

JEWISH VOICE FROM GERMANY

Special Report on Saxony-Anhalt



SUPPLEMENT

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Wernigerode's Rathaus, first documented in 1277, is considered one of Europe's finest town halls. It is a good starting point for a tour through Saxony-Anhalt, also known as the land of early birds as its residents get up before the rest of Germany

Where the Early Birds Live

An Invitation by Minister-President Reiner Haseloff

Welcome to Saxony-Anhalt – Germany's youngest federal state. But Saxony-Anhalt is only young when it comes to its status as a state in the Federal Republic of Germany. The history of the region itself is a far older and a far richer one.

In 1990, upon re-unification Saxony-Anhalt was founded as one of five new German states. At the time, the state faced major structural challenges. The process of economic restructuring was exceptionally difficult, not

least because the state was dominated by large industrial combines, particularly in the Leuna-Halle and Bitterfeld “chemicals triangle” and in the machine-making area around Magdeburg. But ultimately the leap from Marx to market economy was a successful one. Today, Saxony-Anhalt’s economy has made great progress in terms of stability, dynamism and competitiveness. The inefficient state enterprises are a thing of the past, replaced by modern and competitive companies. Many of these enterprises

are operating successfully on the global market. Unemployment in Saxony-Anhalt has undergone a significant decline, also in relation to the national average. Just eight years ago, Saxony-Anhalt's unemployment rate was 20.2 percent. In October 2014, it fell to under ten percent for the first time.

The chemicals industry is one of Saxony-Anhalt's leading sectors. Today, Bayer produces aspirin for the global market in Bitterfeld; the Total refinery in Leuna supplies fuel to much of

Germany; and Schkopau has become an important center for Dow Chemical Company.

The revival of Saxony-Anhalt as a center of research and innovation is another one of the success stories of post-reunification Germany. The state is now home to numerous cutting-edge enterprises and important research institutes. Saxony-Anhalt enjoys an outstanding reputation in the ar-

ea of new technologies, and we have a long tradition of science and research. The region around Magdeburg is known as a cradle of German engineering. In 1856, the renowned Association of German Engineers was founded in Alexisbad, in the Harz region. In 2008, Leopoldina was named the new German National Academy of Sciences, further strengthening the state as a center of science and research. The Academy, which has been located in Halle since 1878, has brought further prestige to the state of Saxony-Anhalt.

Saxony-Anhalt is also a center of music. To this day, a rich musical tradition can be found across the state, which boasts many illustrious concerts and music festivals, including the Handel Festival in Halle, the Telemann Festival in Magdeburg, the Bach Festival in Köthen, and the

Kurt Weill Festival in Dessau. Moses Mendelssohn, who was born in Dessau in 1729, was a leading representative of the educated Jewish middle class, which was shaped by emancipatory and enlightenment ideals. Not far from Dessau is the town of Coswig, birthplace of Hermann Cohen, a philosopher and founder of the neo-Kantian Marburg School. And Friedrich Nietzsche was born in Röcken.

Saxony-Anhalt also boasts a wealth of culture and history. The Old Town of Quedlinburg, the "Luther cities" of Wittenberg and Eisleben, the Dessau-Wörlitz Garden Realm, and the Bauhaus Dessau complex are all UNESCO World Heritage sites. The Francke Foundations in Halle are

on the proposed list of sites. The fabled Bronze Age Nebra sky disk and the Hornhausen rider stele dating from the eighth century are also among the cultural treasures located in the state.

In addition, Magdeburg is of exemplary importance to the early history of the Holy Roman Empire. No other city is more closely associated with the legacy of Otto the Great. And 2017 will mark the

500th anniversary of Martin Luther's posting of the Ninety-Five Theses. Wittenberg is an important center in the history of the Reformation and the city is home to many of the most notable Luther memorials, including the Castle Church and Parish Church St. Marien, the historic Augusteum college, the Luther House, and the old university. The "Decade of the Reformation" was launched in Wittenberg in 2008. In 2017, the city will be one of the central sites of the celebrations.



aseloff

Just two years after that, the Bauhaus will celebrate its 100th anniversary. The history of the Dessau Bauhaus is closely tied to the political and cultural history of the first German republic. The Dessau Bauhaus helped shape classical modernism and proposed the most radical critique of design as a means of mastering the challenges of modernity. The Bauhaus went on to become one of the most important German art movements of the early twentieth century. And after classical music, Bauhaus design is arguably Germany's most important cultural export.

Geographically and culturally, Saxony-Anhalt is situated at the heart of Germany and Europe. This in turn contributes to the unique character of the state as a center of culture and history. Taken together, Saxony-Anhalt is a place with both a rich past and a bright future. ■



Dr. Reiner Haseloff

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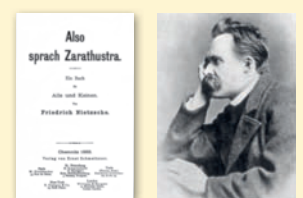
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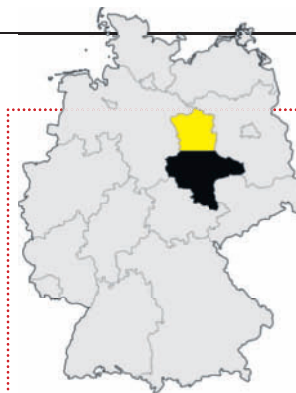
THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE WE GO



UNESCO

Saxony-Anhalt has the largest density of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Germany

- Old Town of Quedlinburg
- Bauhaus sites in Weimar and Dessau
- Luther Memorials in Eisleben and Wittenberg
- Dessau-Wörlitz Garden Realm



Saxony-Anhalt

Surface area: 20,451 km²

Neighboring the federal states of Lower Saxony, Brandenburg, Saxony and Thuringia

Population: 2.24 million

Population density: 110 inhabitants per km²

1.9 % of the population hold a foreign passport

80 % undenominational, 15.3 % Protestant,

3.8 % Catholic, 0.9 % other denominations

600 km of navigable inland waterways and 18 ports/transshipment points

Capital: Magdeburg (231,000 inhabitants)



Saxony-Anhalt's coat of arms represents its historical origins. The state was formed of the former Prussian province Saxony and the German Free State Anhalt. The upper part of the coat of arms with the eagle and the Saxonian crown represents the Prussian province while the lower half shows the bear of the Free State.

