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Development in Germany**

By

**Klaus R. Kunzmann**

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# Light Towers and Corner Stones of Urban Life and City Development in Germany

Klaus R. Kunzmann <sup>1</sup>

Professor Emeritus, Technische Universität Dortmund, Germany

## Abstract

German cities are places, where cultural life has always been important. Theaters, concert halls as well as socio-cultural centers and festivals are light towers and corner stones of urban life and city development. Multifunctional civic halls are essential economic sites of the local, economy. Rooted in a long history fine and performing arts play an important role in the German society. Christian communities built impressive richly decorated churches in cities and villages to praise god and earn a peaceful life after death. Dukes and princesses impressed their large feudal families and visitors by asking architects to build them attractive palaces and country houses surrounded by well-designed gardens. Both the church communities and the feudal gentry used their premises to decorate and display art by renowned artists of the time. They entertain their communities and large families from across Europe with music and theater performances in court theatres and art collections. Once the feudal times came slowly to an end in the 19th century, local governments in German cities and towns encouraged by wealthy bourgeois families resumed the tradition and built public theaters, concert halls and museums for the evolving civic society. In today's Germany the arts and music and related cultural and creative industries have not lost their importance. They are seen valued as vital pillars of local economic development, education, entertainment and social inclusion, even as gate keepers of democracy. After 1945 local governments, besides reconstructing war-demolished theaters and museums, built multifunctional city halls as venues for public and commercial activities, for conventions, congresses, fairs and even sport activities. Cultural and creative industries have received much local cultural and economic interest. The paper will discuss the importance of culture and culture related buildings for city development and urban life in Germany. It will briefly discuss the implications of the still ongoing pandemic on culture and city life on German cities and towns, and will conclude with some remarks on transferability.

*Key Words: theaters, concert halls, civic halls, socio-cultural centers, creative industries, Covid-19*

## 1. The Covid-19 pandemic and the digital turn, change agents of city development

During the pandemic theaters and concert halls had to close. Music events, fairs, conventions and congresses had to be cancelled. Actors, musicians and administrative staff in public theaters and concert halls operated by the public sector, - most of them had long term employment contracts -, hence they did not suffer from theater closures. The German tradition to maintain and operate public theaters in medium-sized towns and cities with permanently tenured staff showed its resilience. In contrast freelance actors and musicians as well as solo-self-employed artists, designers and musicians as well as private enterprises

in the cultural sector had to apply for special government payments. Event companies, too, suffered from the lockdowns and made their technical and administrative staff redundant. Particularly gastronomic services, an important local economic sector, which is highly dependent upon consumption, entertainment and tourism, have been a victim of pandemic lockdowns. Apart from those permanently employed in the cultural public sector, many employees in the cultural and creative sector in Germany are working under limited seasonal contracts. Food and drink consumption linked to a theater performance, a concert or another cultural event are an important source of income for restaurants, cafes and bars. Even fashion industries suffered from the closures, not just because of e-shopping practice, but, because cultural events

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<sup>1</sup> E-mail: klaus.kunzmann@udo.edu

are also opportunities to dress nicely and show fashion taste.

During the Covid-19 pandemic the public sector finally realized that Germany was not really prepared for the digital turn. Mainly for privacy reasons the digitalization in Germany has been lagging behind other countries, such as China, Japan, the US or Finland in Europe. The pandemic, however, has raised the awareness for digitalization and accelerated the digital turn, also in the cultural field. After the spatial, the social and the ecological turn in city development, the digital turn requires new competence for cultural production and consumption, as well as for the operation, management and maintenance of theaters and cultural buildings.

## 2. The wider context of culture and city development in Germany

Culture in Germany is practiced and consumed in three fields:

- Culture supported by the public sector, such as operas, theaters, libraries, museums as well as art and film academies. Places, which are operated in public interest mainly depend on public subsidies of local and regional (Länder) governments and on specific cultural programs of the federal government, decided annually.
- Culture, produced in various forms of socio-cultural centers by a broad spectrum of groups of the civil society, financed partly by the local government with additional donations from private sponsors, foundations and corporate contributions. These centers are often operated by voluntary work.
- Culture and creative industries, offering commercial cultural products and services, occasionally supported by local and regional economic policies.

Cultural policies of the federal, as well as regional and local governments in Germany cover mainly the fields of theatre, music, libraries, museums, architectural conservation as well as academies of fine and performing arts, music, film and design and community colleges. (In contrast to EU-definitions, architecture is not included in statistics published on public expenses for culture, while zoos and botanic gardens are included).

In 2017 public cultural expenditure in Germany corresponded to 0.35% of the gross domestic product, not much in relation to Germany's economic strength. Overall, public budgets allocated 1.77% of their total

budget to culture. Public cultural expenditure per inhabitant was 138.21 € in 2017. Federal, state and local governments were spending that year 11.4 billion € on culture. As in the previous years, the majority of cultural expenditure was financed by states and municipalities with 38.7% and 44.4% respectively. The Länder financed 4.4 billion euros and the municipalities 5.1 billion euros. The federal government provided a further 1.9 billion euros, or 17.0%. The development of public spending on culture differs greatly between the Länder (including municipalities). While public funding for culture in the states (except city state) increased by 5.8% between 2016 and 2017, it fell by 6.5% in the city states. Federal expenditure increased by 18.6% in the same period. The municipalities shape the local cultural offerings. Large cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants provided more than half of the municipalities' current basic funds for culture. The ten cities (excluding city states) with 500,000 and more inhabitants accounted for 25.0 % or 1.2 billion €. The municipalities with a population of 20,000 to less than 100,000 had current expenditure of 1.1 billion euros, which corresponded to a share of 22.6%. Cultural expenditure by cultural sector. At 34.5%, theatre and music accounted for more than a third of the total cultural expenditure of the Federal Government, the Länder and the municipalities in 2017. A further 19.1% went towards funding museums, collections and exhibitions.

