

*Mining culture, labour, and the state in early modern Saxony**

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This article encourages cultural historians to shift their attention from the ‘origins’ of early modern mining culture in manual labour to seemingly derivative contexts such as the court, bureaucracy, and heritage collections. How did these sites fashion the idea of mining culture as a system of expressions, and how was this system used, with varying success, to align individuals and groups with the requirements of material production? The article identifies at least five layers of constitutive and interpretative work: The current, ‘normalized’ scholarship in a reunited Germany; the construction of liberal or socialist traditions in the East and the West after the war; the resurrection of both a mining State and mining Volk during the Nazi era; the system-building of ethnographers and heritage associations since the early 1800s; and attempts of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth-century mining bureaucracy to homogenize workers’ dress, ritual, and language for judiciary, management, and economic planning purposes. Each layer produced their own archives, on which any investigation of early modern mining culture depends as an empirical base, and all of them offered their own attempts to construct a system of cultural expression from the particular stories, archival documents, songs, and dress elements that they collected and arranged.

On 21 February 1678, Johann Georg II (1612–1680), Elector of Saxony, put on a miner’s dress and paraded through Dresden (Fig. 1). The parade was part of a month-long suite of divertissements to mark the ‘happy convention’ of the Albertine dynasty after a difficult partition and a period of dispute.¹ His younger brothers, the Dukes of lesser, secundogeniture lands, were riding just behind the sexagenarian Elector.² They, too, were dressed as miners, just

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¹ Uta Deppe, ‘Die Feste am Dresdner Hofe Johann Georgs II. von Sachsen als Medium herrscherlicher Selbstdarstellung’, in Vinzenz Czech (ed.) *Fürsten ohne Land: Höfische Pracht in den sächsischen Sekundogenituren Weissenfels, Merseburg und Zeitz* (Berlin: Lukas, 2009), 212–36.

² They were August of Saxony-Weißfeld (1614–1680), Christian of Saxony-Merseburg (1615–1691), and Moritz of Saxony-Zeitz (1619–1681).

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Fig. 1 Samuel Klemm, miner's garniture for Johann Georg II, 1675–1677, silver, gilded silver, enamel, jasper, garnet, quartz, opal, iron, leather. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Grünes Gewölbe, Inv.-Nr. VIII, 320–6 (Photograph: Jürgen Karpinski, bpk.)

as the long train of courtiers, mining officials, and workers who followed suit. When spectators moved their eyes from the workers back to the Elector, did they see a miner, or a prince, or did they see both? In a striking visual act, Johann Georg's colourful silk dress both confused and affirmed social roles. During the festival, the character of Mercury made this incongruity explicit for the audience. First he believed the group comprised of young workers ('Berg-Bursche'):

But I was deceived by these thoughts of mine. Emerging from the depth of the shaft charged a throng of dressed-up miners ('ausgeputzter Bergleute') on the most exquisite horses, with lances in their hands. How strange this adventure appeared to me, is easy to imagine!³

Confused, he asked workers ('in voller Arbeit begriffene Bergleute') for clarity. They first ignored his question until one of them ventured that this was perhaps the doing of ghosts. But all mystery resolved into hilarity when the news of the princely visitors broke and he finally understood that the strange troop was here to 'entertain [the guests] and to show them the blessings that the heavens bestowed on [Johann Georg II's] country'.⁴ Yet, as the spectacle unfolded, the semantic ambiguity of both word and dress remained deliberately unresolved.⁵ Today, only the tools and accessories of Johann Georg's lavish dress survive, embodying a strong tension between form and material. While the form blends with the drab dress of workers, its being made of silver and precious stones set it sparkingly apart.⁶ In this paper, I want to use the cross-dressing prince as the starting point for an exploration of how premodern German mining culture was shaped by later historiography, museum

³ '[...] alleine ich ward in meinen Gedancken betrogen. Denn es stiegen aus dem Abgrunde eines tiefen Stollens eine grosse Schaar auf den schönsten Cavallen sitzende / und in Händen führenden Lantzen ausgeputzter Bergleute herauf / wie frembd mir aber dieses Abenteuer vorkahm / ist leicht zu ermeßen?' Gabriel Tzschimmer, *Die Durchlauchtigste Zusammenkunfft, Oder: Historische Erzählung, Was [...] Johann George der Ander Herzog zu Sachsen [...] Bey Anwesenheit Seiner [...] Gebrüdere, dero Gemahlinnen [...] zu sonderbahren Ehren, und Belustigung, in Dero Residenz und Haupt-Vestung Dresden im Monat Februario, des M.DC.LXXVIIIsten Jahres An allerhand Aufzügen, Ritterlichen Exercitien [...] Denkwürdiges aufführen und vorstellen lassen* (Nuremberg: Johann Hoffmann, 1680), 267.

⁴ '[...] wie der Herr / und Beherrscher der allerredlesten / und von Silberträchtigen Fund-Gruben der tapferen Hermundurur vor wenig Tagen unvermuthet hohe Gäste bekommen / welche zu belustigen und Ihnen den Seegen zu zeigen / den der Himmel seinem Lande gegeben / Er dem Obersten des ganzen Ertz-Gebürges anbefohlen / denen meisten seiner Untergebenen einen Feyertrag anzudeuten / und sie aufzumuntern / damit sie ihre angebohrne Hurtigkeit durch irgend eine sonderbare Invention denen Fremben [sic] vor Augen stellten.' Tzschimmer, *Durchlauchtigste Zusammenkunfft*, 268.

⁵ Tzschimmer's list of participants simultaneously distinguished and conflated social categories: between mine-workers wearing their 'usual garb' and members of the court and the bureaucracy who appeared in a 'miner's garb'. Mercury repeats his experience that the 'unusual tumult' first appeared as if ordinary workers went to work with their 'caps, shaft-hats, knife, bag, lamp, knee-pads, and leather apron' but that in reality he saw chivalric miners ('Berg-Leute zu Pferde'), ready for jousting. *Ibid.*, 273–7. See also Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, 'Gabriel Tzschimmer's "Durchlauchtigste Zusammenkunfft" (1680) and the German Festival Book Tradition', *Daphnis*, 22 (1993), 61–72.

⁶ Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Grünes Gewölbe, Inv.-Nr. VIII, 317–26.

collections, and myth-making from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries. I argue that mining culture as a distinct system of expression was not developed by workers in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the early modern period but rather by modern state actors, museum curators, and historians.

Since 1945, historians have employed different strategies to resolve the ambiguity of Johann Georg's dress. One is to posit that what we see is in fact the interaction between different groups with their own distinct cultures. East German historians such as Friedrich Sieber read the movement of motifs from the mines to the court as part of a strategy by princes, bureaucrats, and absentee investors to paper over class antagonisms: 'By using the word *Bergleute*, all mining investors [...] become miners, and sometimes they present themselves as such'.⁷ The original context, and indeed wellspring, of mining culture is manual labour in the mines:

Only [in miners at work] lives that which makes miners essentially miners: the experience of work in the lightless depth. [...] Shared work, in which everybody depends on everybody else, fosters a feeling of togetherness based on a class situation and expressed in combative solidarity. [...] In all sorts of artistic creations the miner's life-world is mirrored. Dress, shaped by conditions of work, becomes the external symbol of togetherness among miners.⁸

For East German historians writing in the 1950s to the 1970s like Sieber, the appropriation of mining motifs, and in particular of the miner's garb, was inauthentic if not immoral: these cultural products of the working class were 'snatched up as a mask', they were 'made lovely and frivolous'.⁹ Sieber's combative tone and Marxist-Leninist framework fell prey to the 'normalization' of East German mining history writing after *c.* 1975.¹⁰ Yet newer work echoes his project in that it deciphers the cross-dressing prince within a distinct 'festival culture' or 'court culture' that has to be understood in its own

⁷ 'Über den Begriff der Bergleute werden später alle am Bergbau Interessierten zu "Bergmännern", und zur gegebenen Zeit gebärden sie sich als solche'. Friedrich Sieber, *Volk und volkstümliche Motiwik im Festwerk des Barocks, dargestellt an Dresdner Bildquellen* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1960), 50.

⁸ 'In dieser gewaltig vorwärtsdrängenden Entwicklung stehen die Bergleute vor Ort. Nur in ihnen ist lebendig, was im Kern den Bergmann zum Bergmann macht: das Erlebnis der Arbeit in der lichtlosen Tiefe. [...] Gemeinsame Arbeit, bei der jeder vom andern abhängt, fördert ein in der Klassenlage gründendes Gefühl der Zusammengehörigkeit, das sich früh in kämpferischer Solidarität äußert. [...] In bildnerischen Gestaltungen aller Art spiegelt sich die bergmännische Lebenswelt. Die Tracht, von den Bedingungen der Arbeit geprägt, wird das äußere Zeichen der Zusammengehörigkeit der Bergleute.' Sieber, *Volk*, 48–9. See also Herbert Clauss, 'Bergmännische Arbeitsvorgänge in volkskünstlerischer Gestaltung', *Deutsches Jahrbuch für Volkskunde*, 3 (1957), 407–47; Helmut Wilsdorf, 'Arbeit und Arbeitsgerät im sächsischen Erzbergbau des 16. Jahrhunderts', *Deutsches Jahrbuch für Volkskunde*, 5 (1959), 255–300, 255–7.

⁹ Sieber, *Volk*, 48: 'als Maskerade an sich gerissen'; 65: 'verniedlicht und vertändelt'.

¹⁰ Otfried Wagenbreth, 'Zur Montangeschichtschreibung in Sachsen, 1949–1989', *Neues Archiv für sächsische Geschichte*, 64 (1993), 201–21.

terms.¹¹ The antagonism that they stress is not between court and an exploited people, but rather between different German and European courts who watched, competed, and exchanged motifs with each other. The use of mining dress at court followed ceremonial rules, most importantly by expressing rank through appropriate materials. It was a tool for symbolic communication and must be understood as such. Mining-themed *divertissements*, like other “living images” of the daily life of the people[,] present the ruler [...] [as] a “down-to-earth” *pater patriae*, for whom the achievements of his subjects are important as they form the basis of the State’s economic power.¹²

Another strategy to interpret socially amphibious cultural products was to develop a more ecumenical notion of mining culture, one that was shared across many different groups. West German historians have always stressed the legitimacy of the festivals and in particular of Johann Georg II’s dress as a ‘means of representation among mining-related circles to which the prince, as the holder of the regal prerogative and as a mine-owner, considered himself justly close’.¹³ In his recent survey of mining art, Rainer Slotta locates the origin of mining culture in:

The unique [working] environment – together with the ‘battle against Nature’ – [that] led to a specific consciousness and a unique identity, which is mirrored in the artistic expressions of the mining sector: The miner creates a special environment and creates monuments for himself, in which he lives and recognizes himself. By creating these ‘values’ [...] he distinguishes himself from other professional groups.¹⁴

His survey, however, ranges widely across social groups without any of the qualms about authenticity that Sieber felt. For him, the integration of many

¹¹ Uta Deppe, *Die Festkultur am Dresdner Hofe Johann Georgs II. von Sachsen (1660-1679)* (Kiel: Ludwig, 2006); Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, *Court Culture in Dresden* (Houndsmill: Palgrave, 2002); Claudia Schnitzer, *Höfische Maskeraden: Funktion und Ausstattung von Verkleidungsdivertissements an deutschen Höfen der Frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1999); Jutta Bäuml, ‘Die Darstellung des Bergbaus im höfischen Fest des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts’, in Manfred Bachmann, Harald Marx, and Eberhard Wächtler (eds.), *Der silberne Boden: Kunst und Bergbau in Sachsen*, (Leipzig: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1990), 213–19; Monika Schlechte, ‘Das Saturnusfest 1719’, in Bachmann, Marx, and Wächtler (eds.), *Der Silberne Boden*, 219–29; Monika Schlechte, ‘Saturnalia Saxoniae: ‘Das Saturnfest 1719. Eine ikonographische Untersuchung’, *Dresdner Hefte* 8, (1990), 39–52.

