carbonisation of wood was the basis of many technical and industrial developments.



VOGTLAND MUSICAL INSTRUMENT CON- STRUCTION IN MARK- NEUKIRCHEN AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

In the so-called “musical corner” of the Vogtland Region, musical instruments have been constructed over a period of ca. 350 years in a concentration and variety that is unparalleled anywhere else in the world. The origins of this handicraft can be traced back to Bohemian violinmakers who settled in the South-Eastern Corner of Saxony as religious refugees in the middle of the 17th Century.

Today, the traditional construction of musical instruments is practised by ca. 1,300 craftsmen in more than 100 workshops. Almost all string, plucked, wind and percussion instruments and harmonicas used in European music including components and accessories are manufactured here. The knowledge of techniques, tools and materials has from the very beginning been handed down from generation to generation. The basis of the continuous learning process of the makers of instruments is intense observation and exchange with musicians and colleagues as well as the studying of instruments and nature materials. The construction of musical instruments in Vogtland attracts numerous lay orchestras, international music competitions and master classes for music students to the region around Markneukirchen. Projects in schools, exhibitions and guided tours of workshops allow the population at large to experience how instruments are made. The traditional construction of musical instruments thus conveys a regional sense of identity and continuity.

Almost all string, plucked, wind and percussion instruments and harmonicas used in European music including components and accessories are manufactured here.



THATCHER'S CRAFT

The covering of roofs with reeds is one of the oldest craftsmanship techniques to do with house construction, and had been verifiably practised as early as ca. 4,000 B.C. Originally it had been roofs in rural areas which the builder of the house had constructed using his own means from the tried and tested, regionally available materials reed or straw. It is the common reed or bulrush that today serves as a basic material for thatched roofs. Thatched roofs are widespread in many regions of Europe, Asia and Africa. In Germany they are predominantly to be found in those areas of Northern Germany close to the coastline (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony), but there are also a few scattered examples in the Spreewald (Spre Forest) or the South of Germany.

The thatching of roofs requires a high degree of expertise. The handicraft thrives upon a plethora of traditions which have been handed down orally and upon handicraft customs which have been passed on from generation to generation. Moreover, in 1998 the skilled profession of the thatcher, specialised in the thatching of roofs using reeds was called in to being in order to do justice to the increased expertise required. The interest in roofs thatched with reeds has been strongly on the increase again in recent years. Owners of thatched houses appreciate the pleasant living climate, the harmonious aura of the building and support for ecological reasons the use of construction materials that grow back again.

The interest in roofs thatched with reeds has been strongly on the increase again in recent years.



JOURNEYMEN'S WANDERINGS ON THE ROAD

The wanderings of the journeyman is a tradition followed by the professions of the main construction trade of taking to the road after the successful completion of one's apprenticeship and to spend several years in other regions, learning new skills and gaining new insights in the process. Young journeymen, in meeting with strangers and like-minded people, are confronted with the unknown and the unpredictable, in order to continue their professional training and broaden their own personal horizons. Everyone who can identify himself as a thatcher, tiler, joiner, concrete worker, mason or carpenter, has not yet reached the age of 30, is single, has no debts, commands the German language and is a trade union member, may take to the road in this fashion. For this purpose the journeyman joins a journeymens' association.

With five Euros in his pocket and dressed in traditional uniform, a newly-qualified journeyman takes to the road accompanied by an experienced journeyman. As a wandering journeyman one has a responsibility towards one's uniform and conducts oneself in such a manner that journeymen who come after one are also made welcome. Decisive for these wanderings, in addition to the new experiences gained, is being a member of a community that maintains a network of hostels to which the travelling journeyman may always have recourse.

With five Euros in his pocket and dressed in traditional uniform, a newly-qualified journeyman takes to the road accompanied by an experienced journeyman.

CONTEXT

With the ratification of the UNESCO Convention (2003) in 2013, Germany committed itself to create a nationwide inventory of intangible cultural heritage. By establishing it, the importance of intangible cultural heritage as a whole and the importance of individual forms of cultural expressions become the focus of public attention. It is an inventory in terms of knowledge organization in order to show which intangible resources our country has. What traditions and forms of organization exist in Germany and how diverse they are, is largely undocumented so far. It is however not an inventory-taking of “German heritage” but of “heritage in Germany”.

The resulting cultural exchanges, the variety of forms of expression and the creative recreations are especially interesting. Intangible cultural heritage is living and constantly evolving. Cultural expressions recorded in the nationwide inventory and their bearers stand for the creativity and inventiveness of our society.

Being part of the nationwide inventory of intangible cultural heritage is a publicly visible recognition of cultural expressions and their bearers. This attention gained can be used to safeguard the vitality of cultural forms. The bearers of the cultural expressions recorded in the nationwide inventory can use a logo for non-commercial purposes. There is no financial support connected with the inclusion in the inventory.

The first round of applications illustrates an exemplary selection and is the basis for the further development of the inventory in future rounds. Civil society groups, communities and initiatives are further encouraged to participate with proposals in the creation of the nationwide inventory of intangible cultural heritage. Until now, urban and intercultural expressions have been under-represented for example. The inventory should be a collection of diverse, colourful, innovative forms of intangible cultural heritage in Germany – especially those that can contribute to master societal challenges.

IMPRINT

Publisher:

German Commission for UNESCO
Colmantstraße 15
53115 Bonn, Germany
E-mail: sekretariat@unesco.de
Internet: www.unesco.de

Chief editor: Benjamin Hanke (DUK)

Editorial board: Julia Sattler (DUK), Theres Klose (DUK) Nathalie Feldmann

Translation: profi Schnelldienst Fachübersetzungen GmbH, Germany

Layout and setting: MediaCompany – Agentur für Kommunikation GmbH, Germany

Printing: Druckerei Brandt, Germany

Print run: 500

Photo credits: The bearers possess the rights to use and publish the photos. They have agreed to their publication in relation to their cultural expression being included in the German nationwide inventory of intangible cultural heritage.

Furthermore:

page 6: Kreuzchor, Martin Radloff, flickr (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)
page 8: Arbeiterchor, Joachim Bomann, flickr (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)
page 16: Tempelreinigung, Oberammergauer Passionsspiele 2010, Brigitte Maria Mayer
page 24: Karneval Köln, Frank Nürnberger, flickr (CC BY-NC 2.0)
page 38: Energiegenossenschaft Vogelsberg, Günter Mest
page 38: Wohnprojekt Ligsalz46, Karin Just
page 54: Reetdachdecker, Tellmewhat, flickr (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

Download from: www.unesco.de

The text of this publication is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Germany (CC BY-NC 3.0 DE). This license is available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/de/deed.en>.

© German Commission for UNESCO, Bonn, December 2014

The German Library registers this publication in the German National Bibliography. Detailed bibliographic data may be found on the internet under <http://dnb.ddb.de>.

ISBN: 978-3-940785-68-8

This publication received funding from the Federal Commissioner for Culture and the Media based on a resolution of the German Parliament (Deutscher Bundestag).

Printed on chlorine-free bleached and recycled paper.



Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung
für Kultur und Medien



The nationwide inventory of intangible cultural heritage is an inventory of living traditions practiced in Germany. Cultural expressions must meet the criteria as defined in the UNESCO Convention of 2003. This includes vitality and identity-generating components for the bearer's community. The passing on of knowledge and skills, creative development, free access to the tradition as well as the involvement of the whole community are further important criteria.