To better understand the context of culture and city development in Germany one has to be aware of the wider urban context in the country, the long history of culture<sup>Note 1</sup>). The polycentric urban system, the important role of culture in the public media, the powerful German stage union (*Bühnenverein*) and the importance of the German Artist Social Insurance (*Künstlersozialkasse*), which secures the pension of artists and writers in the country.

### 2.1 The polycentric urban system

Since 1870, ending a century long feudal history Germany is a federal state. With 13 relatively independent states and three city states (Berlin, Hamburg and Bremen) its urban system is very balanced. Since 1990 Berlin is (again) the capital and the cultural hub of Germany. Many administrative government functions are decentralized and scattered all over the country. The states and city states sustain their particular cultural profile. The economic disparities between the federal states (Länder) are high. While Bavaria with Munich as its state capital tops the list, Berlin is the poorest and highly indebted state in Germany. More than 80 % of the German population (2020: population 82 million) live in small- and me-

dium-sized cities (below 20.000, respectively between 20.000 and 100.000). 20 % in larger cities (100.000 and more). Only four cities have a population of more than million (Berlin, Hamburg, Munich and Cologne). In 20 20 16 % of the population in Germany, were born outside Germany (mostly in Turkey, Poland, Rumania, Italy and Syria), but around 27 % have a migration background. In 2022 many schools in Germany up to 50% are grandchildren of foreigners. The language capability of many parents and kids is limited. For a country where German language is an important dimension of cultural life, this is an enormous challenge.

Rooted in history, cities and towns are self-governed. They keep a fixed percentage of general income and industrial tax to finance and operate local infrastructure. Even though culture, in contrast to education and social welfare is not a mandatory task in the German constitution, three to five percent of the local budgets are dedicated to cultural expenses to maintain cultural infrastructure and support cultural production.

## 2.2 The role of culture in the public media

The important role of culture in the German society is also reflected in the role culture is represented in public media. Two public TV stations in Germany (3SAT and ARTE) offer free programs in the field of fine and performing arts (Though all German households have to pay a mandatory annual fee of € 250 for all public TV programs. From 1999 to 2011 German public television (ZDF) operated in addition a daily special theater program for free. Since 2011 this TV station has been widened to become a cultural TV-station, covering all cultural fields (fine and performing arts, music, film, digital culture and gaming)

## 2.3 A powerful stage union

A powerful well-established organization in the German theater landscape is the "Bühnenverein" (the German Theatrical Association). It is employers' association of theatres and orchestras. It addresses all artistic, organizational and cultural policy issues that affect theatres and orchestras in Germany. These include topics such as the importance of the theatres and orchestras for the cities, the development of the

audience as well as the shaping of legal framework conditions up to the social situation of the artists. Other topics include training for the artistic and artistic-crafts professions, the financial situation of the theatres and orchestras and the resulting possibilities and limits of artistic creation. The optimization of organizational structures and the relationship between legal entities and theatre management are also important areas of responsibility. In addition, the association is involved in advisory capacity to the legislative processes of the federal and state governments.

## 2.4 The Artists' Social Insurance

Compared to many other countries, much employment in Germany cultural institutions (operas, theaters concert halls, public theaters is secured by the public sector. Most artistic and technical administrative staff enjoy permanent contracts. In contrast, artistic management staff (e.g. directors, conductors, stage designers, responsible for cultural productions, is only hired for limited time periods (three to five years). Freelance and self-employed artists are working in all cultural fields. An important institution in Germany, supporting self-employed artists in all fields is the *Künstlersozialversicherung* (KSV, an insurance, which is supported by the Government. By implementing the Artists' Social Insurance Act (KSVG), it ensures that self-employed artists and publicists enjoy a similar level of protection in the statutory social insurance system as employees. It is not a service provider itself, but coordinates the payment of contributions for its members to a health insurance of their choice and to the statutory pension and long-term care insurance. Self-employed artists and publicists are entitled to the entire statutory benefits catalogue. However, they only have to pay half of the contributions due out of their own pockets; the Artist Social Security Fund (*Künstlersozialkasse*) tops up the amounts with a subsidy from the federal government (20 %) and social security contributions from companies (30 %) that exploit art and journalism. The individual monthly contribution an artist/publicist pays to the Fund depends on the amount of his/her earned income.





Fig. 1 Event location (collage Klaus R. Kunzmann)



### 3. Cultural Buildings: Light Towers and Corner Stones

Cultural buildings are light towers and corner stones of a city <sup>Note 3)</sup>. They are significant pillars of urban life. They profile the culture of a city, they are magnets attracting investment and innovative labor force, they are targets of urban tourism, they are arenas of public discourse and learning, and they are guardians of social inclusion.