¹² ‘Diese “lebenden Bilder” aus der Alltagswelt des Volkes präsentierten den Herrscher nicht wie in zahlreichen anderen Inszenierungen als “Gott dieser Welt”, sondern sie propagierten das “Image” des “bodenständigen” Landesvaters, für den die auf den Leistungen seiner Untertanen beruhende Wirtschaftskraft des Staates im Vordergrund stand.’ Deppe, *Festkultur*, 283.

¹³ Heinrich Winkelmann, *Der Bergmannsschmuck Johann Georgs II. von Sachsen* (Bochum: Vereinigung der Freunde von Kunst und Kultur im Bergbau e.V., 1962), 5.

¹⁴ ‘Diese einzigartige Umgebung – verbunden mit dem “Kampf gegen die Natur” – führt zu einem besonderen Bewusstsein und einer einzigartigen Identität, die sich auch in den Kunstäußerungen des Montanwesens widerspiegelt: Der Bergmann schafft sich eine besondere Umwelt und setzt sich Denkmäler, in denen er leben und sich selbst (wieder)erkennt. Durch diese von ihm geschaffenen “Werte” – auch wirtschaftlicher Art – unterscheidet er sich von anderen Berufsgruppen’, Rainer Slotta, ‘Der (Silber-)Bergbau als Kunst-Katalysator’, in Christoph Bartels and Rainer Slotta (eds.) *Geschichte des deutschen Bergbaus*, i: *Der Alteuropäische Bergbau: Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2012), 591–618, quotation on 591.

different people in the mining towns was a remarkable ‘cultural achievement’ (my emphasis), and the art works in which a socially open mining culture manifested seem to have underpinned this feat of integration.¹⁵ In a similar vein, Angelika Westermann considers ‘[w]ork and technology [...] not only central elements of mining culture but its foundation’.¹⁶ She identifies ‘identity and integration problems’ in early modern mining regions and suggests that a ‘group-specific culture’ developed that eased cooperation, promoted social peace, and facilitated economic efficiency.¹⁷

A background assumption shared across these very different ideological positions is that the original and most authentic environment for mining culture is manual labour in the mines. In this model, mining culture flows from the mines and is somehow watered down when it moves into different social environments. In this article I propose that cultural historians shift their attention from the ‘origins’ of culture in the mines and take ‘secondary’ contexts such as the court or the mining bureaucracy more seriously. I do not suggest to investigate how the court and bureaucracy used mining motifs to fashion cultural products, as an extensive literature has done precisely this.¹⁸ Instead, I am interested in how these contexts fashioned the idea of a distinct ‘mining culture’ in the first place – a system of expressions that could be used (or so it was hoped) to align individuals and groups with the requirements of material production. This is not to deny that workers themselves used ritual, song, and dress to assert their group identities, for example as members of a *Knappschaft*, for which there is ample evidence.¹⁹ Instead, I want to interrogate to what extent researching mining culture is not only conditioned by a succession of ideologies (Cameralism, National Socialism, and Marxism-Leninism) that sought to stabilize workers’ group identities within the State, but also by the research infrastructure (museums, journals, libraries) that were set up in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to investigate a mining *Volk*.

To begin this conversation, I will investigate the creation of uniform clothing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the collection of documents, objects, and cultural expressions by nineteenth-century civic associations, and the resurrection of mining ‘tradition’ during the Nazi era as three historical

¹⁵ ‘[...] kann man ermessen, welche kulturelle Leistung es bedeutete, in so kurzer Zeit aus einem zusammengelaufenen Konglomerat aller deutschen Stämme ein Gemeinwesen zu schaffen’, *Ibid.*, 595. This is a (apparently approving) quotation from Klaus Kratzsch, *Bergstädte des Erzgebirges: Städtebau und Kunst zur Zeit der Reformation* (Munich, 1972). See also 617–18.

¹⁶ ‘Arbeit und Technik sind, wie es Gerhard Heilfurth formuliert, nicht nur zentrale Elemente der Montankultur, sondern ihr Fundament’. Angelika Westermann, ‘Bergstadt und Montankultur 1350–1850’, in Wolfgang Weber (ed.) *Geschichte des deutschen Bergbaus*, ii: Salze, Erze und Kohlen: Der Aufbruch in die Moderne im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert (Münster: Aschendorff, 2015), 409–560, quotation on 414.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ See, for example, Bachmann, Marx, and Wächtler (eds.), *Der silberne Boden*.

¹⁹ See, for example, [August Friedrich] Wappler, ‘Über die alte Freiburger Berg-Knapp- und Brüderschaft’, *Mitteilungen des Freiburger Altertumsvereins*, 37 (1900), 48–71; and [August Friedrich] Wappler ‘Über den Streittag (22. Juli) der Bergleute’, *Mitteilungen des Freiburger Altertumsvereins*, 38 (1902), 1–55.

moments in which particular stories, archival documents, songs, and dress elements were actively pulled together to create a homogeneous system of cultural expression. Accordingly, the article is structured into three parts that hone in on the government bureau, the collection, and the war economy as incubators of early modern 'mining culture', respectively. While this takes us well beyond 'the Renaissance' however broadly construed, I argue that this modern story is crucially relevant for the study of earlier periods. Modern historiography, collecting, and myth-making has not only provided conveniently cohesive concepts to summarize complex historical situations but has also shaped the very archives of documents, images, and objects that allow us to access premodern mining culture.

AT THE BUREAU

While the culture of workers has been explored by ethnographers and historians since the nineteenth century, and court culture by researchers of the past thirty years, the culture of mining officials is rarely explored in its own right.²⁰ Due to a specific interpretation of the regal prerogative to underground resources, medieval princely tax collectors developed into a multi-tiered bureaucracy in which officials planned and monitored the work in the mines.²¹ By the seventeenth century, the Saxon *Bergstaat* had developed into four levels: the Schichtmeister, who micro-managed a small number of mines and supervised the foremen; the Central Mining Office (Oberbergamt) in Freiberg; and a number of Mining Offices (Bergämter) who devised and monitored long-term, large-scale plans; and a mining department in Dresden that served as an interface with the court.²² This way of organizing production was common elsewhere in Germany too, but particularly salient in Saxony.²³ The position of the powerful officials was particularly vexing for

²⁰ See Hartmut Schleiff and Peter Konečný (eds.), *Staat, Bergbau und Bergakademie: Montanexperten im 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2013); Jakob Vogel, *Ein schillerndes Kristall: Eine Wissensgeschichte des Salzes zwischen Früher Neuzeit und Moderne* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2008). For a programmatic statement about what a cultural history of administrations could entail, see Peter Becker, 'Überlegungen zu einer Kulturgeschichte der Verwaltung', *Jahrbuch für europäische Verwaltungsgeschichte*, 15 (2003), 311–36.

²¹ Heiner Lueck, 'Bergrecht, Bergregal', in Albrecht Cordes and Wolfgang Stämmler (eds.), *Handwörterbuch zur Deutschen Rechtsgeschichte*, i (Berlin, 2012), 528–33; Ines Lorenz, 'Die Bergverwaltung Kursachsens von 1589 bis 1694' (PhD diss., Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 1989).

²² Lorenz, 'Bergverwaltung'.

²³ This approach was called Direktionsprinzip, because officials directed mining works as opposed to the Inspektionsprinzip after the liberalizations of the 1850s when officials merely inspected privately run mines. The authors of the handbook of German mining history summarize the current consensus as follows: 'Das gesamte Montanwesen befand sich zu Beginn des 18. Jahrhunderts entweder in landesherrschaftlicher Hand oder wurde über die Berg- und Hüttenverwaltung von ihr dominiert.' Michael Fessner and Christoph Bartels, 'Von der Krise am Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts zum deutschen Bergbau im Zeitalter des Merkantilismus', in Bartels and Slotta (eds.), *Geschichte des deutschen Bergbaus*, i, 453–590, 483. However, a revision of this view is underway. See Andre Wakefield, *The Disordered Police State: German Cameralism as Science and Practice* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2009); Franziska Neumann, 'Review of Klaus Tenfelde / Stefan Berger / Hans-Christoph Seidel (eds.), *Geschichte des deutschen Bergbaus. I: Der alteuropäische Bergbau. Von den Anfängen bis zur Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Münster: Aschendorff, 2012', *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 42, (2015), 75–7.

East German historians as they could not easily discuss them as belonging to either side of the presumed class antagonism. For Sieber, early modern officials constituted a 'middle stratum' who partook in court culture and were even its carriers. Yet they also had the 'basic experience' of the underground when they carried out their inspections.²⁴

Officials did not always wear miners' dress when they were on duty. According to a Freiberg chronicle, this first happened by accident, when Elector August I, King Frederick II of Denmark as well as Magnus and Adolph, dukes of Holstein, paid a visit to the town in 1557. August had just renewed Freiberg's identity as *Bergstadt* (mining town), by granting the council the right to receive two shares' worth of income from every newly opened mine in the district and exhorting all citizens to put their money into mining. To demonstrate that they accepted their role in this economic program, the councilors and staff at the Mining Office had themselves decked out 'in the fashion of miners with white mining caps, white woolen mining coats, and mining aprons, took axes into their hands, and walked towards their lordships'. The entry through the St Peter's gate was scheduled for 2 p.m., but the highborn visitors arrived at five. 'As it took so long, the old and the new council convened at the said gate, and judged a mining case, which nobody remembers that it has ever been done in this way and in these clothes'.²⁵ The use of miners' garb for official business found imitators among Saxon mining administrators, who would occasionally use some of its elements when they inspected a mine.²⁶ By 1700, putting on miners' garments could already be an expression of commitment to one's office. During their hands-on efforts to restore mining after the Thirty Years' War, Abraham von Schönberg (1640–1711) and other highborn officials donned a 'dirty mining blouse' many times. Still, the editor of a mining handbook reassured his dedicatees that 'the purple of your high dignity was by no means stained'.²⁷

While this may have been true, Schönberg used a different visual strategy when he commissioned a portrait of himself in 1681 (Fig. 2). Recently promoted to the very high office of a *Oberhauptmann*, he is shown in the same

²⁴ Sieber, *Volk*, 65.

