

# LH & 13 ODW

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*Be running up that road  
Be running up that hill  
Be running up that building  
See, if I only could, oh*

In the deep forests of Brandenburg, you can find small square stones at certain crossroads. The stones – Jagensteine – are marked with numbers. Each quarter is numbered to indicate the adjacent Jagen, a topographical area of the forest. Jagensteine are instruments of orientation. Finding one's way in these forests is not as easy as on the plains. On the plains of this vast and empty land, one finds landmarks such as rivers, streets, electricity pylons and a rare church spire. But in the depths of the forest it is harder. Especially when there are no great elevation changes to help.

From the 17th century onwards Brandenburg has been shaped by the Prussians. As well as cultivating and mapping the land, the Prussians are associated with the promotion of: sincerity, diligence, modesty, conscientiousness, punctuality, righteousness, willingness to make sacrifices, cleanliness, piety, asceticism, honesty, tolerance, reliability, straightforwardness, accuracy, justness, probity, incorruptibility, restraint, and determination. Unending Slog.

These virtues were a colonial strategy, propagated to unite the diverse people of the Prussian Empire, a scattered and often troublesome territory to govern. During the Baroque era the dissemination of these virtues helped to increase economic efficiency, initiating structures for education and administration – the birth of the German bureaucracy.

Navigating with Jagensteine today is very difficult. If one stands in front of a heavily weathered stone, orientation can be impossible. You can't see the forest for the trees.

The language of navigation is redeployed by today's super-ambitious, hyper-motivated, go-getting, self-starting, over-achievers. No Jagensteine, but milestones, crossroads, and landmarks; routes to take and peaks to climb. Not necessarily virtuous, but absolutely directional. Advancements in space, upwards or forwards. One landmark after another, leading to an ascent. An uphill battle in a rather hilly country.

JR