Tradition

Sympathy for the Devil...

Since days of old, during the night of April 30, Walpurgisnacht (Night of Walpurgis), witches convene on the Hexentanzplatz (Witches' Dance Square), a plateau perched high above the Bode gorge. From here they fly to the Brocken, the highest peak in the Harz mountains, for a night of reveling and mischief – with the devil. The tradition still draws tens of thousands to this day. They gather on the Harz peak, bonfires are lit, wild dancing and merry-making ensues.

For those who have forgotten their broom, the Hexentanzplatz can also be reached by cable car. The Brocken can be conquered on foot or with the Brocken Railway.



Food&Drink



Baumkuchen – “Tree Cake”, the “King of Cakes”, is a speciality from Salzwedel. The delicate cake is baked layer by layer on a spit over an open wood fire. When sliced later, the cake resembles the growth-rings of a tree – hence its name. Between 15 and 20 layers of batter make a Baumkuchen.

Saale-Unstrut Wines – Germany's northernmost wine-growing region produces exquisite, mainly dry wines. Beautiful landscapes, ancient castles and traditional wineries with wine-tasting facilities make for a memorable journey. The area is also the home of Germany's most popular “sekt” – sparkling wine – called Rotkäppchen (Little Red Riding Hood).

Milbenkäse – A rarity these days, this cheese from Würchwitz is made with the help of cheese mites ... The traditional way of manufacture and its distinctive slightly bitter

taste makes this cheese so special. The trusty mites in the rind are also eaten.

Halloren – The tasty chocolates are said to owe their shape to the buttons of the traditional salt-panners' garb of the town of Halle. Made from cream and chocolate, more than 180 million Halloren are sold each year.



Great Outdoors

Saxony-Anhalt is proud of its more than 200 **nature sanctuaries and landscape conservation areas**. In the **Harz National Park** (24,700 hectares) mountain peaks, spectacular rock formations and deep forests await the visitor. With a bit of luck, you can observe black storks, lynx and European wildcats here. Why not wander through Europe's largest lime tree forest in the park **Colbitz-Letzlinger Heide**? Nature park **Drömling**, also called the “Land of the 1000 Ditches”, is home to endangered species. Or you can watch cranes and sea eagles and catch a sight of beavers at work in the fluvial topography of the **Dübener Heide** nature reserve.

Arts&Culture

MELT! Festival – The location near Gräfenhainichen is breathtaking, the music intoxicating: Melt, the festival for electronic and rock music takes place annually at Ferropolis, the City of Iron, against the backdrop of gigantic former brown coal excavators. Björk, Franz Ferdinand, Oasis, Tocotronic ... have all played in this industrial monument. Next Melt!: July 17–19, 2015 www.meltfestival.de

Handel Festspiele Halle – At venues in and near Halle, the annual festival celebrates the famous Baroque composer. World-class musicians perform music by Handel and his contemporaries. Tickets for the next festival (June 4–15, 2015) are already on sale: www.haendelfestspiele-halle.de

Rosarium Sangerhausen – A must for all lovers of the Queen of Flowers, the Rosarium boasts the largest collection of roses worldwide – more than 8,500 varieties. A magic place for all seasons, but make sure not to miss the first blossoming in early May. www.europa-rosarium.de



In Touch With Heaven

The Nebra Sky Disc

In 1999, a spectacular archaeological find was made – only to immediately disappear again: treasure hunters excavated a disc, weapons and artefacts dating back some 3,600 years. They sold their find right away but it was restored to its rightful owner Saxony-Anhalt in a spectacular operation.

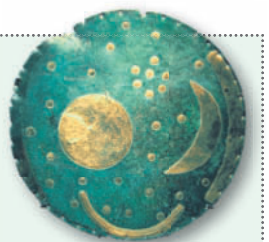
The Nebra Sky Disc, a bronze disc with gold insertions showing the sun, the moon and stars, is the oldest concrete depiction of cosmic phenomena. According to the UNESCO Memory of the World Register, the Nebra Sky Disc is “one of the most important archaeological finds of the 20th century.” It can be seen in Halle's State Museum of Prehistory. www.himmelsscheibe-erleben.de

Solar Observatory Goseck

It seems that the people of Saxony-Anhalt have always had a special affinity to celestial spheres: The Solar Observatory of Goseck, a monument of the Neolithic age, dates back some 7,000 years. Discovered in 1991, it is one of the earliest sites testifying to man's observation of the skies.

www.sonnenobservatorium-goseck.info

Find out more about archaeology in Saxony-Anhalt: www.himmelswege.de





TRAVEL

Icons of Arts and Culture

Discover the historic heart of Germany

Saxony-Anhalt and its capital Magdeburg are always worth a trip. Here one can experience central Europe’s cultural traditions in their purest form. More than 1000 years ago, it was from Magdeburg that emperor Otto the Great set out into the world; he is regarded as the founder of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, which existed until 1806. Magdeburg Cathedral is the oldest Gothic church in Germany. It houses a great number of treasures and to this day shapes the silhouette of the city on the river Elbe.