- The cultural profile of a city is an important dimension of city identity in Germany. City marketing brochures and digital platforms, edited by all cities, whether they are large or small, are dominated by references to cultural activities and its cultural infrastructure, to impressive local architectural icons and to locations of cultural life, to programs of traditional and experimental cultural productions, and to local festivals. In international rankings, the cultural profile of a city contributes much to a high rank.
- Cities in Europe compete for investment and qualified labor. The cultural image and cultural infrastructure of a city is an essential location factor for highly qualified national and international staff and their families, when deciding to change a job. Universities, too, attract students, professors and researcher not only by praising the profile of the university or the quality of student life but also with the local cultural activities.
- Cultural tourism is an essential income source for local economic development. Larger cities attract visitors with their quality of life. Bigger cities praise their cultural landmarks, the quality of their cultural performances, their museums and art exhibitions as well as their cosmopolitan spirit. Smaller and medium sized towns praise their regionally embedded cultural activities. Their annual music or art festivals, their architectural diamonds, their regional food and wines.
- Operas, theater and concert halls as well as festival grounds are locations of community life and entertainment, where the local community is dressing-up to enjoy an evening. Operas, theater performances and concerts are occasions of citizens to meet friends and colleagues. Concerts are consumed and enjoyed by music lovers, who are enthusiasts of classical, modern or rock music, promote the persistence of the local music life or play a musical instrument themselves. As dining-out is often linked to visits to theaters and concerts the local gastronomy, too, is benefitting from public support to cultural infrastructure theaters and concert halls.
- Besides their entertaining function, theaters in a

German city are also arenas of public discourse and learning. Theatres playing specially selected traditional drama or comedy, or performing a new production of a living author discussing current political themes or attacking mainstream agendas often spark off controversial discussions among the audience. Such performances are much communicated events in local, even regional media and trigger off reflections about local, regional and national policies and strengthen the democracy in the country.

- Socio-cultural centers in cities and towns are guardians of social life and inclusion in a city. There diverse and multi-layered cultural works is carried out by local actors, networks and initiatives representing a broad range of fields that reflect the cultural policy at the local, state and national level. Originally born out of urban movements for alternative forms of cultural expression and mediation that pushed for social change, socio-cultural centers and initiatives are now an integral part of the cultural landscape in large and small cities as well as in rural areas. Socio-cultural centers are places of diverse perceptions of culture. As a rule, they are located in urban districts, which are experiencing structural transformation. These centers promote civic engagement and the creative-cultural competences of many - regardless of age, gender and ethnic origin - through cultural participation. Citizens frequenting these places search for place, where they are respected as migrants or seek answers to their individual challenges.
- Multifunctional city halls, in contrast, are venues for single commercial events, for conventions and congresses, and even for sport events. Even though they are also used for concerts of international rock concerts world music and other cultural events (e.g. balls, dance competitions, or art exhibitions), they have a quite different profile.

All these cultural places in a city form an interrelated network of cultural locations in a German city, a network, which gives a city a cultural profile. The intensity of interrelations is an indicator of the cultural life in the city (Figure 2).