²⁵ '[...] und die Raths Personen und Berg Bediente in grosser anzahl sich nach art der Bergleute mit weissen Bergkappen / weissen wülenen Berggröcklein und Bergledern bekleidet / Grubenbeile in die Hände genommen / und der Herrschafft entgegen gangen. Der Einzug ist umb zwey uhr nach Mittags angesetzt gewesen / aber erst abends umb fünffe zum Petersthore herein geschehen / deßwegen weil es sich so lange verweilet / ist underdessen der ganze alte und newe Rath für ermenten Thoren zusammen getreten / und haben in besagten Berghabit ein Bergurtheil gesprochen / welches / welches niemand gedenken wollen / daß es sich der gestalt und dieser Kleidung zuvor jemals begeben'. Andreas Möller, *Theatrum Freibergense Chronicum Beschreibung der alten löblichen BergHauptStadt Freyberg in Meissen* (Freiberg: Beuther, 1653), 267–8.

²⁶ Sieber, *Volk*, 50.

²⁷ 'Also auch von dem schmutzigen Gruben-Kittel, darinnen SIE hohen Sich / zu höchst-rühmlichster Beförderung des Landes-Wohlfahrth / zum öfftern befunden / der Purpur Dero hohen Würde / keines wegen habe beflecket werden können [...]'. Johann Christoph Goldberg, dedication in Balthasar Rösler, *Speculum Metallurgiae Politissimum. Oder: Hell-polierter Berg-Bau-Spiegel*, ed. Johann Christoph Goldberg (Dresden: Johann Jacob Winckler, 1700).



Fig. 2 Unknown artist, *Abraham von Schönberg*, 1681. TU Bergakademie Freiberg (Photograph: Waltraud Rabich)

exquisite white coat with puffed sleeves, gold trimmings and rich laces that he had worn when he was trailing Johann Georg II during the parade of 1678. This outfit cited the dress of successful mining entrepreneurs during the height of German mining in the sixteenth century but was also the latest French fashion.²⁸ He chose four attributes to emphasize his closeness to the trade. The items that most clearly identify Schönberg as a mining official is the knife (Tscherper), whose handle stands white and erect between his hands. This knife was a tool of knowledge, as it served to 'to find out if the wooden frames are still good or rotten so that it may be replaced in due time'.²⁹ Next to the knife, there is the waist-bag (Tscherpertasche), which is where miners kept their lamps when they were not in use along with their gunpowder and tinder. Schönberg holds a drawing compass in his right hand and mining map in his left hand,³⁰ as a reference to the princely edicts of 1667 that he helped prepare and implement, which made it obligatory for officials and mine-owners to have a complete map of their mines drawn and deposited with the Central Mining Office in Freiberg.³¹ Schönberg fashioned closeness with mining by depicting his body covered in the dress of a rich investor, the equipment of mine workers, and the instruments of planning that officials like himself used in their daily work.

While this was in itself a striking act of recombinatory creation, its force was enhanced by seven additional portraits that Schönberg commissioned around the same time (Fig. 3). They depict his predecessors, many of whom were also his family, beginning with Wolf von Schönberg (1518–1584). It was custom that the *Knappschaft* would have these officials portrayed after their death to display them in the Mining Office in Freiberg. Schönberg instructed the

²⁸ See Winkelmann, *Bergmannsschmuck*, 47; Karl Ewald Fritsch, 'Die Kleidung des erzgebirgischen Bergmannes im Urteil des 19. Jahrhunderts', *Deutsches Jahrbuch für Volkskunde*, 12 (1966), 288–311, 307.

²⁹ 'Gruben-Tscherper, ist ein grosses Messer, welches die Bergleute neben der Gruben-Tasche führen; wird in der Grube gebraucht, das Gezimmer damit zu bestechen, und zu erkundigen, ob es noch frisch, oder faul sey, damit man bey Zeiten auswechseln könne'. Johann Caspar Zeisig (ed.), *Neues und wohlgeordnetes Mineral- und Bergwerks-Lexicon*, 3rd edn. (Chemnitz: Johann David Stössels Erben und Putscher, 1784), 269.

³⁰ Since the medieval period, surveyors helped prevent or settle legal strife by marking the boundaries of claimed fields (hence their German appellation *Markscheider*). Initially, they reproduced a mine's layout in its actual size by arranging rods or strings and pegs above ground. From the 16th century onwards, there is evidence of maps on which the relationship between fields and veins were represented on a smaller scale. Their majority was made to answer specific questions, for example how deep and in which angle a shaft had to be built in order to connect with a lower-lying adit. Composite maps were drawn to keep track of how the different tunnels of larger mines related to each other, and the Mining Offices eventually began to assemble maps of entire districts. These overview maps were changed or redrawn as the underground structures expanded that they helped to plan. See Karl Neubert and Walther Stein, *Plan- und Risskunde*, 2nd edn., i (Freiberg: Bergakademie Freiberg, 1958), 11–38; Michael Ziegenbalg, 'Aspekte des Markscheidewesens mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Zeit von 1200 bis 1500', in Werner Kroker and Ekkehard Westermann (eds.), *Montanwirtschaft Mitteleuropas vom 12. bis 17. Jahrhundert: Stand, Wege und Aufgaben der Forschung* (Bochum: Deutsches Bergbau-Museum, 1984), 40–9; Michael Ziegenbalg, 'Von der Markscheidekunst zur Kunst des Markscheiders', *Berichte der Geologischen Bundesanstalt*, 41 (1997), 267–74.

³¹ Wolfgang Jobst and Walter Schellhas, *Abraham von Schönberg, Leben und Werk: Die Wiederbelebung des erzgebirgischen Bergbaus nach dem Dreißigjährigen Krieg durch Oberberghauptmann Abraham von Schönberg* (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Grundstoffindustrie, 1994), 128–33.



Fig. 3 Unknown artist, *Christoph von Schönberg*, 1681. TU Bergakademie Freiberg (Photograph: Schönbergsche Stiftung)

painter to faithfully depict their faces and the dimensions of their bodies but to replace their garments, which the sitters had chosen according to the fashion of their day, with a uniform dress just like his own. Schönberg also had the accompanying objects changed. While the original portraits depicted the sitters with signs of more generic wealth and power, such as chains and gloves, Schönberg's portraits showed them with mining objects such as the ceremonial axe, a piece of ore, or a lamp, similar to the ones that Johann Georg II

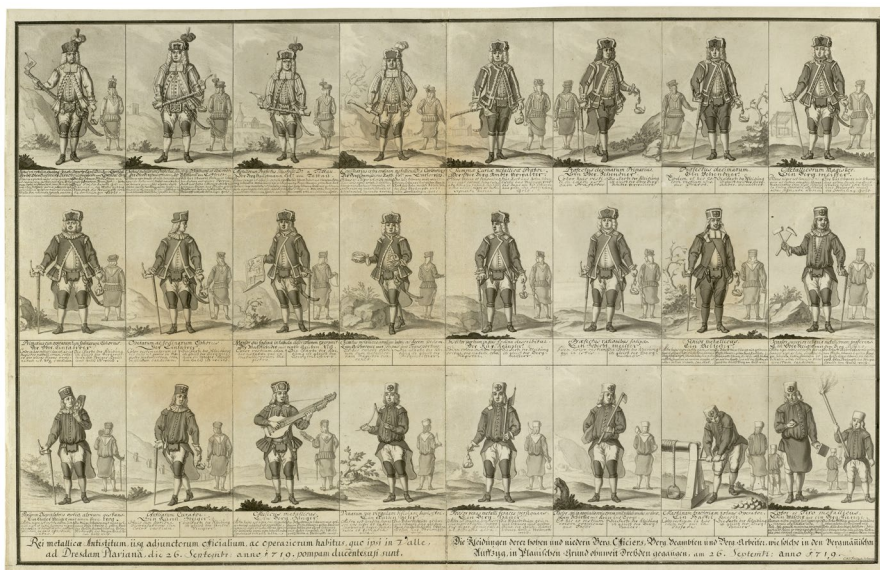


Fig. 4 Carl Heinrich Jacob Fehling, *Die Kleidungen derer hohen und niedren Berg Officers, Berg Beamten u. Berg Arbeiter, wie solche in d. Bergmännischen Aufzug in Plaischen Grund, ohnweit Dresden gegangen am 26. Sept. 1719, 1724*, pen and wash drawing, 54.9 × 86.1 cm, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, Inv.-Nr. C 6777 (Photograph: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden)

carried in 1678. This retrospective homogenization of the officials' dress was a visual act with immediate audience: mining officials in 1681 among whom Schönberg had been trying to enforce a version of the miners' garb as official uniform since a princely edict to this effect in 1668. In order to *show* officials that there was a long tradition of wearing a uniform, he had his predecessors painted in his image. His sartorial policy, however, was only partially successful.³²

Officials after Schönberg showed a remarkable creativity in differentiating and recombining forms that they found in the repertoire of miners' dress. They developed them into a complex visual language that could express fine gradation of rank as well as capture some of the division of labour, which was such a characteristic trait of the business. One large drawing by Carl Heinrich Jacob Fehling, made to capture the dresses worn at a miners' parade in 1719, shows the recombinatory logic of these uniforms (Fig. 4). The parade was part of the festivities that marked the wedding of Friedrich August II

³² Karl Ewald Fritsch, 'Die Schönbergporträts der Bergakademie Freiberg', *Bergakademie*, 14 (1962), 311–17. See also Helmut Wilsdorf, *Das historische erzgebirgische Bergmannshabit* (Schneeberg: Folklorezentrum Erzgebirge / Vogtland beim Bezirkskabinett für Kulturarbeit Karl-Marx-Stadt, 1988), 21–3; and Fritsch, 'Kleidung', 305–8.

(1696–1763), prince of Saxony and son of the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, Friedrich August I/ August II (1670–1733), and his betrothed Maria Josepha (1699–1757), archduchess of Austria and niece of the Emperor Charles VI. A miner's parade near Dresden was the highlight of the 'Feast of Saturn', which in turn was the last of a four-week cycle of events dedicated to the seven planet-gods.³³ The fact that this cycle was summarily referred to as 'Saturnalia Saxoniae' underlines the importance of the closing spectacle of parading miners.³⁴ Fehling's drawing was made to document the uniforms worn at the parade.³⁵ It is structured by horizontal and vertical pen lines that create three rows and eight columns. Each of the resulting 24 panels features one mining official or worker, who face the viewer (except for the winchman, who is bent down in the midst of a revolution of the crank). The figures are shown in full body and in festive uniform. The background of each panel shows the back of the same figure, often against a lightly washed mining landscape. Under each figure there is written the name of the office or function and the colours of the uniform. The figures are arranged by rank and function, running from the highest officials at the top left to simple mine workers at the bottom right. Ranks and functions are distinguished by modulating the colour, materials, and accessory objects. The *Bergmeister* (district director), for example, wears:

The hat black with black and yellow band, the coat black, the waistcoat red, the hose and stockings white, the borders gold.

The *Einfahrer* lacks the buttons and has less elaborate borders. Yet,

The colours of the garment is the same as the *Bergmeister*; the pleated collar of a *Steiger* is white.

The *Ober-Steiger*, again, is distinguished from the *Einfahrer* by a different hat and a light linen garment:

The shaft-hat black with gold trimmings, black and yellow band [like the *Bergmeister*], the mining frock black [as all other upper garments], the waistcoat

³³ See Bachmann, Marx, Wächter, *Der Silberne Boden*, 221; Karl Ewald Fritsch and Friedrich Sieber, *Bergmännische Trachten des 18. Jahrhunderts im Erzgebirge und im Mansfeldischen* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957), 34.

