

HÖLLENTAL UND HIMMELREICH

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In times of ongoing digitalisation, centuries-old customs are still cherished in the Black Forest, a region in south west Germany. In many villages there appears to be a deep-rooted consciousness of tradition across generations. In the past, rites and feast days constituted both compensation for and climax to the harsh daily routines of the peasants' working year. These practices divided the Christian cycle of the year into festive seasons. Their occurrence structured village life and conveyed a feeling of continuity.

This project poses questions concerning the significance of religious customs within our more plural society. Seasonal festivals like 'Fastnacht' or 'Trachtenfeste' each require specific and regulated costumes that serve to confirm identities, but they are from a past era. As we live in a world which claims to offer infinite choices, why would people follow such rigid guidelines? Maybe these rites are kept alive to escape the demands of contemporary life within a rapidly changing world.

The Black Forest is the most visited recreational space of the German uplands. Festivals and religious processions are maintained and show no sign of being forgotten. Even though society has largely become secularised in the Christian world, another possibility is that these religious events have become commercialised and well established in the tourist calendar.

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