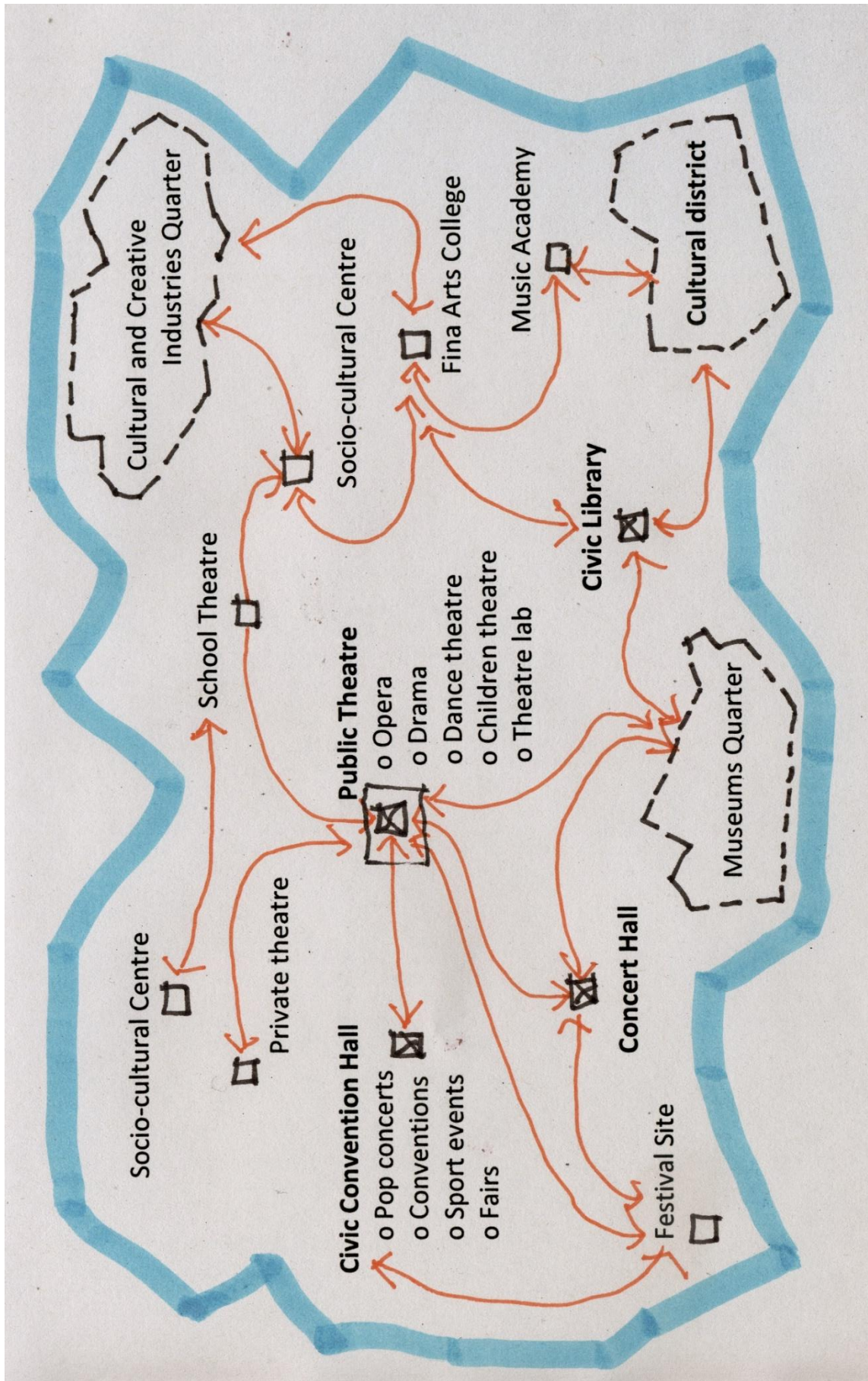


Fig. 2 The network of cultural locations in a German city (Image by the author)

## 4. Cultural Buildings and Venues in Germany

Opera houses, theaters, City halls, festival locations and socio-cultural centers in cities and towns are the locations of the vibrant cultural life in German cities and towns. They are presented in more detail in the following sections of this paper:

### 4.1 Theaters and Opera Houses

In 2017 129 local governments in Germany operated 140 public theaters (opera houses and theaters) with 838 venues <sup>Note 4</sup>. They are all members of the German *Bühnenverein* mentioned above. Though allied bombs had demolished many inner cities in the country during air raids in 1944 and 1945, all theaters have been rebuilt in the decades thereafter, some cities even built new opera houses (e.g. Düsseldorf, Essen or Gelsenkirchen). With the exception of a few state theaters (e.g. Berlin, Munich, Stuttgart and Düsseldorf) all theaters are operated by local governments. Most large theaters (often in different buildings) are so-called *Dreisparten* Theaters (three discipline theatres offering operas, drama and ballet). The size of the venues varies. Besides the large venues for operas, drama and ballet, many German cities have a number of smaller venues for traditional and experimental plays, for dance or children's theater. As a rule, the performances are held during ten months and four to six times a week. Most opera singers, actors, dancers and musicians in the theatre and orchestra, as well as administrative and technical staff are permanently employed. The theater is managed by an intendant (theater director) who is responsible for the artistic program. An administrative director is responsible for management of the theater and the staff. The intendant is selected and appointed by the local government for a limited time period, which is usually three to five years. This is also valid for the conductor of the orchestra, the chief stage designer and the choreography director. The opera and theater budgets are annually defined by the local government. Many theatres houses offer attractive annual subscriptions to secure permanent audiences, though their number declines, Younger generations prefer to be flexible and make their own choice. Tickets prices and subscriptions, however, do only cover a limited share of the expenses.

Theaters in German have an important role in education, too. Curricula in secondary schools (for boys and girls aged 10 to 19 years) include mandatory lessons on traditional and modern German and foreign authors, which are played in the local theater, such as Goethe, Brecht, Shakespeare, Becket, Moliere or Camus. In addition, many secondary schools have theater classes, where students can express their own approaches and train their communication skills.

In 2017 € 3.9 billion were spent for theaters in Germany by state (1.7 € billion) and local governments (2.2 billion), 34.5 % of all expenses for culture. In addition, private theaters can be found in most larger Germany cities offering more entertaining plays and musicals. As a rule, they also receive some limited financial contributions from the local government, which they have to negotiate annually. In some cities free actors, who do not consent with the mainstream programs of the local public theaters, offer experimental performances though depend on support from audiences and private sponsors. In some larger cities (e.g. Hamburg, Berlin, Munich, Bochum) private musical theaters have been newly built in the last quarter of the 20th century. They attract local audiences and city tourists alike. The popular musical *Starlight Express* in Bochum, for example, attracted 17 million spectators since its start in 1988. Much read journals elect the theater of the year, the opera of the years, the theater of the year, the director of the year and the singers of the year. This in turn is widely covered by regional print media.

One more fact has to be mentioned. Many universities in Germany offer bachelor and master degree programs for students, who wish to work in the field. As a rule, no fees for public universities (around 90% of all universities are public) are raised in Germany, though entrance examinations are held for universities and academies in the field. They are free to select the most talented students. The most renowned universities are in Munich, Berlin, Essen, Hannover, Karlsruhe, Hamburg and Bremen.

All this explains, why theaters in Germany compete heavily for successful art directors and conductors, for actors and authors of innovative scripts, and obviously for local and tourist audiences.

Theaters and concert halls are prominent places in their cities. As a rule they represent the scenic third dimension of attractive public piazzas without cars that are relaxing locations for citizens and tourists alike, who enjoy to frequent adjacent cafes and restaurants.