The Harz mountains and their Brocken peak are steeped in legend and were a source of fascination even to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Heinrich Heine, prompting them to explore this mountain landscape of forest, moors and flowing rivers. Today, the Harz National Park and Nature Reserve is an important habitat for rare animals. It offers hiking routes, many ski slopes and perfect cross-country skiing conditions – and the legendary Brocken Railway.



“The building is the ultimate goal of all fine art,” the Bauhaus manifesto proclaimed back in 1919. As a school of design, the Bauhaus revolutionized artistic and architectural thinking and production worldwide, and is considered a headstone of the modern age. Today the cultural inheritance of the Bauhaus is preserved and carried forward by the Dessau Bauhaus Foundation. There are tours of the Bauhaus and the Masters’ Houses; one building in the Gropius estate is dedicated to the life and work of Dessau born philosopher Moses Mendelssohn.



When Italian philosopher Umberto Eco was asked which woman from European art he would most like to spend an evening with, he answered: “In first place, with Uta von Naumburg.” Uta’s statue is a highlight among the medieval Naumburg Master’s depiction of the twelve cathedral founders. There is much more to discover in this impressive church, its adjoining cloister, gardens and castle. During a tour of the historic old town, tasting specialties of the near-by wine-growing Saale Unstrut area is a must.



“It is now endlessly beautiful here,” wrote Goethe in 1778 about the “new” he found all around him in Wörlitz Park. Laid out in the late 18th century, with an extent of 277 acres (112 ha) it is not only one the largest but also one of the first and most distinguished landscape parks of continental Europe. A garden for the people, it is cluttered with follies and artistic arrangements. Once a haven for the enlightened, the unrivalled Garden Realm was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2000.



MEDIA

George and Matt in Halberstadt

Saxony-Anhalt has become a major player in the international movie industry

By Rainer Robra

In 2014, twenty feature films and television movies were made in Saxony-Anhalt. The year before, “Monuments Men” was filmed in Halberstadt, Merseburg and Osterwieck to worldwide acclaim. George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, and Bill Murray all had starring roles. Behind the scenes, up to 600 people took part in the shoot. “Monuments Men” went on to premiere at the Berlin International Film Festival in February 2014. Minister-President Reiner Haseloff was on hand on the red carpet to greet George Clooney, who produced, directed and starred in the film. He invited the Hollywood star to return to Saxony-Anhalt, where his film crew had spent what was by all accounts an enjoyable three weeks in the idyllic town of Ilsenburg in the Harz region.

Courageous and forward-thinking

But even before George Clooney, many other producers staged their films in Saxony-Anhalt. And other exciting projects are in development for the coming year. The small state in the heart of Germany has become a contender among film locales worldwide. But this success was nowhere on the horizon when the minister-presidents of the central German states of Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia founded a joint association for the promotion of film back in 1997. The Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung GmbH (MDM) association commenced its work in 1998. Since then, it has provided a total of 198 million euros of funding to 1,669 projects in all.

Before MDM was founded, no film intended for commercial release had ever been made in Saxony-Anhalt. The dominance of the established media locales Berlin, Munich and Hamburg seemed entirely out of reach, and Holly-



Hollywood stars filming “The Monuments Men” at locations in Saxony-Anhalt clearly enjoy working here: Damon and Clooney



The people of Saxony-Anhalt are not only media consumers; they are producers and important contributors to the state’s creative economy

wood seemed but a distant galaxy. In the mid-1990s, the new state of Saxony-Anhalt, which had only been called into existence after German reunification, was faced with difficult economic and social challenges. In statistical comparisons with other German states, Saxony-Anhalt could often be found languishing at the bottom. Its public image was equally unfavorable. The great historical and cultural achievements of the state and its beautiful landscape were rarely mentioned in the media. Nor were the many accomplishments that had been achieved since reunification, such as the reversal of much of the environmental damage which had been wrought in the former East Germany, and the construction of new infrastructure.

The decision of the state government to take part in what was then still at best a fledgling media industry was both courageous and forward-thinking. This political decision helped secure Saxony-Anhalt its place in what is today one of our leading social, cultural and economic industries. But in the late 1990s, when the analogue age was only just drawing to a close, no one could have anticipated that the production and distribution of digital audiovisual works would become one of the world’s most dynamic economic sectors.

Artistic and technical qualities

All national and international media platforms are always on the lookout for new content. Productions from Saxony-Anhalt are known for both their high artistic and technical qualities. One example is the Studio Halle group, which is based in Halle (Saale). Since its founding in 1999, the company has focused on what was then the new DVD media format. Today, the Studio Halle group has an analogue and digital archive encompassing thousands of film titles, which are being restored, digitized and reissued.

But media technology is only one component of Halle’s success as a media locale. The Motion Works animated film studio, for example, offers an outstanding example of the artistic potential of modern me-

dia. The company was the first to move to Halle after the state government decided to promote the media sector. Today, Motion Works is one of Europe’s largest animation studios, known for its work in television and feature films for children including *The Little Polar Bear* and *Laura’s Star*.

Public broadcasters are another important partner for the state. Together with the states of Saxony and Thuringia, Saxony-Anhalt founded the Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk (MDR). The broadcaster has seen nationwide acclaim for its films, television series and feature film coproductions.

