

# Summary



**UNESCO's Concept of Culture Heritage / Or: What do the Fagus Factory in Alfeld, the Log Books of James Cook, and the Production and Playing of the Azerbaijani Tar Have in Common? (Frank Simon-Ritz)**

(pp. 650 – 655)

This year the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) celebrates two important anniversaries: the 50th anniversary of the »Convention Concerning the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage« and the 30th anniversary of the »Memory of the World Programme«. Both international agreements also have considerable implications for the work of libraries.

In 1972 the member countries of UNESCO signed an international agreement designed to protect the world's natural sites and cultural properties. The impetus came from a coalition project to preserve the temples known as the »Nubian Monuments« that were located near Abu Simbel along the Egypt-Sudan border from destruction due to the building of the Aswan High Dam on the Nile River in the 1960s. In an unprecedented international campaign, countries around the world responded to the UNESCO appeal and raised over 80 million dollars as well as supplying equipment and technical skills in order to relocate the monuments of the rock-cut temples. This project made it clear that the entire world community is responsible for the preservation and conservation of select memorials, ancient sites, or natural landscapes. Today there are 1,154 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 167 countries. 51 of them can be found in Germany.

The »Memory of the World Programme« was established in 1992. It is a global digital network of outstanding collections of books, manuscripts, music scores, picture images, sound recordings and films. The goal of the registry is to ensure the safety of and make accessible documentary evidence of exceptional value in archives, libraries, and museums. At present (26 October 2022) the registry holds 427 entries.

**Libraries in Times of War / Blue Shield Germany and Cultural Assets in the Russian-Ukrainian War (Elisabeth Korinth, Matthias Wehry)**

(pp. 662 – 665)

The UNESCO »Convention Concerning the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage« and its »Memory of the World Programme« are international agreements about the protection of cultural assets. Even under normal circumstances it is difficult to enforce them. Cases of military conflict, such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine, demonstrate, however, that much more is needed than written agreements to efficiently guarantee protection. For this reason, the UNESCO-affiliated Blue Shield International was established in 1996. It has been given the special task of preserving cultural assets in the event of wars, armed conflicts, and natural catastrophes. Blue Shield Germany is one of the national committees.

The German national committee is a non-profit association which is involved in the protection of material and immaterial cultural heritage in areas of conflict or catastrophe at the national and international level. Its ability to take action is based on the 1954 »Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict«. Among the committee's constituent members are the most important organisations in the fields of monuments, museums, libraries and archives, thus bundling valuable expertise and enabling a holistic approach to cultural heritage.

Blue Shield is in this way an interdisciplinary association and benefits from having members from different fields working together in committees and action groups. During the Ukraine conflict the network of experts from different areas of specialisation have been able to use their various contacts with Ukrainian colleagues and organisations in order to find ways to provide support. Active since March 2022, an important cornerstone for this work has been the »Ukraine Monitor«, a task force which collects and coordinates reports of damage to cultural assets throughout Ukraine.

**Public Music Libraries / An Obsolescent Model or an Indispensable Pillar of Musical Education? (Verena Funtenberger)**

(pp. 674 – 678)

In recent years, the future of public music libraries has repeatedly been a topic of discussion at various conferences. As seen in libraries in general, the level of borrowing of physical media is also declining in music libraries. At the same time, however, the cataloguing and classification of their materials remain more cost-intensive than in other fields, because these require special competencies of music librarianship and there continue to be few collaborative sources of data. Lending statistics for sheet music, moreover, have never been able to compete with those of cookbooks or other how-to books, due to the »hurdle of musical notation«. Some decision-makers have therefore posed the question whether this collection segment should even be offered at all. In recent years, many music collections have been drastically reduced and positions for music librarians left vacant. The vision that was once laid out in a publication titled »The Public Music Library«, whereby every larger city should have a music library to accompany the communal music schools, now seems to be a distant utopia. Is the public music library an obsolescent concept?

Certainly not. There is no alternative to public music libraries. They are an indispensable and important pillar of musical education which have their own special goals and a unique profile. They remain the only institution which can offer open, barrier-free, and free-of-charge access for those interested in music, and can contribute, together with their educational and cultural partners, to ensuring equal opportunity and inclusive participation. It is not without reason that the position paper of the State Music Council of North Rhine-Westphalia recommends the expansion of music libraries into »third places«.

*Translated by Martha Baker*