³⁴ Schlechte, 'Saturnalia Saxoniae', 39–52. For the festive culture in Saxony before August, see Deppe, *Die Festkultur am Dresdner Hofe*.

³⁵ Andrea Zucchi later made copper engravings based on the drawings, which were printed and likely sent to the courts of Europe and guests of the parade. Schlechte, 'Saturnalia Saxoniae', 42. See also Monica Schlechte, 'Recueil des dessins et gravures représentent les solennités du mariage: Das Dresdner Fest von 1719 im Bild', in Pierre Béhar (ed.), *Image et spectacle: Actes du XXXII^e Colloque International d'Etudes Humanistes du Centre d'Etudes Supérieures de la Renaissance (Tours, 29 juin–8 juillet 1989)*, xv (Amsterdam: Rodolpi, 1993), 117–69.

red [like the *Bergmeister*] the hose, stocking white [like the *Bergmeister* and the *Einfahrer*], the collar of a *Steiger* white [like the *Einfahrer*].

Not only the fabrics and cuts, but also tools became signifiers in a well-developed visual language. The surveyor was distinguished by a mining map, the assessor by a compass and transporter, the *Obersteiger* by hammer and pick, and the diviner by a rod. Johann Georg II's miner's lamp is shown firmly lodged in the hand of Woldemar baron of Löwendal, as part of the dress that marked him as *Oberbergwerksdirektor*, that is August's highest representative in mining. Fehling's panels demonstrate how mining officials, for the occasion of a court festival, drew upon existing cultural forms and developed them into a visual language eloquent about the internal order of the bureaucracy.

While this recombination of existing elements created new forms of dress, it also involved standardization of the cultural variety that prevailed across Saxony. For the carefully choreographed 1719 parade, the Central Mining Office wanted some 1500 workers to appear in a green hat, black linen blouse, white breeches, a leather apron, kneepads, and holding a ceremonial axe and a lamp. This mass mobilization of personnel was a marked difference from 1678, where the prince and his train outnumbered the few diviners, miners, smelters, and minters who trailed them; here the participants of the parade presented a substantial part of the entire workforce.³⁶ The sheer number of bodies aimed to make a point, as the master of ceremony informed European audiences: Saturn, that is August, 'may not present people decked out in silver, gold, jewels, but he will display subjects who are capable of handling those materials; who by their sweat and labour, and disregard for their health and life, search them out from the inside the earth and process them.'³⁷ Uniform dress was one powerful ingredient in this visual act.

However, when Freiberg inquired with the Local Mining Offices, they realised that their 'traditional' outfit consisting of seven pieces was far from the reality of what miners actually wore to work or at festive occasions. The Schneeberg Office, for example, sent a detailed report on the equipment of 200 named individuals, of which only one *Obersteiger* had all seven items in his possessions. (He seems to have been particularly fussy, or lucky, about his

³⁶ The by far largest district of Freiberg counted 4191 people employed in and around the mines and smelting works in 1756. See Alfred Börner, 'Über das älteste Mannschftsverzeichnis des Freiburger Bergbaues vom Jahre 1756,' in Rektor der Bergakademie Freiberg (ed.), *Bergbau und Bergleute: Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bergbaus und der Geologie* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1955), 168–78.

³⁷ 'Kan er dann keine mit Silver, Gold und Kleinodien ausgeschmückte Leute zu ihrer Auffwartung darstellen, so wird er iedennoch solche Unterthanen aufführen, welche mit dergleichen umzugehen nicht unfähig sind, und es durch ihren Schweiß und Fleiß, auch mit Hindansetzung ihrer Gesundheit und Lebens, zu Gloire und Dienste ihrer Herrschaft, und zur Wohlfahrt des Landes, aus dem innersten Schoosse der Erden hervor zu suchen und zu bearbeiten, sich angelegen seyn lassen.' [Johann von Besser], *Königliche Denckmahl, welches nach geschehener Vermählung ihro Hoheit des königlichen und chur-sächsischen Cron-Printzens Herrn Friedrich Augusti, mit der durchlauchtigsten Fr. Maria Josepha, Ertz-Hertzogin von Oesterreich, bey dero hohen Ankuunft in der königl. und chur-sächs. Residentz-Stadt Dreßden, vom ersten bis letzten Sept. 1719. gestiftet worden* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1719), 107–8.

outfits as he also owned an additional ceremonial axe, which were expensive and difficult objects to procure.) An overwhelming 195 miners did own a lamp, and 172 of them also possessed leather aprons, which were relatively cheap items that they needed for their daily work. This was good news. However, the Mining Office in Johanngeorgenstadt pointed out that the lamps of their miners were very small to save fuel, and thus unfit for the parade, which was likely the case everywhere.³⁸ Thirty miners from Schneeberg wore a different kind of outer garment, which was deemed unsuitable for the parade, while only about half of the requisitioned men owned a green hat. The Office intimated that workers used to wear them but that they now wore fashionable hats with broad brims that they turned up in the front. White breeches and kneepads, Schneeberg wrote, had never been popular in their district.³⁹ Thus the efforts of mining officials to impose their fiction of a traditional 'Berghabit' to create a striking visual act at the parade revealed sartorial diversity and sense of fashion among workers.

Workers, on their part, were also aware that the clothes they wore and the tools they handled could be used for powerful statements.⁴⁰ In the 1730s, miners disassociated themselves from their dirty work by donning pristine, white clothes on their strolls through town.⁴¹ This marked their leisure time in a widely visible way, and it was perhaps also an act of disobedience as the prince and his officers had since 1661 been trying to impose black linen shirts as the civic dress for anyone who worked in the mines and thus fell under their special jurisdiction.⁴² Especially the leather apron, both as a tool and garment, allowed for unambiguous ways to associate and dissociate oneself from mining, as the cultural norm was that a miner was 'generally everybody who works in a mine or who wears a leather apron'.⁴³ In 1703, miners in Freiberg had defaced a broadsheet containing a princely ordinance that sought to regulate their dress (Fig. 5). As the Mining Office explained, the broadsheet had been put up because miners adopted all sorts of 'unmininerly' garments:

³⁸ Fritsch and Sieber, *Bergmännische Trachten*, 16. For the economy of lamp size and fuel, see Helmut Fiege, *Zur Entwicklung der sächsischen Unschlitt-Grubenlampe* (Bochum: Deutsches Bergbau-Museum, 2006), 34–6.

³⁹ Fritsch and Sieber, *Bergmännische Trachten*, 15–16.

⁴⁰ For analyzing dress as "visual acts", see Ulinka Rublack, *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); and Ulinka Rublack, 'Renaissance Dress, Cultures of Making, and the Period Eye', *West 86th*, 23 (2016), 6–34.

⁴¹ 'So aber, wenn ein munterer Berg Pursche sein 6, 8 stunden Schicht verfahren und von seiner Zeche gekommen, ziehet er sich weiß an, spazieren besonders des Sonnabends, welcher Tag ihnen ohnedem ganz frey gelaßen wird, so daß sie also nur fünf Tage in der Woche zu arbeiten haben, entweder auf der Gaße herum oder geht seiner Üppigkeit und Wollust in den Schenck- und Wirthshäußern nach, weiß also seine Zeit nicht anders als mit Spielen und üppigen Wesen zuzubringen.' Superintendent Dr. Christian Friedrich Wilisch to the Oberkonsistorium, 4 September 1737, quoted in Wappler, 'Streittag', 35.

⁴² Fritsch, 'Kleidung', 307–8.

⁴³ 'Bergmann heist insgemein ein jeder, so in der Grube arbeitet, oder ein Arschleder trägt'. Zeisig, *Mineral- und Bergwerks-Lexicon*, 85.

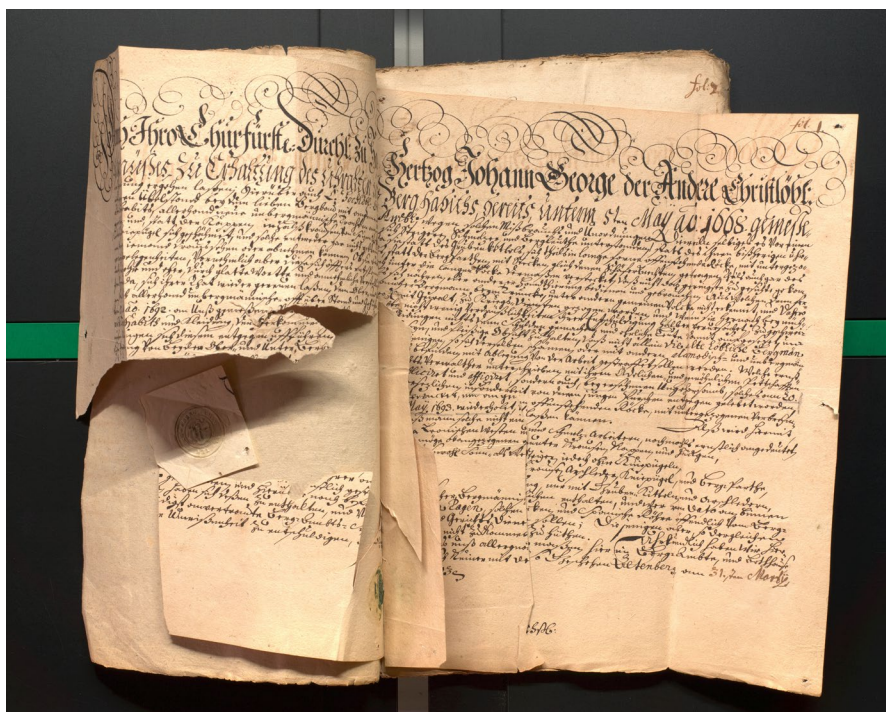


Fig. 5 Defaced broadsheet containing a princely ordinance that sought to regulate workers' dress. Sächsisches Staatsarchiv, 40006 Bergamt Altenberg (mit Berggießhübel und Glashütte), Nr. 2096 (Photograph: Author)

Instead of the old mining blouses, [they wear] long coats that they keep open in the front, with waistcoats underneath; and, instead of the hoods, collars with lace; and sticks like shepherds' garments instead of the axe. Sometimes they are ashamed of their leather apron and kneepads. They do not wear them at all, or hide them under their frocks so that it is not possible to see who is a miner, and who earns their livelihood in a different way.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ '[...] einen nicht geringen Übelstand mit angemerket hat, wann sich theils Steiger und Bergleuthe unterstanden, statt des ihren behörigen uhralten Berghabits, allerhand neue unbergmännische Trachten anzunehmen, da sie statt des Gruben Kittels, sich theils in lange, forne offen stehende Röcke, mit untergezogenen Westen, und statt der Kappen, in Halskraußen von Spitzen gekleidet, theils stat der Bergparthen mit Stecken, gleich denen Schäfer Trachten getragen, theils auch gar des Leders und Knie-Bügel sich schämen, und solche entweder gar nicht gebrauchen, der doch unter die lange Röcker dermaßen verstecken, daß man das geringste nicht davon zu Gesichte bringen, weniger daraus sehen oder abmachen kan, ob sie des Bergwerckes seyn, oder andere Handthierung und Nahrung bedienen und gebrauchen [...] f. 2, 1692. Sächsisches Staatsarchiv, 40006 Bergamt Altenberg (mit Berggießhübel und Glashütte), Nr. 2096. For sumptuary laws in Saxony, see L. Bartsch, 'Die sächsischen Kleiderordnungen mit Bezugnahme auf die Freiburger Verhältnisse', *Mitteilungen des Freiburger Altertumsvereins*, 20 (1883), 1–44.