To mark the 25th anniversary since the fall of the Berlin Wall, German public TV produced the film *Bornholmer Strasse*. In a memorable performance, Charly Hübner in his role as the border police officer responsible that night captures the inner conflict of the guards between the tragic and the grotesque. Director Christian Schwochow shot the film at a former border inspection post. It was a fitting locale, which still gave off the forbidding air of former East Germany. This air of authenticity is crucial for many producers, directors and set designers. While director George Clooney turned to Osterwieck’s narrow streets lined by half-timbered buildings and the fabled Ladegast organ in Merseburg cathedral,

Christian Schwochow went to Marienborn inspection post. Actor and director Detlev Buck has twice chosen Vitzsburg Castle near Naumburg as the backdrop for his successful *Bibi und Tina* children’s films. In 2012, the Munich based production company Clausen-Wöbke-Putz went to Quedlinburg to film the movie version of Otfried Preussler’s *The Little Ghost*. This past summer, they returned to the UNESCO World Heritage City to film several scenes for *Heidi*.

The many films produced in Saxony-Anhalt have been a boon to the economy. Every euro that MDM has provided in film and media funding has been repaid many times over, bringing jobs to the state and boosting demand for goods and services, including catering for the film crews. In 2014, the regional effect was pegged at 311 percent; in concrete terms, this means the state provided about 2.4 million euros in financial support, and gained about 7.5 million euros in return. This, too, is evidence of the positive economic impact of the film industry.

Nominated for the Oscar

But the cultural impact and value is also important. Films made in Saxony-Anhalt have garnered countless nominations and awards at national and international film festivals, with films sponsored by MDM receiving frequent accolades. In 2012, the drama *In Darkness*, a coproduction by SchmidtKatze-Filmkollektiv from Halle, received an Academy Award nomination in the category of Best Foreign Language Film. The film by Polish director Agnieszka Holland is based on a true story: that of a group of Jews who escaped the ghetto in Lviv and then hid in the city’s sewer system. The rising production company 42 Film, also based in Halle, hopes that its coproduction *Corn Island*, which was nominated by Georgia, will take the coveted Oscar in Los Angeles.

Saxony-Anhalt has successfully established film as a cultural and economic institution in the state. And now the people of Saxony-Anhalt are not only media consumers; they are producers of media and important contributors to the state’s creative economy. ■

Minister of State Rainer Robra is the head of the State Chancellery of Saxony-Anhalt



The TV-production “Bornholmer Strasse” with Charly Hübner as patrol officer on November 9, 1989 was shot at former border inspection post Marienborn



INDUSTRY

Germany's Chemistry Lab

Innovative spirit and modern infrastructure make Saxony-Anhalt attractive to investors

By Dominik Bath

In the former East Germany, the city of Bitterfeld was known for the stench of its chemicals industry. Aging and outdated chemical facilities polluted the air. But those days are a thing of the past. Instead, the Miltitz Aromatics company helps perfume the air. As managing director Peter Müller notes, "We sell scent." And in that, they're a success. The mid-sized firm based in the Bitterfeld-Wolfen chemicals park has customers in nearly 30 countries. From Dior to Gucci to Joop and Jil Sander, nearly every flacon of perfume contains aromatic scents made by the family-owned firm.

"The perfumer is the one who draws the picture. And we're the ones who give the perfumer the colors to use," Müller explains. He founded Miltitz Aromatics in 1993. Today its 43 employees produce close to one hundred aromatic substances and scents. The scents are created in an in-house laboratory and developed especially to the customer's request. It's both chemistry and art, and business is booming; in 2014 Miltitz expects a turnover of about 11.5 million euros. Even the world-renowned Chanel No. 5 perfume has a splash of Saxony-Anhalt in it – Miltitz produces one of the important scent elements for the fragrance originally launched by French fashion designer Coco Chanel.

Investment and new jobs

Currently the 360 companies with facilities in Bitterfeld-Wolfen employ about 12,000 people in all. According to the chemicals industry association, the Bitterfeld-Wolfen chemical and pharmaceuticals plants are among the most modern facilities in Europe. But this was not always the case. After German reunification, Bitterfeld was ranked among Europe's most polluted cities. The industrial plants were outdated and in disrepair, and their products could not compete on the open market. Thousands of employees lost their jobs. The post-reunification process of economic integration in the area was a slow one. But by the mid-1990s, investment had increased. Meanwhile more than 600 companies have moved to Bitterfeld-Wolfen, Leuna, Zeitz and Piesteritz. Nearly 17 billion euros have been invested in southern Saxony-Anhalt, creating a wealth of new jobs. Over the past years, the unemployment rate has continued to decline. In October, it fell to under ten percent for the first time since reunification. Now the problem in Saxony-Anhalt is demo-

graphic change and a shortage of skilled workers.

Today, the chemicals industry in Saxony-Anhalt is populated by modern, forward-thinking companies. Since reunification, international corporations like BASF, Linde and TOTAL have opened facilities in Leuna. One of the best-known companies in Bitterfeld-Wolfen is pharmaceutical giant Bayer, which has been manufacturing aspirin there since 1995. As Gerhard Heimpold of the Halle Institute for Economic Research notes, "With its modern infrastructure and well-developed chemicals parks, Saxony-Anhalt is an attractive location for the chemicals industry."

Five future markets

As a scent manufacturer, Miltitz Aromatics is something of an exotic creature in the Bitterfeld-Wolfen chemicals park. At the same time, though, it exemplifies the economic landscape of Saxony-Anhalt, which is dominated by small firms, with a smattering of mid-sized companies mixed in. Large, capital intensive enterprises and corporate headquarters are rare in the state. As Saxony-Anhalt's Minister of Economics Hartmut Möllring notes, "Our goal must be to encourage companies to be more innovative and to move into markets outside Europe as well. That's the only way we can promote economic development in our state."