### 4.2. Concert Halls

There are 37 public concert halls in Germany. They represent central venues for musical performance in the serious music sector. <sup>Note 5</sup> They are designed for music performances or have been retrofitted for this purpose and usually offer seating capacity for several hundred visitors. 14 concert halls are united in the German Conference of Concert Halls to coordinate their programs and share marketing expenses Together with the opera houses, concert halls are central venues for musical performance in a city in the classical music sector. Prominent examples are



the *Philharmonie* in Berlin (built in 1978) and the spectacular concert hall in Hamburg, built in 2015. These buildings are specially erected for concerts and designed accordingly in terms of architecture and technical equipment. The concert halls are managed by administrative managers, employed by the local government, while the music program is under the responsibility of an *Intendant* (music director), who is selected and contracted by the local government. Concert halls serve as venues for local and regional

ensembles, but they are also used for guest performances and festivals.

In Germany, in 2022, there were 129 professional orchestras with almost 10.000 musicians. 110 orchestras and 8 chamber orchestras are public and financed by German states or local governments. 11 orchestras and big bands that are financed by regional (state) public radio stations.



**Fig. 3** A marketing kaleidoscope of German opera houses (Collage by Klaus R. Kunzmann)





**Fig. 4** A marketing kaleidoscope of German dance theatres

(Collage by Klaus R. Kunzmann)



### 4.3 City Halls

In addition to theaters and concert halls many German cities have a multifunctional Stadthalle (City hall, town hall, guild hall civic hall), which is used for diverse cultural and commercial events, from rock to classical concerts from party conventions to academic and professional congresses, from exhibitions to sports events (e.g. boxing, table tennis). As a rule, they are built after 1945 in the city center. When public land was not available in the inner city they were located outside city centers. Such sites are linked to commercial fair grounds, where abundant parking space was available and where public transport lines allowed convenient access. Such city halls are not considered to be local light towers, even if they had been designed by renowned architects as for example the city hall in Bielefeld. Usually such city halls are managed by independent public authorities, that take care that expenses and earnings are balanced.

### 4.4 Socio-cultural Centers

While opera houses, theaters, and concert halls are traditional venues for performing arts and music for the conservative upper and middle class, most German cities also operate public socio-cultural centers in selected urban districts and neighborhoods. Socio-cultural centers are venues of the most diverse perceptions of culture, promotes civic engagement and the creative-cultural competences of many - regardless of age, gender and origin - through cultural participation. The history of socio-cultural work and institutions began in West Germany in the 1970s, when initiatives, later associations, sprang up like mushrooms from the fertile soil of the New Social Movements. They occupied industrial wastelands, empty tenement buildings, disused railway stations and the like - more or less legally - to realize their ideas of a new model of society. It was supposed to be free and fair, and in any case different from the rules that had prevailed until then. Originally born out of an urban movement for alternative forms of cultural expression and mediation that pushed for social change, socio-cultural centers and initiatives are now an integral part of the cultural landscape in large and small cities as well as in rural areas. Experience has shown that cultural activities are also a successful means of integrating migrants with an ethnic background in other cultures into the German society. Today socio-cultural centers offer space for a broad range of cultural activities. They get basic financial support of the local government, though socio-cultural centers are also depending on support from members and foundations and from project-based support from state programs. The centers are operated by creative and socially minded managers, who

are appointed by the local government. Socio-cultural centers in Germany have become essential institutions in German cities and towns. They are corner stones of community development in German cities and towns by offering a wide range of cultural services in urban districts for residents in a district or neighborhood. Here often consumption and production go hand in hand (called "prosumption"). Visitors are not just consumers of production, but participate in the production. This trend may support the use of underused commercial space. Combining production and consumption may increasingly become a mode for cultural addicts to combine interest and amateurish cultural hobbies, by joining groups, who are practicing in their free time under professional guidance theater, dance and music.

### 4.5 Festivals

Many German cities use summer holidays to stage theater and music festivals, using existing theaters and concert halls or even particular venues, such as open-air arenas (e.g. the Waldbühne in Berlin or the Festspielhaus in Bayreuth) and obsolete industrial structures (e.g. the railway yard in Mülheim). Internationally renowned opera festivals take place in Munich, Berlin, Baden-Baden and Bayreuth. The state of Schleswig Holstein is performing an annual music-festival, where private country houses serve as venues for concerts of internationally renowned musicians to entertain the visitors from the state and beyond attracting international musicians. The Ruhr, an old industrial region is polishing its poor cultural image by three annual festivals. Old industrial structures are the stage for the experimental Ruhrtriennale or the theater festival in Mülheim/Ruhr. And a broad range of venues in the Ruhr region offer attractive spaces for a privately sponsored annual piano festival.

### 4.6 Cultural and creative industries

During the last quarter of the 20th century cultural and creative industries became a favorite action field of regional and local economic development (Note 6). Inspired by world-wide read popular books of Allen Scott, Richard Florida and Charles Landry (Note 7), and promoted by generous public policies these long neglected fields became popular and caused cities to develop cultural and creative quarters, which in turn encouraged many young artists and culture-related entrepreneurs to start a free-lance career. A young consumption-oriented generation of citizens enjoyed the products designed and produced by the new enterprises. Creative quarters mushroomed all over Europe. They became favorite living quarters for young mainly educated citizens. In post-pandemic times digitalized cultural production will further increase



and change consumption modes. Benefit-ting from the existence and contracts of the local cultural infrastructure these industries complement the cultural profile of a city.