On the other hand, miners used the accoutrements of their work when they insisted on their rights. In order to protest against the cancellation of a holiday in 1737, they appeared in their 'Sunday mining blouses', went to Church, and listened to the weekday sermon.⁴⁵ In other words, workers acted not as passive 'carriers' of mining culture but used it actively, flexibly, and with a sense for visual effect. They drew on cultural forms to affirm a social order, or to change it, or to invert it momentarily, in a manner not unlike the festivals at the Dresden court. The 'traditional' miner's dress, consisting of seven pieces of equipment, a historicizing cut, and defined materials was thus actively constructed in instances when uniformity of dress across different occupational groups and geographical areas mattered. The miners' parade in 1719 was one such occasion.

During the cameralist reforms under Anton von Heynitz (1725–1802), uniformity of dress began to matter at all times.⁴⁶ For him, the function of the new, standardized dress that he ordered in 1768 was twofold: it should visualize, and help enforce, 'distinction' of miners from every other social group. A representative uniform thus became one of Heynitz' instruments to encourage people to take up the 'labourious and dangerous metier' of mining.⁴⁷ On the other hand, it was to enforce 'subordination' within the refined, paramilitary hierarchy of the Saxon mining state.⁴⁸ The Freiberg Academy, founded in 1765 to train mining officials, had already been integrated into Heynitz' sartorial policy, with the rank of the professors calibrated with that of a *Bergmeister* and the students both associated with, and distinguished from, the workers that they were to supervise one day:

An ordinary blouse of black woolen cloth [Tuch], which is different from the common mine worker in that its collar and cuffs have a narrow trimming [, ...] that they have a triangular ordinary hat and their hair properly done, that their

⁴⁵ 'Montags an gedachtem Fest-Tage versammelten sich viele Bergleute in ihrem Sonntags-Gruben-Kütteln in die gewöhnliche Wochenpredigt und höreten dieselbige mit an'. Christian Gotthold Wilisch, *Das Alter die Ehre und der reiche Seegen Gottes bey dem Freibergischen Bergwerk* (1767), quoted in Wappler, 'Streittag', 35.

⁴⁶ For the reforms, compare Horst Schlechte, *Staatsreform in Kursachsen 1762-1763: Quellen zum kursächsischen Rétablissement nach dem siebenjährigen Kriege* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1958); Wakefield, *The Disordered Police State*, Andre Wakefield, 'Silver Thaler and Ur-Cameralists', in Mary Lindemann and Jared Poley (eds.), *Money in the German-Speaking Lands* (New York: Berghahn, 2017), 58–73.

⁴⁷ Fritsch and Sieber, *Bergmännische Trachten*, 38. This policy is further explained in the report of the revision commission of 1771: 'Kein Stand hat also mehr Aufmunterung nöthig, und kann weniger Bedrückung aushalten. Dieses sind auch die Ursachen, warum an diese so nützlichen Unterthanen, ganz aus dem übrigen, mehr complicirten politischen Zusammenhange hat herausnehmen, absondern, ihnen eine eigene Tracht, Verfaßung, einfache und kurze Rechte, und besondere Richter geben, das nothdürfftige Auskommen, und die Möglichkeit solches zu verdienen, durch eine fast allgemeine Exemption von Personal-Praestandis und mehr Abgaben versichern, auch endlich durch die eingeführte, immerfort gehende Ascension, zu Hofnung einiger Verbeßerung, und zugleich einer Art von Ehrbegierde ermuntern müßen.' Quoted in Hans Baumgärtel, *Bergbau und Absolutismus: Der sächsische Bergbau in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts und Maßnahmen zu seiner Verbesserung nach dem Siebenjährigen Krieg* (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Grundstoffindustrie, 1963), 175–6.

⁴⁸ For the difficulties in imposing the uniform, see Fritsch and Sieber, *Bergmännische Trachten*, 45–51.

lower garments are of white woolen cloth, while the workers' ones are made of white linen, also that they wear boots and carry an axe-cane.⁴⁹

The Academy soon expanded to become the main avenue for a career in Saxon mining, training young men who shaped their professional persona by donning prescribed dress who would, after graduation, mark progress of their careers with the change of uniform.⁵⁰ Heinrich von Trebra (1740–1819), one of the first Freiberg graduates, understood clearly the politics of dress. When in 1770, as *Bergmeister* of the Marienberg district, he swapped his uniform for a 'bourgeois business dress' to appeal to Amsterdam investors, he was concerned that his workers took this as a licence that they may walk around in their 'old coats' as they pleased.⁵¹ While workers put on clothes flexibly and sometimes frustrated expectations of their superiors, a new generation of officials, modeled on reformers like Trebra, put on the uniform 'deeply'.⁵² The academy was thus a focus point of a genuine administrative culture, that spread across the mining districts of Germany, Europe and Latin America and that provided an ample repertoire of habits, skills, and styles from which bureaucrats could devise strategies of action.⁵³ The nimble but structured minds of mining bureaucrats that the academy helped to form found a bodily counterpart in the unformed but agile bodies of the young academicians (Fig. 6).

IN THE COLLECTION

Under the tighter grip of a corps of officials, Saxon mining became more ostensibly scientific, and more bureaucratic. Officials also sought to model

⁴⁹ '[...] einem gewöhnlichen Kittel von schwarzen Tuch besteht, der sich von dem der gemeinen Bergarbeiter dadurch unterscheidet, daß Kragen und Aufschläge mit schmalen Tressen besetzt sind [...] daß sie einen dreyeckigten gewöhnlichen Huth und ihre Haare frisirt haben, daß ihre Beinkleider von weißem Tuch, der Bergarbeiter ihre aber von weißer Leinwand sind, insgleichen daß sie Stiefeln tragen und ein Berghäckgen führen.' Alexander Wilhelm Köhler, *Bergmännischer Kalender für das Jahr 1791* (Freiberg/Annaberg: Craz, 1790), 56–7.

⁵⁰ Peter Konečný and Hartmut Schleiff, 'Aufstieg und Ausbildung im sächsischen Bergstaat zwischen 1765 und 1868', in Konečný and Schleiff (eds.), *Staat, Bergbau und Bergakademie*, 125–59, 132–4.

⁵¹ 'Für die Reise dorthin, hatte ich mir ein Geschäftskleid machen lassen, wie es in jener kaufmännischen Welt ohne Aufsehen zu erregen Vorkommen durfte, denn im bergmännischen Anzuge möchte ich wohl auf der Amsterdamer Börse, zu viele Neugierige auf mich gezogen haben. Mit diesem bürgerlichen Geschäftskleide, war ich nur ein einziges Mal auch in Marienberg erschienen. Gleich hatten sich einige veralterte Röcke unter den Bergleuten wieder blicken lassen, die, bey meinem Festhalten über die gemachte Anordnung, der unausgesetzt, und allgemein zu führenden bergmännischen Bekleidung, schon gänzlich verschwunden waren.' Friedrich von Trebra, *Bergmeister-Leben und Wirken in Marienberg* (Freiberg: Craz und Gerlach, 1818), 171. On the genre and the stakes of this text, see Marie-Theres T. Federhofer, "Pragmatische Selbstbiographie": Friedrich Wilhelm Heinrich von Trebras Bergmeister-Leben und Wirken in Marienberg im kulturwissenschaftlichen Kontext, in Robert Seidel (ed.), *Wissen und Wissensvermittlung im 18. Jahrhundert: Beiträge zur Sozialgeschichte der Naturwissenschaften zur Zeit der Aufklärung*, Cardanus, i (Heidelberg, 2000), 13–32.

⁵² Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge, 2000), 2.

⁵³ See, for example, Donata Brianta, 'Education and Training in the Mining Industry, 1750-1860: European Models and the Italian Case', *Annals of Science* 57, (2000), 267–300.

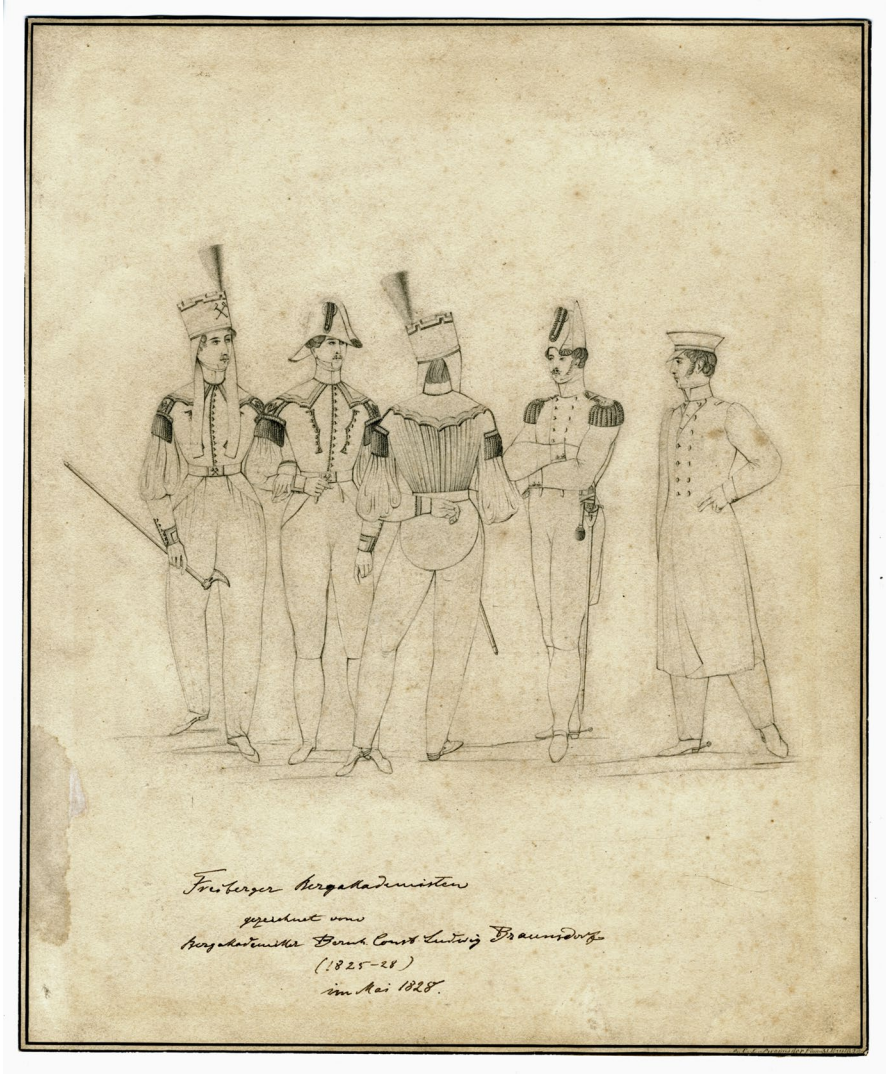


Fig. 6 Bernhard Constantin Braunsdorf, *Freiberger Bergakademisten*, 1828. Pencil drawing. Stadt- und Bergbaumuseum Freiberg, Inv.-Nr. 53/92 (Photograph: Stadt- und Bergbaumuseum Freiberg)

the culture of miners in the image of their own, newly amalgamated administrative culture – not least in order to make the profession more attractive and thus make labour supply to mines more reliable. The mines thus provided the officials with ample opportunity to apply the instrumental reason that they had developed at the Freiberg Academy, and the culture of miners

was one of the things that they intervened in, most visibly by streamlining workers' dress.⁵⁴ Yet, mining also elicited a more diffuse engagement with dress, art works, ritual, lore, and song, also and especially among mining officials.⁵⁵ A searching movement among German intellectuals for the past became increasingly organized around the idea of a *Volk*, which during the Napoleonic wars was perceived to be under imminent threat. Programmatic were the lectures that Heinrich Luden, a history professor in Jena, held in 1809: The primary concern of a people must be to be free of the rule of others, to make possible 'the free development of its own character [eigenthümlichen Charakter] and to prevent an alien people forcing it to adopt an alien life with an alien sentiment'. But importantly, the 'own character' was also threatened by imperfect transmission from generation to generation. To 'recognize, preserve, and develop' this heritage was therefore a patriotic duty. 'What the character of a people is [...], can be learnt from the history of a people.'⁵⁶

Throughout the 19th century and across all German lands, patriots heeded this and similar calls and engaged in salvage ethnography. In 1811, Jacob Grimm urged 'all friends of German poesy and history' to retrieve traces of the German character from inaccessible places.