His ministry has identified five markets as the focus for future investment efforts: machinery and plant engineering, health and medicine,

mobility and logistics, chemistry and bio-economy, and food and agriculture. The ministry also aims to help close the investment gap for mid-sized firms. "In terms of research and development, companies in Saxony-Anhalt still have some catching up to do," Gerhard Heimpold agrees.

About ten staff members in Miltitz Aromatics' R&D department are working on improving existing products and developing new ones. The company has firmly established itself as a global leader in this market niche. Miltitz Aromatics ranks among the "hidden champions" – the leading lights of Saxony-Anhalt's business sector. Although many of these companies have little public visibility, they are powerhouses in the European and global market. For example, Haldensleben's Ifa Ro-



Leuna: once belching pollution, today state-of-the-art chemicals park

torion supplies drive shafts to all the world's major automotive manufacturers. MWG Manufaktur from the Harz region produces guidons that decorate the official vehicles of heads of state from all over the world. The world's smallest and lightest electromagnetic industrial brakes are made by Bischoff, a company based in Stassfurt. And chocolates manufactured by the Halloren company of Halle graced the table at the wedding of Swedish Crown Princess Victoria and Daniel Westling.

a real compliment for us. We're all very proud," Waldeyer says.

Strong partners

F-Glass has a staff of 230, and produces 600 tons of ultra-thin glass every day. Last year, the company had a turnover of about 70 million euros. But this success has been somewhat dimmed by a current slump in orders. "The glass market is quite difficult right now," says Waldeyer.

“

Today, many companies from Saxony-Anhalt are powerhouses in the European and global market

Engineering made in Saxony-Anhalt has also found its way into the new One World Trade Center in New York. Special glass made by F-Glass from Osterweddingen was used on the lower 20 floors of what is now the tallest building in the United States. F-Glass won the contract due to its technological innovation – a colorless flint glass that until now has mainly been used in solar energy units. "The contractors wanted the glass in the concrete wall to have a metallic sheen to it. And our glass was the only one that could provide that," as managing director Dominik Waldeyer explains. The windows in the remaining floors were provided by US-based companies. "Obtaining this commission was

Demand from the solar industry, which is in the throes of a crisis across Europe, is down sharply. Some companies in Saxony-Anhalt have also been forced to close or undertake layoffs. But F-Glass will weather the crisis. "We have a strong partner," Waldeyer notes. That's the Japanese company Asahi Glass, which is the majority shareholder in F-Glass. "We have good contacts in Asia," Waldeyer says. And in Asia, the solar industry is still booming.

According to a study by Ernst & Young consultants, Saxony-Anhalt is attractive to foreign investors. The study revealed that local branches or divisions of 30 foreign companies have created 1,531 jobs in the state, a number second only to North Rhine-Westphalia. But Saxony-Anhalt is still a relative unknown when it comes to industry decision-makers. The study surveyed 200 international executives about business locations in Germany. The executives cited Bavaria, Berlin and Baden-Württemberg as top locations, with Saxony-Anhalt receiving no mentions. But Economics Minister Hartmut Möllring is undaunted: "Our state is better than many people think. And more and more decision-makers know that." ■

Dominik Bath is economics reporter at the daily Magdeburger Volksstimme



Chanel No. 5 has a splash of Saxony-Anhalt in it



500 YEARS OF REFORMATION

The Two Sides of Luther

Wittenberg celebrates and wonders

and where he was headed when he died of a heart ailment on February 18, 1546.

In 1997, the Luther Memorials Foundation of Saxony-Anhalt was founded to prepare for the 2017 event. The foundation is based in the German state with the largest number of sites relevant to Luther's life, and is headed by Stefan Rhein, a philologist who somewhat surprisingly is a Catholic. According to Rhein, the foundation aims to "bring the religious and spiritual legacy of Luther and the Reformation to life for a contemporary audience." This includes maintaining the collections belonging to the Foundation's five museums: the Luther House and the Melanchthon House in Wittenberg; Luther's Birth House and Death House in Eisleben, and the house where his parents lived in Mansfeld, where Luther spent part of his childhood.

Renovation and restoration

Luther City Wittenberg is sprucing up for the big event. Across the city, renovation and restoration work is underway, and builders and diggers are everywhere. Scaffolding and tarpaulins still

Today, it is hard to believe, but when Martin Luther arrived in Wittenberg in 1508 to study theology, the town had just over 2,000 residents. And a university, of course. Frederick III, Elector of Saxony, also known as Frederick the Wise (1463–1525), made Wittenberg his residence. In 1502, he founded the University of Wittenberg, which was the first university in the empire established by a secular ruler rather than by Papal sanction. This was also where

Chairwoman of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany and currently the Special Envoy to the Luther anniversary of 2017.

Shameful legacy

This is evident in Luther's 1543 treatise *Of the Jews and their Lies*, in which he presented a religiously based but irredeemably anti-Jewish screed that also made reference to Wittenberg's "Jew's Sow", a stone relief dating from the fourteenth century that decorates the roof cornice of the Parish Church. Behind the sow stands a rabbi; underneath him, piglets and Jews are shown sucking from the pig's teat. This was a popular image dating from the Middle Ages, which was used on Christian churches throughout much of Europe.

Two new books by German researchers have taken up this longstanding debate, offering a fresh assessment of the issue: *War Luther Antisemit?* (Was Luther an Anti-Semite?), by Dietz Behring, and *Luthers Juden* (Luther's Jews), by Thomas Kaufmann. Stefan Rhein has also offered his assurance that this debate "has been an integral component of the preparations for the anniversary celebrations from the very start."

The 500th anniversary is expected to draw up to a million visitors from all over the world – even Pope Francis is among the invitees. It will commence on May 20, 2017 in Wittenberg with a "world exhibition" on the Reformation under the theme "doors of freedom", which will be shown at 95 historic locations in and around the city. Stefan Rhein's foundation is also planning a major exhibition in the Augusteum.