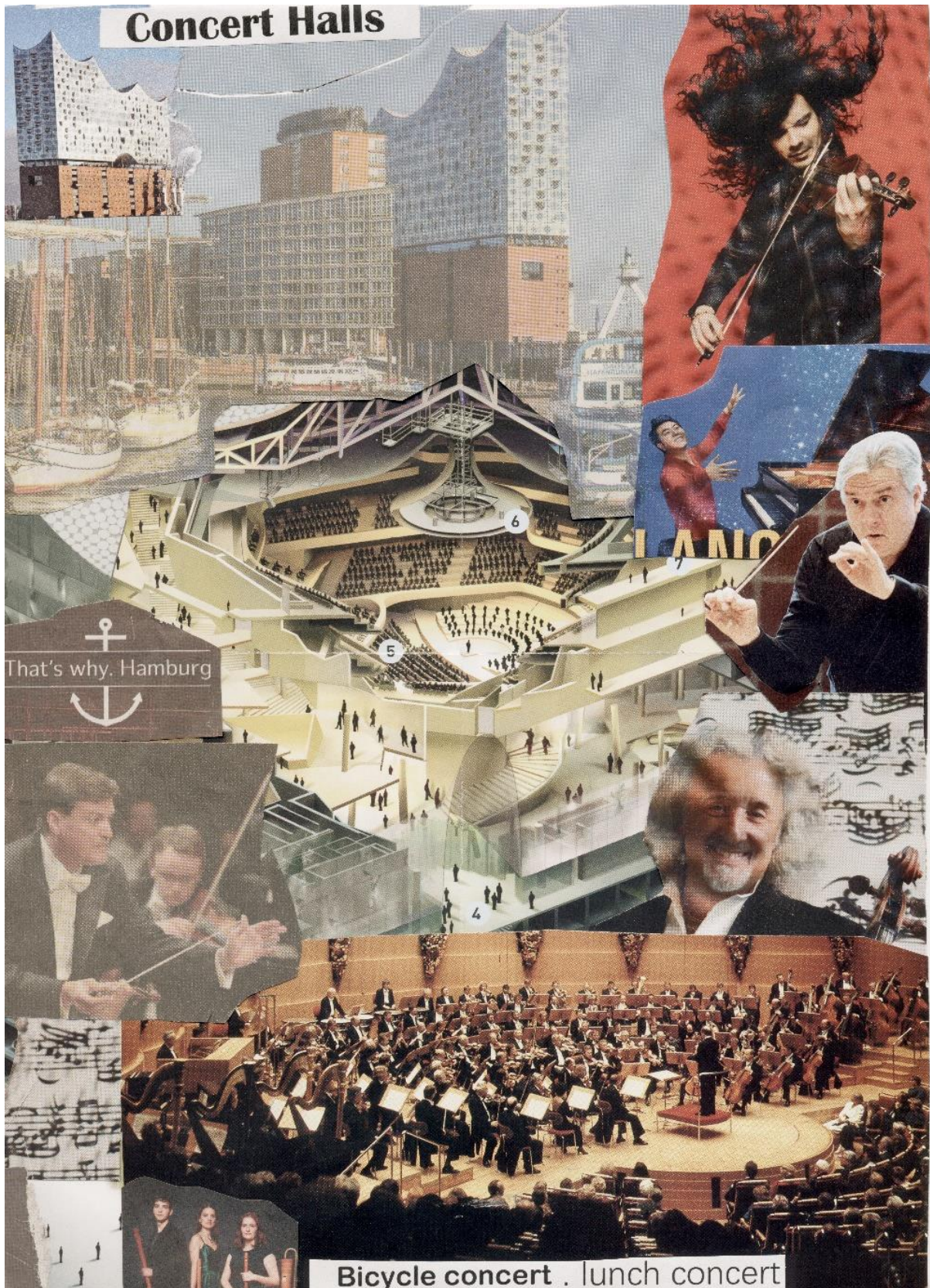


Fig. 5 A marketing kaleidoscope of concert halls (Collage by Klaus R. Kunzmann)





Fig. 6 A marketing kaleidoscope of German dance theaters (Collage by Klaus R. Kunzmann)



## 5. The Implications of the Pandemic for Culture in Germany

Two years of lockdowns during the pandemic had enormous implications for cultural life in German cities. Lockdowns changed consumption modes, e-shopping and virtual entertainment. Public and private theaters and concert halls were closed. The whole creative sector in a city had to be even more creative to survive. Theaters had to use their creativity to explore ways and means to use digital or hybrid forms of production to maintain its linkages with their traditional audiences. Actors and musicians who were fully employed by their public institutions had much time to explore new projects, once the pandemic came to an end. Administrative staff had to work at home. Private creative industries and event agencies, often depending on public cultural policies, had to be very creative to survive in the crisis. Many event agencies had to lay-off their technical and support staff. Self-employed singers and free-lance were forced to use savings or relied on family income to survive the crisis. Creative industries were financially supported by special public programs. They all benefited from *Kurzarbeitsgeld*, a federal program to support the local economy.

Will cultural consumption change in post-pandemic times? Given the experience made during the pandemic and accelerated by increasing digitalization and social polarization, additionally affected by increasing energy prizes in Germany caused by the Russian aggression to Ukraine and the closure of energy pipelines providing gas and oil to Germany, public households as well as rising inflation rates and reduced audiences, some cities in Germany will discuss the future of their theaters. Even after the end of lockdowns, theaters complain about a considerable decline of audiences, which is explained by two reasons. First, many visitors are expressing financial reasons, caused by inflation (in Germany in 2023 around 8 to 10 %) and rising ticket costs. Due to inflation and higher energy costs ticket prizes to theaters and concerts will certainly have been raised. Second, the gradual transition to virtual modes of cultural production and services has caused cultural consumers to enjoy culture at home. This again will further reduce the audience, unless operation costs and ticket costs will be subsidized by private sponsors and foundations. Theaters will certainly not be closed, but their programs will be curtailed and some staff will have to find a job in the private market. As in the United States, even in the German social market economy culture will depend more and more on the market, and on the willingness of the civil society to contribute to the costs of local cultural activities. Demographic development (aging), new values of

the generation Z and a growing number of migrants from other cultural environments will influence the consumption modes and cultural contents. Combining cultural activities with food events will become a hype in the post-Covid-19 society.