In high mountains, in cut-off valleys, there still lives a pure, unaged sentiment.

In the narrow villages, where few paths and no roads lead, where no false enlightenment has reached and done its work – there is still a hidden treasure of customs, lore, and piety of the Fatherland to be found.⁵⁷

In keeping with the mountain imagery, he and his brother Wilhelm opened their 1816/1818 collection of German lore with a story that they had collected in Hessian villages, of three miners of Kuttenberg, whose light, miraculously,

⁵⁴ Fritzsich, 'Kleidung'.

⁵⁵ Theodore Ziolkowski, *German Romanticism and Its Institutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), Ch. 2.

⁵⁶ 'Darum ist das erste Streben eines jeden Volks, und muß das erste Streben seyn: seine Selbstständigkeit zu erhalten, frei und unabhängig zu bleiben von der Herrschaft jedes andern Volks, um sich die freie Entwicklung in seinem eigenthümlichen Charakter möglich zu erhalten, um zu verhüten, daß nicht ein fremdes Volk ihm eines fremden Lebens fremden Sinn aufzwingt.' – 'Dieses Eigenthümliche eines Volks aber [...], das berichtet die Geschichte dieses Volks.' Heinrich Luden, *Einige Worte über das Studium der vaterländischen Geschichte. Vier öffentliche Vorträge, welche Professor Luden, in Jena seinem ersten Vorträge der Deutschen Geschichte 1808 vorausgeschickt hat* (Jena: Akademische Buchhandlung, 1809), 13, 17-18. See also Reinhart Koselleck, 'Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse: X. "Volk" und "Nation" als Kategorien wissenschaftlichen Denkens', in Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, and Reinhart Koselleck (eds.) *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politischen Sprache in Deutschland*, vii (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992), 337-47.

⁵⁷ 'Später könnte es immer zu spät geworden sein und die Kritik am Vorrath zerstreuter Materialien zwar Uebung, allein nicht die Nahrung finden, woraus das historische Bild der Vergangenheit erzeugt und geboren werden muß. Auf hohen Bergen, in geschlossenen Thälern lebt noch am reinsten ein unveralteter Sinn, in den engen Dörfern, dahin wenig Wege führen und keine Straßen, wo keine falsche Aufklärung eingegangen oder ihr Werk ausgerichtet hat, da ruht noch an vaterländischer Gewohnheit, Sage und Gläubigkeit ein Schatz im Verborgenen'. Quoted in Reinhold Steig, *Clemens Brentano und die Brüder Grimm* (Stuttgart/Berlin, 1914), 165.

burned for seven years after they had been caved in.⁵⁸ In Saxony, the call of the Grimm brothers was answered by Widar Ziehnert (1838/1839), Adolph Segnitz (1839/1841) and Johann Georg Theodor Gräbe (1855 and 1874). Segnitz prefaced his collection of Saxon lore with a verse to his reader that characterized his endeavour:

Accept this little book which was born
 from loyal, holy love to the Fatherland; [...]
 It braids for you from old history books
 A wreath of unwithered memory [...]
 Things that the flourishing generations of the past
 have believed, done, hoped for, and thought,
 are, as an echo of by-gone days,
 graciously presented to you in this book.⁵⁹

Early ethnographers thus started from the idea of a *Volk*, or Fatherland, and collected cultural artefacts to give it substance. The material substrate that was both a product and wellspring of their endeavour was the collection of particular items, which made it possible for them to experience the general idea of a *Volk*.

This quest for monuments of the past was soon institutionalized in civic associations throughout the German lands.⁶⁰ In 1825, the *Königlich Sächsischer Alterthum-Vereins* was founded in Dresden, a well-chosen location, since the city housed

Several collections, some of which support historical research by providing written information such as the archives and the Royal Public Library; and others [which] encourage antiquarian studies, such as the Green Vault, the Historical Museum (then still called the Armoury), the Antiques Gallery, and the other museums.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm, *Deutsche Sagen* (Berlin: Nicolai, 1816), 1–3.

⁵⁹ 'Nimm hin dieß Büchlein, das die treue Liebe

Zum Vaterland, die heilige, gebar; [...]

Es flicht aus alten Büchern der Geschichte

Dir der Erin' rung unverwelkten Kranz [...]

Was einst der Vorzeit blühende Geschlechter

Geglaubt, gethan, gehoffet und gedacht,

Das sei, ein Nachhall längst verklung'ner Tage,

In diesem Buch Dir freundlich dargebracht'. Adolph Segnitz, *Sagen, Legenden, Märchen u. Erzählungen aus der Geschichte des sächsischen Volkes*, 2 vols. (Meißen: Klinkicht, 1839), i, unpaginated preface.

⁶⁰ Uwe John, 'Altertumsvereine als Wegbereiter volkskundlicher Forschung', in Michael Simon, Monika Kania-Schütz, and Sönke Löden (eds.), *Zur Geschichte der Volkskunde: Personen, Programme, Positionen* (Dresden: Thelem, 2002), 27–49.

⁶¹ Gustav Klemm, 'Zur Geschichte der Königlich Sächsischen Alterthums-Vereins', *Mittheilungen des Königl. Sächs. Vereins für Erforschung und Erhaltung vaterländischer Alterthümer*, 1 (1835), iii–xxiv, quotation on iii.

Prepared in cabinet, approved by King Friedrich August I, and placed under the patronage of his nephews, the princes Friedrich August and Johann, the *Verein* set itself to the goal to collect and preserve.⁶² As in Luden, *Volk* was the notion around which the scattered search for particular cultural expressions was organized. Monuments of the past, Prince Johann declared at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the *Verein*, feed the ‘interior life of peoples’.⁶³ In the mining town of Freiberg, this speech spurred the foundation of a local branch of the *Verein* in 1860. Its founding presidents were the printer Heinrich Gerlach, a lawyer, and an apothecary, while its board was made up of teachers, university professors, and, prominently, *Oberberghauptmann* Freiherr von Beust.⁶⁴

The Freiburger *Alterthums-Verein* began to organize excursions by foot (‘Alterthumswanderungen oder Entdeckungsreisen’) into the surroundings of the town to obtain documents and objects from villages, castles, churches, convents, mines, and smelting works. In the pithead of the Fabian mine in Marienberg, for example, members were thrilled to discover ‘a collection of mining tools which had been discovered recently in a ruined, old part of the mine’.⁶⁵ Private individuals, mining officials and the Mining Academy provided them with similar objects. The *Verein* immediately set up a local museum that mirrored the Saxon museum in Dresden and the national Germanisches Museum in Nuremberg, but engaged local audiences. It was located at the civic heart of the city, in a representative, wood-panelled room on the first floor of the *Städtische Kaufhaus* next to the city hall. Its display was designed to give visitors, moving from object to object, an intuitive grasp for the past. The museum was an ‘educational historical collection, with a particular emphasis on monuments of mining history [bergmännische Alterthümer].’ As its president summarized its policy, ‘by systematic display of the monuments according to their age, to make the slow development of our

⁶² ‘Der Zweck des Vereins ist: vaterländische Alterthümer zu erforschen und zu entdecken, sie entweder selbst, oder durch Abbildung zu erhalten und für die Nachkommen aufzubewahren.’ *Ibid.*, v.

⁶³ ‘Wie das Gemüth des einzelnen Menschen seine reichsten Schätze aus den Erinnerungen seiner Vergangenheit, namentlich aus den Jugenderinnerungen schöpft, so beruht das Gemüthsleben der Völker größtentheils auf dem Andenken an seine Vorzeit; und wo tritt dieses Andenken dem Auge deutlicher entgegen, als in den Denkmälern der Vergangenheit, die gleichsam eine lebendige Geschichte sind! [...] Es ist daher gewiß keine unwichtige Aufgabe, diese Denkmäler selbst vor Zerstörung zu schützen und die Liebe der Nation zu denselben zu bilden und anzuregen.’ Heinrich Gerlach, ‘Bericht über die Begründung und Thätigkeit des Freiburger Alterthumsvereins vom 14. März 1860 bis 24. März 1862’, *Mittheilungen des Freiburger Alterthumsvereins*, 1 (1862), 7–16.

⁶⁴ ‘Der Zweck des Vereins ist, vaterländische Alterthümer in Freiberg und Umgegend aufzusuchen, aufzuzeichnen und zu erläutern, sowie zu Instandhaltung derselben beizutragen, auch sie entweder selbst zu sammeln oder Abbildungen davon zu entnehmen.’ *Ibid.*, 8–9.

⁶⁵ Heinrich Gerlach, ‘Begründung des Freiburger Alterthums-Museums im Jahre 1861’, *Mittheilungen des Freiburger Alterthumsvereins*, 1 (1862), 49–50.

cultural history [Culturgeschichte] more easily visible.⁶⁶ A reduced entrance fee on weekends made this insight more attainable for the labouring 'Jedermann', while free guided tours for primary schools targeted the youth.⁶⁷ Set up alongside the museum, a library collected print and manuscript sources for more scholarly modes of appropriating the past. The *Verein's* journal, first issued in 1862 and conveniently printed by the president Heinrich Gerlach's own publishing house, provided a forum for synthetic accounts of cultural history that would find audiences beyond the town and its environment. The *Verein* thus fed local evidence into a wider discussion about the German *Volk*, for which the discipline of *Volkskunde* was beginning to claim particular responsibility.⁶⁸

The cultural work of the Freiberg *Alterthums-Verein* continued the work of the mining bureaucracy, which was reduced in power during the liberal reforms of 1868, in more than one way.⁶⁹ As a civic institution, it was the association of free individuals in a living State, not directed by an administration, or the coercive State.⁷⁰ Its members were searching a *Volk* that existed for its own sake while mining officials were guided by a cameralist notion of a *Volk* that existed to work and produce within the State.⁷¹ It preserved, accumulated, and studied cultural products that disappeared in the actual working environment of the mines as these were modernized by academy-trained

⁶⁶ 'Durch die hierdurch entstehende, s. Z. [seiner Zeit] für die Oeffentlichkeit bestimmte Sammlung beabsichtigt man der neuen Zeit nicht allein ein Bild unserer frühesten, kirchlichen wie bürgerlichen, Verhältnisse und Einrichtungen zu bieten und dauernd zu erhalten, sondern man will auch, so weit es hier überhaupt möglich sein wird, durch eine systematische Ausstellung der Alterthümer nach ihrem Zeitalter zu leichter Veranschaulichung des allmäligen Entwicklungsgangs unserer Culturgeschichte beitragen'. *Ibid.*, 50.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁶⁸ Uwe John, 'Altertumsvereine als Wegbereiter volkskundlicher Forschung', in Michael Simon, Monika Kania-Schütz, and Sönke Löden (eds.), *Zur Geschichte der Volkskunde: Personen, Programme, Positionen* (Dresden: Thelem, 2002), 27–49.