But as yet, there has been little said about when, where and how vigorously Luther's hatred of Jews, which remains a shameful history for the Protestant Church, will be addressed and debated during the events. ■

By Michael Dultz

It was the evening of September 24, 1983. Stefan Nau, a craftsman who worked with metals, was about to raise the hammer to turn a sword he had made into a plowshare. About 2,000 spectators were on hand to applaud him and sing church hymns. The event was part of Wittenberg's 500th anniversary celebrations of the birth of reformer Martin Luther, held in conjunction with the German Protestant Church Congress in the former East Germany. The slogan of the event was "Dare to Trust." The festivities in the Luther complex had not been officially approved. But the authorities did not intervene – even though the "swords into plowshares" slogan of the German peace movement had already been banned by the East German regime.

95 theses

466 years earlier, on October 31, 1517, another defiant Wittenberg resident set to work with his hammer. Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk, priest and professor of theology, nailed his "Ninety Five Theses on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences" onto the wooden door of the northern portal of the Castle Church. Whether this is

fact or legend remains a matter of debate. Although Philipp Melanchthon, a later confederate of Luther's, claimed to have documented the event, he would not arrive in Wittenberg until sometime afterwards. Either way, Luther's Theses excoriating the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church and its sale of indulgences ("When the coin in the coffer rings, the soul from purgatory springs"), which he had penned in Latin, spread across the empire. Ultimately this act marked the beginning of the Reformation, leading to the split of Christianity in the West.

In 2017, the 500th anniversary of the Reformation will be celebrated around the world with major exhibitions and religious and cultural events. The anniversary will be of special importance to the nearly 400 million Protestants around the world, whose faith has been shaped by legacy of the Reformation. In Germany and elsewhere, the Reformation had an impact on language, culture, politics, and society. The celebrations will center on two separate locations, both of which lay authentic claim to the title "Luther City" – Wittenberg near the Elbe River and the smaller town of Eisleben where Martin Luther was born on November 10, 1483,



The pamphlet "Of The Jews And Their Lies" (1543)

cover the Parish Church of St. Marien, where Luther held many of his sermons; the church also holds the newly restored Reformation altar, designed by Lucas Cranach the Elder. Still under renovation is the Castle Church, its fabled doors now preserved in bronze, which also holds the burial places of Luther and Melanchthon.



"I have once burnt the Papal Bull here at Wittenberg and I dare to burn it again" – detail at Martin Luther's house in Wittenberg



Wittenberg Castle Church

Luther received his "Doctor Theologiae" in 1512, after which he assumed a post as professor of biblical theology, a position he held until his death.

Salvation through faith

Luther believed that salvation could be achieved through faith alone, and not by deeds. No clerical intermediary was necessary between God and the ordinary believer. Luther preached the freedom of all Christians, and went on to defend his teachings in 1521 at the Diet of Worms. He was declared a heretic and an outlaw, but with the protection of Frederick the Wise, he sought refuge at Warburg Castle near Eisenach, where he translated the New Testament into German in just eleven weeks. Later he also translated part of the Old Testament into German. Both soon appeared in print, which made the Bible available to ordinary people. The importance of Luther's life and work for the Protestant faith and the German language are beyond dispute.

But a German national hero he is not. "Luther was definitely not a role model with respect to his statements about Jews," notes Margot Kässmann, the former

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PEOPLE

Humanism, Music, Knowledge and Freedom

Famous natives of Saxony-Anhalt and their legacy

Hans-Dietrich Genscher (Halle 1927)



Liberal politician. As Germany's Foreign Minister in the 1980s he played a key role in the easing of relations between NATO and the Eastern bloc, and subsequently in the dissolution of the German Democratic Republic. His pragmatic approach led to the historic moment on the German embassy balcony in Prague. Genscher announced that GDR citizens would be granted permission to leave the

country for West Germany. This was a milestone on the way to German reunification in 1989.

Moses Mendelssohn (Dessau 1729–1786 Berlin)

Philosopher and humanist, epitome of the *haskalah*, the Jewish enlightenment. The outstanding Talmud scholar settled in Berlin and translated the Tora into German. The story goes that when Moses Mendelssohn asked Fromet Gugenheim to marry him, she hesitated on account of his being hunchbacked.



He thereupon told her that heaven, which makes all marriages, had once given him the privilege of viewing his future bride. And behold, she was somewhat deformed. He asked God to take the deformity away from her and give it to him, for he wanted nothing to mar her perfection. Fromet was so touched that she accepted – the beginning of a very happy marriage. Together with his friend Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Mendelssohn is one of the icons of German Enlightenment.

Carl von Clausewitz (Burg 1780–1831 Wroclaw)



General and Germany's most intelligent military theorist. His main work *On War* (1832) discusses the impact of "friction" (i.e. the disparity between the plan and reality of war) and states "War therefore is an act of violence to compel our opponent to fulfill our will ... War is a mere

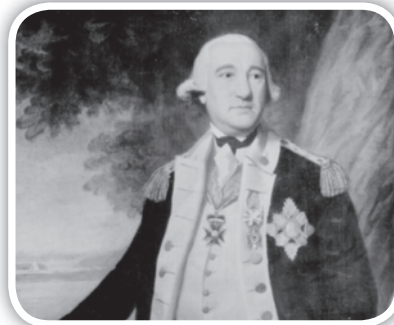
continuation of politics by other means." His thoughts are taught to this day at military academies the world over.