After the pandemic, the local cultural worlds will be different. In Germany the crisis has immensely accelerated the digitalization of the society and economy. Cultures had to be consumed at home. Public cultural institutions experimented with digital performances to maintain some contacts with their visitors and clients. Nevertheless, all cultural institutions have to accept that their face-to-face audiences will decline. Creative private cultural enterprises had to be creative to earn their living or change their business modes by offering virtual productions and e-shopping.

The pandemic, too, will have implications for local urban development policies<sup>Note 8</sup>. Primarily inner cities will experience some change. They will lose some of their urban attractiveness for less wealthy citizens and tourists. Caused by energy shortage, the transformative spirit of city development, inner cities will be transformed into greener environments, almost car free and bicycle and pedestrian dominated environments. Attractive public piazzas with more green alleys, roof gardens and public parks will be even more important to attract citizens from the suburbs. Young urbanites in larger cities will be forced to find affordable housing in the wider suburban city region. Larger offices will decide to shift to hybrid working styles.

All this will reduce the habit to enjoy cultural activities in inner cities after work and to benefit from digital culture at home. Affordable accessibility will be an important criterion of transformative development in the city where car mobility is losing its dominance as a consequence of mobility changes of the generation Z and policies to stop global warming and save non-renewable resources. With a growing number of foreign-born citizens and their children, cultural traditions will change. Though multicultural activities initiated by different ethnic and religious groups (Syrian, Somalian, Afghanistan, Russian or Ukrainian) will enrich and the cultural life in German cities.

In the future more flexible and affordable places for cultural projects and creative industries that are relying on cultural activities and new life styles of a city will be required.

The postponed digital turn of the German society will force cultural institutions to invest more time and effort in hybrid modes of cultural production and services. This will certainly reduce the number of visitors in theaters, opera houses and concert halls, unless



the managers of the venues explore new more entertaining and less educating approaches to their cultural services and productions. The digital turn may also cause art students to focus on qualifications, which can also be used to find work outside the cultural sector.

## 6. Conclusion

In times of geopolitical conflicts, energy capitalism, pandemics, inflation, my-country-first populism and growing social disparities, culture will receive less social and political support. Local governments in Germany are challenged to sustain their cultural light towers and cultural community centers. A stagnating economy caused by global trade wars and speculations in non-renewable resources will slow-down the living standards of the German society. Social disparities and spatial fragmentation in city regions will increase. Some theaters and cultural centers in cities and towns may even have to face potential closure unless their managers show creativity in sustaining their production and services, and offer affordable programs that meet the progressively much more diverse expectations of the local community. Younger generations will call for more cultural diversity. Local budgets for culture, however, will decline compared to times prior to the pandemic. They will call for more state and federal help, though the federal and state governments will not be willing to raise their generous support for local governments. While theaters, concert halls and cultural centers will depend on local support. They will be forced to apply for additional funds for new productions by responding and applying to specific thematic programs of federal and state governments. In the future, more private enterprises and foundations will have to contribute productions, or just lease underused cultural space for free to special cultural events. Less routine and more creativity, will be the slogan for the future, for cultural institutions and local governments alike (Gnad et al.). Hybrid modes of production will be one answer of theaters and concert halls to maintain their audiences and justify their existence in digital times. To this end the continuous qualification of managers and technical staff of cultural venues will be crucial. Many universities and institutions in Germany already offer a broad range of especially designed programs and courses to update cultural management competence. Festival locations will remain favorite entertainment events for the more affluent segment of the society.

Given growing social disparities in cities socio-cultural centers will become even more important to

provide cultural entertainment and education and secure peace in socially disadvantaged city districts. They will be supported by local governments and the civil society with much voluntary commitment and labor. Empty consumption spaces in inner cities will offer multiple opportunities for local creative industries and the creative segment of the civil society. One hope is that property owners will decline their rents decline or even lease unused spaces for free to cultural uses. Younger generations of the society may be more willing to share their inherited wealth for cultural initiatives.

In the coming decade theaters and concert halls in German city centers will remain light towers of cities. Socio-social centers will even become more important as corner stones of a more fragmented cosmopolitan city region to make the inclusion of migrants easier and by doing so will sustain security and peace in the city.

## 7. Transferability

Context matters. Cultural traditions and values as well as cultural policies and cultural management styles in polycentric Germany and centralized Japan where the national government has much more power. The economies in both countries follow different ideological trends. The role of local governments in financing and operating cultural infrastructure and in promoting cultural projects differs considerably. Hence any transfer of cultural policies and success stories requires careful handling. Only a thorough analysis of problems could lead to strategies that address the challenges. Experience tells that observations made in another country inspire, but solutions have to be rooted in the respective local, cultural, economic and political environment. Ideas may be global, though solutions are always local. <sup>Note 9)</sup>





Fig. 7 The Covid-19 Culture (Collage by Klaus R. Kunzmann)





Fig. 8 Digital Culture Collage by Klaus R. Kunzmann)



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The paper is based on numerous sources in German publications in German language. Due to their limited accessibility to Japanese readers they are not quoted in the list of references.