⁶⁹ Guntram Martin, 'Bergverfassung, Bergverwaltung, Bergrecht im sächsischen Montanwesen des 19. Jahrhunderts: Probleme des Übergangs vom Direktionsprinzip zur freien Unternehmerschaft (1831 bis 1868)' (PhD thesis, Technische Universität Dresden, 1994).

⁷⁰ Compare, for example, 'Wenn die Mitglieder des staatsgesellschaftlichen Vereins in den verschiedenen Kreisen und Abtheilungen desselben die auf diese sich beziehenden Angelegenheiten und Interessen selber verwalten und die an des Staates Spitze stehende oberste Auctorität bloß bestimmt ist, sich mit dessen allgemeinen Angelegenheiten und Interessen zu befassen: dann hat man eine politische Ordnung der Dinge, die das Gegentheil von einer solchen ist, worin eine Alles in sich concentrirende, Alles in ihren Bereich ziehende und centralisirende höchste Staatsmacht als Staatsregierung waltet. Der Staat gleicht dann einer aus vielen besonderen Associationen zusammengesetzten großen Association, so daß jene in diese mehr auf eine organische als mechanische Weise, mehr durch Gemeinsamkeit der Interessen, als durch Zwang zu einem untrennbaren Ganzen verknüpft sind, zu welchem sich die Theile wie die Glieder zum organischen Gesamtkörper verhalten.' Friedrich Murhard, 'Staatsverwaltung', in *Staats-Lexikon oder Encyclopädie der Staatswissenschaften in Verbindung mit vielen der angesehensten Publicisten Deutschlands* (Altona: Hammerich, 1843), 83–104, quotation on 90. On the opposition between these two modes of statehood in nineteenth-century Germany, see Bernd Wunder, 'Bürokratie: Die Geschichte eines politischen Schlagwortes', in Adrienne Windhoff-Héritier (ed.) *Verwaltung und ihre Umwelt: Festschrift für Thomas Ellwein* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 1987), 277–301.

⁷¹ Keith Tribe, 'Cameralism', in Gilbert Faccarello and Heinz D. Kurz (eds.), *Handbook on the History of Economic Analysis*, ii (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2016), 43–51.

officials. And it provided a local research infrastructure, nested within a Saxon and later national framework of journals, libraries, and museums that *Volkskundler* and historians used to move from particular objects, documents, songs, and stories to more general accounts of mining culture.

AT WAR

When the National Socialists revived mining in the Ore Mountains for their war economy, they had a rich repertoire of cultural elements at their disposal to shape the behaviour of workers. On the one hand, they could draw on the notion of a mining *Volk* that preceded the State as it emerged with empirical saturation from the work of ethnographers and historians. On the other hand, they reactivated the eighteenth and nineteenth-century ideology of a hierarchically integrated *Bergstaat*, which had been largely dormant since the liberalization of the sector in 1868. Mining in the Saxon Ore Mountains declined rapidly when Germany switched from a silver to a gold-based currency in 1871. Unable to compete with cheaper silver from Latin America, the sector was finally shut down by 1913.⁷² In preparation for war, the Nazis strove for independence from mineral imports. In 1937, they built mines and smelting works – the *Reichswerke AG für Erzbergbau und Eisenhütten 'Hermann Göring'* – to process iron ores around Salzgitter whose exploitation had been considered unprofitable.⁷³ The role of Saxony's resurrected mining industry was to provide the important metals tin, tungsten, bismuth, cobalt, and lithium alongside the traditional products lead, zinc, and silver.⁷⁴ Party official Friedrich Wernicke, a gifted geologist and mining engineer, organized the reestablishment of mining in Saxony. As director of the Freiberg Mining Office (Oberberghauptmann), he set up new Local Mining Offices in the annexed territory of Sudetenland, in 'those parts of the common metallic district that had been on the southern side of the old border.'⁷⁵ (His 1933 dissertation had developed the idea of a 'metallic district' that stretched across German and Czech parts of the Ore Mountains.⁷⁶)

⁷² Otfried Wagenbreth and Eberhard Wächtler, *Der Freiburger Bergbau: Technische Denkmale und Geschichte*, 2nd edn. (Leipzig: Deutscher Verlag für Grundstoffindustrie, 1988), 21.

⁷³ Dieter Ziegler, 'Kriegswirtschaft, Kriegsfolgenbewältigung, Kriegsvorbereitung: Der deutsche Bergbau im dauernden Ausnahmezustand (1914–1945)', in Dieter Ziegler (ed.), *Geschichte des deutschen Bergbaus*, iv: Rohstoffgewinnung im Strukturwandel: Der deutsche Bergbau im 20. Jahrhundert (Münster: Achendorff, 2013), 15–182, in particular 165–74.

⁷⁴ Friedrich Wernicke, 'Sachsens Erzbergbau wiedererstanden', *Der Vierjahresplan: Zeitschrift für nationalsozialistische Wirtschaftspolitik*, 6 (1942), 274–78, quotation on 278.

⁷⁵ 'Mit der Rückgliederung des Sudetenlandes im Jahre 1938 wurden die Aufbauarbeiten dann planmäßig auch auf den südlich der alten Reichsgrenze gelegenen Teil des gemeinsamen Metallbezirks ausgedehnt.' *Ibid.*, 276.

⁷⁶ Friedrich Wernicke, *Die primäre Erzverteilung auf den Lagerstätten in Abhängigkeit von den Bildungsvorgängen und den geologischen Verhältnissen des Lagerstättengebirges* (Würzburg: K. Triltsch, 1933).

To provide a work force for the resurrected mines, the Nazis drew on culture. Wernicke wrote in 1942 that nowhere else in Germany miners had

Developed such beautiful and varied folklore [Brauchtum] in terms of song, festive dress, and festivals. This mining tradition [Bergbautradition] is alive and present throughout the entire Ore Mountains, and today it shapes again the workers of the newly arisen mines.⁷⁷

The long-term narratives that *Volkskundler* and historians had created from their surveys of cultural products were braided into a racialized understanding of a professional group. The point of Bergtrat Karl Bax's 1942 book on *The German Miner in the Course of History* was precisely that there was no historical change: The 'eternal face of the German miner' had remained unchanged as the 'genetic heritage' of a group that was defined both by 'race and by profession'.⁷⁸ This mining tradition ('bergmännische Tradition'), Bax wrote, could be grasped when looking 'at long centuries' in one glance, and it could now help reestablish the profession: 'The German Volk must again understand mining's great political task of which every medieval person had been convinced.' Wernicke describes this task in more concrete, expansionist terms: 'to shape the greater European space'.⁷⁹ In other words, Nazi officials believed that 'tradition' offered the building blocks of professional identity that could reconstitute a workforce for the war effort and for colonization after victory.

While the idea of a racially stable mining profession drew on *Volkskunde* and its nineteenth-century precursors, the administrative culture of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries provided the Nazis with the tools to integrate the mining sector under strong leadership.⁸⁰ *Oberberghauptmann* Wernicke invoked *Generalbergkommissar* Anton von Heynitz as his predecessor, and marked the fourth centenary of the Mining Office in

⁷⁷ 'In keinem deutschen Gau hat der Bergmannsstand ein so schönes und vielgestaltiges Brauchtum in Lied, Festkleid und Fei ergestaltung entwickelt wie in Sachsen. Diese Bergbautradition ist im ganzen Erzgebirge lebendig und gegenwärtig und formt heute wieder die Mannschaften der neu erstandenen Gruben.' Wernicke, 'Sachsens Erzbergbau', 274.

⁷⁸ '[...] das ewige Antlitz des deutschen Knappen zu zeichnen, wie es sich – den bewegten Ablauf geschichtlicher Perioden und den widerspruchsvollen Wechsel der Zeitverhältnisse überdauernd – als Erbgut eines dem Beruf und der Rasse nach heroischen Menschentums unverändert erhalten hat. Nur aus einem die Lehren langer Jahrhunderte überschauenden Zusammenhange heraus und in Anknüpfung an das, was uns heute als beste bergmännische Tradition erscheint, kann dem Bergmannsberuf jene Ordnung gegeben werden, die seiner kulturellen Bedeutung, seiner politischen Sendung und seiner wirtschaftlichen Aufgabe entspricht [...]'. Karl Bax, *Der deutsche Bergmann im Wandel der Geschichte, seine Stellung in der Gegenwart und die Frage seines Berufsnachwuchses* (Berlin: Ernst, 1942), preface by author.

⁷⁹ Auch im Herzland des deutschen Bergwesens, im sächsischen Erzgebirge, stehen wieder ihrem Bergmannsberuf und ihrem Werk verbundene Männer bereit, den europäischen Großraum durch schöpferische bergmännische Arbeit mitzugestalten.' Wernicke, 'Sachsens Erzbergbau', 278.

⁸⁰ Friedrich Wernicke, *400 Jahre Oberbergamt Freiberg* (Berlin: Wilhelm Ernst & Sohn, 1942). See also Walter Fischer, '400 Jahre Sächsisches Oberbergamt Freiberg (1542-1942): Die Bedeutung dieser Dienststelle für die Entwicklung der Geologie und Lagerstättenkunde', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Geologischen Gesellschaft*, 95 (1943), 143-83.

Freiberg with a publication.⁸¹ Dress, here, was important. A well-known portrait of Heynitz in mining uniform was an opportunity to refashion him as a prototype of Nazi leadership:

The portrait shows clearly how splendidly the uniforms of the mining leaders had been developed. At the same time it testifies to how proudly even the highest state officials identified themselves with mining by putting on a mining uniform.⁸²

Bax praised Heynitz' efforts to boost Prussian arms production by building a strictly organized, centrally planned mining sector, which – he pointed out – was very similar to the 'even greater task that the Führer has given to *Reichsmarschall* Göring as the commissioner for the Four Years Plan.' Hermann Göring, as the head of the mining concern that bore his name, had become the first miner of the country.⁸³

In a striking piece of propaganda, Göring invited 598 miners from all parts of the Reich and 57 smelters from the Reichswerke in Salzgitter to decorate them with the War Merit Cross (*Kriegsverdienstkreuz*). A photograph depicts a key moment in the ceremony (Fig. 7): an unnamed miner stands in the brightly lit centre against a dark background of miners sitting at numbered tables. The table in front of him is decorated with turned figurines, typical handicraft from the Ore Mountains. The miner's body is stiffly bent, supported by a tight, black uniform, and he gazes intently at Hermann Göring on the right. Robert Ley, leader of the *Deutsche Arbeitsfront* that replaced trade unions as workers' organizations in the Nazi state watched the scene carefully but from a distance on the left. Göring appears in good spirits. Well-known for his passion for dress, he appeared in the dove-grey uniform that was created for his position as *Reichsmarschall*.⁸⁴ Ley's attentive gaze, the bent body of the miner, and Göring's pleasure are linked by a material object which delivers the central piece of propaganda:

The speaker of the miners, a miner from Westphalia who carries the Golden Party Badge, thanked the *Reichsmarschall* for the prestigious award and presented him a mining lamp as a gift of honour. It carried the engraved words:

⁸¹ 'Die sächsische Bergbehörde, deren Leiter von Heynitz gewesen, begeht in diesem Jahre mit dem 400jährigen Bestehen des Oberbergamtes Freiberg ein in Deutschland und in der Welt einmaliges Jubiläum.' Wernicke, 'Sachsens Erzbergbau', 274.