Georg-Friedrich Handel (Halle 1685–1759 London)

One of the most productive composers of all times, wrote operas (*Julius Cesar*, *Semele*), concertos (*Water Music*) and oratorios (*Saul*). Settled in London. The Baroque giant was robust and also headstrong when it came to the performance of his works, famously threatening to throw his primadonna out of the window should she refuse to sing to his tune...



Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben (Magdeburg 1730–1794 Utica, NY)



Prussian officer and US general. Served as a soldier under King Frederick the Great of Prussia. As George Washington's Chief of General Staff he was a central figure in the American War of Independence. Author of the *Blue Book*, a.k.a. *Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States*. The annual Steuben Parade in New York City is held in his honor.

Otto von Bismarck (Schönhausen 1815–1898 Friedrichruh)

Politician and statesman. The "Iron Chancellor" forged German unity after the victory over France in 1871, stating that henceforth "We do not pursue power politics but security policy." Though a staunch conservative, he was instrumental in establishing social security laws in Germany. His high art of diplomacy was brushed aside by Emperor Wilhelm II., Bismarck was dismissed in 1890, with Germany taking a course towards disaster.



Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard (Magdeburg 1942)

Biologist. She was the first German woman to earn the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1995, honored for her development of fruit fly embryos, thus making genetic control of embryonic material possible. "It is tiring to be an exception, to be the first, the only," says Nüsslein-Volhard, who has established a foundation to support young women scientists who have children. A bright star – also in the sky: main belt asteroid 15811 is named after her.

Kurt Weill (Dessau 1900–1950 New York)

Composer, son of a cantor. During the "Golden Twenties" in Berlin he co-created *The Three Penny Opera* and *Rise and Fall of the City Mahagonny* with Bertolt Brecht. Wrote operas, chamber music, songs. Emigrated to the United States in 1935 to become one of Broadway's leading musical composers wowing audiences with works like *One Touch of Venus* and *Lost in the Stars*. Forever unforgettable is his "Speak Low When You Speak Love..."



FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE AND THE JEWS

This Cursed Anti-Semitism!

Saxony-Anhalt's most brilliant thinker and a fatal misinterpretation

By Elisabeth Neu

A small town in Saxony-Anhalt produced one of the greatest and most prolific German philosophers – the author of works such as *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, *Ecce Homo*, and *Human, All Too Human*. Friedrich Nietzsche was born in Röcken on October 15, 1844, the son of a family of pastors. His father died at a young age. Friedrich – called “Herzensfritz” or “Sweet Fritz” by his family – grew up in the bigoted atmosphere of a Protestant parsonage, the only boy in a household of women. “I was always sick when I was with them,” he would later remember. Eventually he enrolled at the nearby Schulpforta boarding school, which more than 150 years later still enjoys a reputation as an elite institution. For the gifted young student, life at Schulpforta was a breath of fresh air for body and spirit.

Nietzsche went on to study philology and theology, although he soon abandoned the latter subject. As a young man, he absorbed the anti-Semitic sentiments of his day and time. He was also known to parrot anti-Jewish slogans from time to time, for which he later expressed deep regret.

visits to his mother and sister in Naumburg. His restless search seemed never-ending. But during that time, he still managed to produce an impressive body of work.

Breaking with Wagner

Time and again, Nietzsche turned to the topic of Jews and Jewish history. He admired the “ancient Hebrews”: “All honor to the Old Testament! In that I find great men...” But this respect for Old Testament Jews went hand in hand with his contempt for the later Jewish priests, whom Nietzsche accused of “slave morality” and “ressentiment”. That was also when Christianity appeared on the scene – the religion of which Nietzsche was a radical critic, as is testified by his later work, *The Antichrist*. For Nietzsche, the destruction of the Temple and the beginnings of the diaspora was when the Jewish people acquired “energy,” “an accumulated capital of spirit and will” and “spiritual independence” – qualities that Nietzsche both admired and emulated.

Continually, Nietzsche was confronted by anti-Semitism, which he called the “great disease of our century.” And then, of course, there was the matter of Richard Wagner. What was at first an exuberant

by step to everything I despise, even to anti-Semitism ... Richard Wagner, ostensibly the most triumphant creature alive ... suddenly fell helpless and broken on his knees before the Christian cross.” Finally, Nietzsche asked, “Is Wagner actually a man? Or is he not rather a disease?” But the philosopher was unable to banish the composer from his thoughts. His last work was *Nietzsche contra Wagner*, which he penned not long before he began his long journey into the darkness of dementia.