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## Notes

Note 1) Particularly: Mac Gregor, Nil (2005) *Germany: Memories of a Nation*. London: Penguin

Useful sources on cultural policies in Germany are

- Glaser, Herrmann (1999) *Deutsche Kultur 1945-2000*. Berlin: Ullstein.
- Siebel, Walter (2015) *Die Kultur der Stadt*. Berlin: Suhrkamp.
- See also the Annual Reports of the Kulturpolitische Gesellschaft. e.g. Norbert Sievers, Ulrike Blumenreich, Sabine Dengel und Christine Wingert, Hrsg. (2021) *Jahrbuch für Kulturpolitik 2019/20. Kultur. Macht. Heimat*. Heimat als kulturpolitische Herausforderung Band 17 der Reihe Jahrbuch für Kulturpolitik. Bonn: Institut für Kulturpolitik der Kulturpolitischen Gesellschaft. Münster: Landschaftsverband Westfalen Lippe.
- bpb (= Beilage zur Wochenzeitung Das Parlament) (2004) Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte- Special issue on cultural policies in Germany . B49/2004.

A critical comment on German cultural policies has been published by Haselbach, Dieter, Armin Klein und Pius Knüsel: (2012), *Der Kulturinfarkt: Von Allem zu viel und überall das Gleiche. Eine Polemik über Kulturpolitik, Kulturstaat, Kultursubvention*. München: Albrecht Knaus Verlag.

Note 2) Most data are from Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder Hrsg. (2022) *Kulturfinanzbericht 2020*. Wiesbaden: Statistisches Bundesamt.

Note 3) International publications, articulating the importance of culture in cities are for example

- Debord, Guy (1967/1992) *La Sociéete du Spéctable*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Miles, Malcom (2007) *Cities and Cultures*. London: Routledge.
- Zukin, Sharon (1997) *The Culture of Cities*. Cambridge. Blackwell.

European task force in culture and development (1997) *Culture in from the margins. A contribution to the debate in culture and development in Europe*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Note 4) Brauneck, Gérard and Manfred Brauneck. Hg. (2001) *Theaterlexikon: Begriffe und Epochen, Bühnen und Ensembles*. Hamburg: Rowohlt

Note 5) Music Council, Ed. (2019) *Musical Life in Germany*. Bonn: German Music Information Center.

Note 8) The implications of Covid-19 have become a concern of many planners in Europe and Germany, for example

- Just, Tobias und Franziska Plößl, Hrsg. (2022) *Die Europäische Stadt nach Corona. Strategien für resiliente Städte und Immobilien*. Heidelberg Springer Nature,
- Kunzmann, Klaus (2020) *Smart Cities After Covid-19: Ten Narratives*. disP: The Planning Review 221 · 56.2-
- Volkmer, Michael und Karin Werner, Hg. (2021) *Die Corona-Gesellschaft: Analysen zur Lage und Perspektiven für die Zukunft*. Bielfeld: transcript.
- Scott, Carlos Nunes, Ed. (2022) *Local Government and the Covid-19 Pandemic*. Heidelberg: Springer.
- Galloway, Scott (2021) *Post-Corona*. London: Penguin.

Note 9) In fall 2022, for example, in the context of a generous program to address climate change (ZERO) the Federal government launched a small program for cultural institutions, who suggested to produced cultural projects linked to climate change and promised to save energy.

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- 3) Siebel, Walter (2015) *Die Kultur der Stadt*. Berlin: Suhrkamp.
- 4) Norbert Sievers, Ulrike Blumenreich, Sabine Dengel und Christine Wingert, Hrsg. (2021) *Jahrbuch für Kulturpolitik 2019/20. Kultur. Macht. Heimat*. Heimat als kulturpolitische Herausforderung Band 17 der Reihe Jahrbuch für Kulturpolitik. Bonn: Institut für Kulturpolitik der Kulturpolitischen Gesellschaft. Münster: Landschaftsverband Westfalen Lippe.
- 5) bpb (= Beilage zur Wochenzeitung Das Parlament) (2004) Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte- Special issue on cultural policies in Germany . B49/2004.
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- 7) Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder Hrsg.(2022)

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- 8) *Kulturfinanzbericht 2020*. Wiesbaden: Statistisches Bundesamt.
  - 9) Debord, Guy (1967/1992) *La Société du Spectacle*. Paris: Gallimard.
  - 10) Miles, Malcolm (2007) *Cities and Cultures*. London: Routledge.
  - 11) Zukin, Sharon (1997) *The Culture of Cities*. Cambridge: Blackwell.
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  - 17) Kunzmann, Klaus, R. (2020) *The Creative City: An Obituary?* GRIPS Cultural Policy Concentration (CPC) Case Studies No.23 <https://www.culture.grips.ac.jp/case-series>
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  - 26) Volkmer, Michael und Karin Werner, Hg. (2021) *Die Corona-Gesellschaft: Analysen zur Lage und Perspektiven für die Zukunft*. Bielefeld: transcript.
  - 27) Scott, Carlos Nunes, Ed. (2022) *Local Government and the Covid-19 Pandemic*. Heidelberg: Springer.
  - 28) Galloway, Scott (2021) *Post-Corona*. London: Penguin.