⁸² 'Das Porträt gibt eine rechte Vorstellung davon, in welcher prunkvoller Weise die Uniformen der bergbaulichen Führerpersönlichkeiten entwickelt worden sind. Gleichzeitig legt es Zeugnis davon ab, mit welchem Stolz sich selbst die höchsten Staatsbeamten durch das Tragen bergmännischer Uniformen zum Bergbau bekennen.' Bax, *Der deutsche Bergmann*, 59.

⁸³ 'Sowohl die Art seines Auftrages als auch die Weise, wie er ihn durchführte, erinnern lebhaft an die noch größere Aufgabe, die der Führer dem Reichsmarschall Göring als dem Beauftragten für den Vierjahresplan im Rahmen des großdeutschen Aufbauwerkes gestellt hat.' *Ibid.*, 60.

⁸⁴ Brian L. Davis, *Uniformen und Abzeichen der Luftwaffe 1940–1945*, tr. Karl P. E. Veltzé (Stuttgart: Motorbuch-Verlag, 2001), 286–7.



Bergmännische Feierstunde beim Reichsmarschall des Großdeutschen Reiches.

Fig. 7 Hermann Göring receives a miner's lamp during a festive gathering of miners on 11 January 1941. Source: Karl Bax, *Der deutsche Bergmann im Wandel der Geschichte, seine Stellung in der Gegenwart und die Frage seines Berufsnachwuchses* (Berlin: Ernst, 1942)

'To their supreme Mining Lord [obersten Bergherrn], the *Reichsmarschall* Hermann Göring; presented by his German miners on the day when the miners were honoured.' By this dedication, the miners expressed their pride, that they could consider the *Reichsmarschall* as one of their own kind.⁸⁵

CONCLUSION

This article used the incongruous sight of the Elector of Saxony dressed up as a miner as the starting point for a meditation on 'culture' in accounts of

⁸⁵ 'Der Sprecher der Bergleute, ein westfälischer Knappe mit dem Goldenen Parteiabzeichen, dankte dem Reichsmarschall für die hohe Anerkennung und überreichte ihm als Ehrengeschenk eine Bergmanns-lampe, auf der die Worte eingraviert sind: "Ihrem obersten Bergherrn Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring überreicht von seinen deutschen Bergleuten am Tage der Bergmannsehrung." Mit dieser Widmung brachten die Bergleute ihren Stolz darüber zum Ausdruck, daß sie den Reichsmarschall als einen der ihren betrachten dürfen.' Bax, *Der deutsche Bergmann*, 60.

early modern German mining. Since 1945, historians have developed different strategies to dissolve the ambiguity. Some distinguished a workers' culture from a court culture and interpreted the cross-dressing prince in the sense that courtiers, falsely or playfully, imported mining motifs from its original social context for the display of power. Others operated with a more ecumenical notion of mining culture as carried by officials, burghers, and the court with a legitimate claim to being associated with the sector because they lived in a mining town, they invested in mines, supervised workers or had prerogative rights to its products. A background assumption that seems to be shared across these contradictory positions is that the original and most authentic environment for mining culture is manual labour in the mines. In this article, I challenged this assumption by investigating sites that may appear derivative (government bureaus, the court) or unproductive (museum collections) if manual labour in the mines is taken to be the origin and well-spring of mining culture. I argue that these sites were instrumental for the construction of German mining culture in the sense all cited authors use it.

(1) *Mining culture in the bureau.* Since the second half of the 17th century, officials in the central bureaus sought to reform the Saxon mining administration by imposing stricter rules about dress. In 1681, *Oberhauptmann* Abraham von Schönberg, an early proponent of uniform dress both among workers and officials, had portraits of his predecessors repainted to create visual proof of a tradition of uniform dress, though his sartorial policy was only partially successful. The miners' parade during the festivities of 1719 was another occasion in which the Central Mining Office in Freiberg pushed for standardization of dress. Mining officials and courtly planners of the parade drew on existing forms of mining dress to develop a complex visual language that expressed rank and division of labour. Their attempt to impose uniform dress across all districts revealed the great actual diversity of dress among workers. Workers were never passive 'carriers' of mining culture but used mining garb actively, flexibly, and with a sense for visual effect. They sometimes chose to disassociate themselves from mining, and resisted impositions by officials. Anton von Heynitz further developed uniform dress into an instrument of cameralist statecraft, which would attract labour in the *Bergstaat* and ensure obedience of workers and officials. The Freiberg Academy was integrated in this sartorial policy as soon as it was founded in 1765 to train young bureaucrats. It soon became a main avenue for a career in Saxon mining as well as in other districts in Europe and Latin America and helped spread a genuine administrative culture whose carriers recognized each other by their uniforms.

(2) *Mining culture in the collection.* While academy-trained officials modernized Saxon mining, a new way of engaging with the past emerged during the first half of the nineteenth century. Throughout the German lands, and also in Saxony, civic associations set up museums, libraries, and journals to collect

monuments that would tell them about the German *Volk*, whose characteristics they felt were threatened by external powers and by enlightened thought that encroached on the customs, lore, and piety of the Fatherland. The *Alterthums-Verein* in Freiberg collected archival material, art works, handicraft, tools, and other items about the mining history of its district, and systematized these particular cultural artefacts into more coherent narratives, both in their museum and in their publications. This provided a local research infrastructure, nested within a Saxon and later national framework of journals, libraries, and museums that the emerging discipline of *Volkskunde* could use as its empirical base.

(3) *Mining culture at war*: Saxon mining rapidly declined after the liberalization in 1868 and was mostly shut down in 1913. When the Nazis resurrected the sector to promote economic autarky, they drew on a rich repertoire of cultural forms in order to reconstitute and direct the labour force. On the one hand, they braided narratives of *Volkskundler* and historians into a racialized notion of an unchanging German mining *Volk*. On the other hand, they refashioned early modern mining officials as prototypes of Nazi leadership and put a new emphasis on uniform dress. Hermann Göring, stylized as ‘oberste Bergherr,’ was both distinguished from, and associated with, the workers whom he met as director of the mining concern that bore his name.

This use of tradition, again, was criticized by East German historians before the ‘normalization’. In a 1969 article, Eberhardt Wächtler accused the work of the *Vereinigung der Freunde von Kunst und Kultur im Bergbau* in Bochum of continuing the cultural policy of the Nazis by actively creating a tradition where none existed for the workforce in the post-war Ruhrgebiet.⁸⁶ Tradition, for Wächtler, was malleable and could be put to use for any societal goal. In the hands of the German monopol capitalists, it became part of the ‘arsenal of weapons in the anti-communist campaign’⁸⁷ against West German workers. While this ulterior function of its work is arguable, the *Vereinigung* was indeed founded in 1947 to explore the arts and other cultural expressions that have a relationship to mining.⁸⁸ Heinrich Winkelmann, the founding president of the *Vereinigung* and director of the *Bergbau-Museum*, explained in 1952 the aims of their journal *Der Anschnitt*:

Especially the big industrial districts have been massive magnets that attracted people from all tribes [Volkstämmen] and regions [Landschaften]. [...] The loss of a home-region went hand in hand with an uprooting in time: the destruction of tradition. [...] Many of our contributions are about the past. This

⁸⁶ Eberhard Wächtler, ‘Die bergbauliche Tradition als Bestandteil der antikommunistischen Politik des deutschen Imperialismus seit 1933’, *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, 10 (1969), 277–86.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 286.

⁸⁸ See also Evelyn Kroker, ‘Die Gründungsgeschichte der VFKK. Ideen, Handelnde, Programm’, *Der Anschnitt* 5/6 (1998), 186–95.

is not an idle endeavour! [...] Will this not help [miners] to grow new roots in time, in tradition?⁸⁹

At the same time, their East German colleagues were engaged in their own invention of tradition. Sieber's insistence, cited in the introduction to this article, that mining culture only lives in manual labour was an attempt to recode *Volk* as class, and model mining as an early context for the modern antagonism: miners found themselves in 'a class situation', which they 'expressed in combative solidarity'.⁹⁰ In the accounts of working class history as they were written in the GDR before 1975, one commentator remarks only half in jest, 'it seems as if all that workers ever did was strike'.⁹¹

In other words, there are at least five layers of interpretative work that deflect our view of the premodern period: The current, 'normalized' scholarship in a reunited Germany; the construction of liberal or socialist traditions in the East and the West after the Second World War; the resurrection of both a mining State and mining *Volk* during the Nazi era; the system-building of *Volkskundler* and *Altertumsvereine* since the early 1800s; and attempts of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth-century mining bureaucracy to homogenize workers' dress, ritual, and language for judiciary, management, and economic planning purposes. Each layer produced their own archives, which any investigation of premodern mining culture depends on as an empirical base; and all of them offered their own attempts to construct mining 'culture' from the particulars that they collected. To excavate this genealogy of mining culture across states, academic disciplines, and civic institutions will be difficult but perhaps a worthy task for the emerging field of the history of knowledge.

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⁸⁹ 'Besonders die großen Industriegebiete haben sich seit mehr als fünfzig Jahren als riesige Magnete erwiesen, an die Menschen aus allen Volksstämmen und Landschaften herangezogen wurden. [...] Mit dem Verlust der Heimat ging Hand in Hand die zeithafte Entwurzelung: die Zerstörung der Tradition. [...] Sehr viele unserer Beiträge befassen sich dabei mit der Vergangenheit. Das ist kein müßiges Unterfangen! [...] Sollte dadurch nicht ein wenig der Verwurzelung in der Zeit, in der Tradition gedient werden?', Heinrich Winkelmann, 'Worum es geht!', *Der Anschmitt* 3 (1952), 3. See also Heinrich Winkelmann, *Der Bergbau in der Kunst* (Essen: Glückauf, 1958), 7–20.

⁹⁰ Sieber, *Volk*, 48. See also Johann Köhler, *Keime des Kapitalismus im sächsischen Silberbergbau (1168 bis um 1500)* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1955); Susan C. Karant-Nunn, 'Saxon Silver Miners as Early Proletariat', in Thomas Max Safley and Leonard N. Rosenband (eds.), *The Workplace before the Factory: Artisans and Proletarians, 1500–1800* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 73–99.

⁹¹ Wagenbreth, 'Montangeschichtsschreibung', 202.