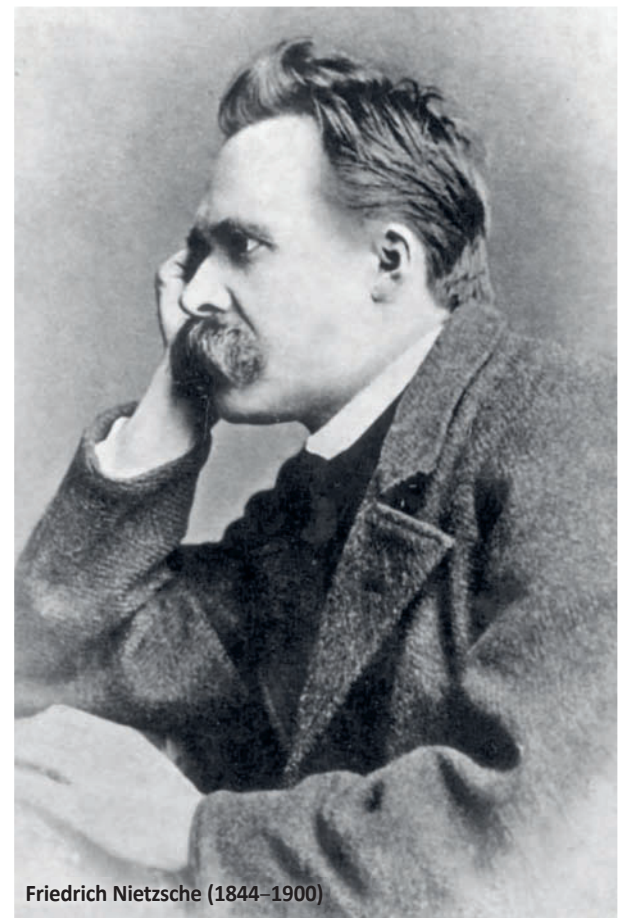
“A heap of ruins” is how Franz Overbeck described his friend after his breakdown. Nietzsche’s illness, the precise cause of which still remains a matter of speculation, forced him to rely on the care of another notorious anti-Semite, his sister Elisabeth. Friedrich and Elisabeth were close, which did not stop them from having bitter arguments. “This cursed anti-Semitism is the cause of a radical break between me and my sister...,” as Nietzsche wrote to Overbeck. To Elisabeth, he wrote, “It is a matter of honor to me to be absolutely clean and unequivocal in relation to anti-Semitism.” Nietzsche was also aware that his writings were being misused: “And that I am unable to do anything against it, that the name of *Zarathustra* is used in every anti-Semitic periodical, has almost made me sick several times...”

“I’ll have all the anti-Semites shot!”

Elisabeth married the virulent anti-Semite Bernhard Förster. Together they emigrated to Paraguay in order to take part in the founding of the Aryan colony of Nueva Germania. The project failed and the “strange apostle”, as Nietzsche had called his brother-in-law, committed suicide.

In exchange for caring for her brother, who had meanwhile descended into the depths of insanity, Elisabeth extracted a high price – control over the interpretation of his works. In just one of her many unpleasant practices, she also brought in visitors to see her ailing brother. Friedrich Nietzsche died in 1900 in Weimar.

Nietzsche had once written to his friend and mentor Malwida von Meysenbug, “...the thought still terrifies me as to how totally unsuitable people will



Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900)

one day invoke my authority.” And that indeed came to pass. After her brother’s death, Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche appointed herself custodian of his papers, and even stooped to falsifying aspects of his life and work. For example, she made a compilation of his writings and published it as *Will to Power*. The door to misrepresenting his work had been opened. An ardent anti-Semite, Elisabeth Förster-Nietzsche became an fervent admirer of Hitler, “our glorious Reich Chancellor,” as she called him. Hitler paid her a visit in Weimar, and soon the Nazis went on to lay claim to Nietzsche’s “Übermensch” as an aspect of their own will to power.

Elisabeth gave Hitler her brother’s walking stick, which he had taken on so many of his own wanderings. There is also a disturbing photograph of Hitler in front of a bust of Nietzsche – on the one side, carved out of stone, the free thinker, universalist and author of the life-affirming dithyrambs of Dionysus; on the other side the obstinate philistine, hate-filled ideologue, and mass-murderer.

Nietzsche’s occasionally bombastic language, his at times impenetrable irony, his mental leaps and fragmentary thoughts, and then also the later falsifications of his work, all contributed to the blatant misinterpretations of his ideas. Nietzsche himself would have been profoundly repelled by fascism and Nazism. He opposed nationalism and hated the idealized cult of Germany, and loved France, Switzerland and Italy – in his own words, he was an “unrepentant European.” And, as he once announced, “I’ll have all the anti-Semites shot!”

Nonetheless, for many years Nietzsche was seen as “contaminated” by his appropriation by the Nazis. Nietzsche’s cause was finally taken up by the “generation of 1968”, who restored him to his rightful status as a free-thinking philosopher. But Friedrich Nietzsche did not live to see his own elevation to the ranks of philosophical greats. His last journey took him back to Röcken, in the state of Saxony-Anhalt. That is where he lies buried today.



As a youth, Nietzsche attended the elite boarding school Schulpforta

After completing his university studies he was offered a professorship in Basel. Shortly after arriving in Basel, he struck up a friendship with Paul Rée, a philosopher and physician of Jewish background. Throughout his life, Nietzsche sought companionship and conversation among his Jewish friends. The friendship between Nietzsche and the Danish philosopher and author Georg Morris Cohen Brandes was also mutually rewarding. “May God have mercy on European reason if Jewish reason is removed from it,” Nietzsche wrote.

But the young scholar suffered from many physical frailties. Throughout his life, Nietzsche, who was known for his sensitive and nervous disposition, suffered from headaches and stomach ailments. He was severely myopic and forever struggled with his vision. He was plagued by restlessness, spending much of his life traveling from one place to the next. He went on long hikes, often in the mountains. For many years, he also paid

friendship and mutual admiration eventually ended, to be replaced by conflict and contempt. Nietzsche the cosmopolitan abhorred the small-minded anti-Semite. Richard Wagner’s essay *Judaism in Music* was first published in 1850 under the pseudonym Karl Freigedank. The vitriolic anti-Semitic pamphlet struck a nerve and went on to become a best-seller. Twenty years later Wagner felt compelled to strike another blow, republishing the essay under his own name and with a new addendum. As Wagner warned the Jews, “But, remember, there is only one real form of deliverance from the curse that besets you – that of Ahasverus – extermination!” This was but a short step to the genocidal hatred of Wagner’s admirer, Adolf Hitler.

Nietzsche was present at the laying of the cornerstone of Wagner’s Festspielhaus, his opera house, in Bayreuth. But not long after, he rejected his friend the Maestro: “Wagner ... condescended step



“Röckener Bacchanal” near Nietzsche’s birthplace and grave