Discuss the cultural features of the area where you are currently living and working, perhaps theatre, opera, music, art in museums galleries and public spaces – or local dialect and language.

Plan

* Intro- outline main cultural aspects
* Industry and media have played their part in shaping the city. -Hamburg docks- fish markets, ports annual birthday celebrations. Warehouse districts
* The alster+ Rathaus+ St Michelis Kirche
* Attractions- Art galleries p41+ Reeperbahn
* Dialekt?
* Prostitution?
* Alternative culture

The port remains an important aspect of Hamburg and has contributed to the overall wealth of the city. The ships came, delivered coffee, tea and spices, all of which made the city richer. But how much wealth does a container ship carry with it these days? Bergmann, ‘the port will remain an asset. But how do we, as a city use this asset to generate new wealth?’ what if one was to benefit from Brexit and make Hamburg, the most Anglo- Saxon city on the continent, the capital for international arbitration? With lower attorney fees than in London. ‘And the Elbphilharmonie fits well in the picture.’- Bergmann ‘At least it provides a magnet for culture and tourism’.

Carsten Brosda- served as city’s senator for cultural affairs since February says the Elbphilharmonie ‘is not just a landmark- those can be built anywhere if you have enough money.’ He says ‘this building is inextricably linked to the place’. It is at the intersection of the old city centre and the new HafenCity district. He hopes that Hamburg’s self- image will change because of its rising reputation: ‘So far, Hamburg has been associated with many things but ‘city of culture’ is not the first thing or even the second thing that comes to mind.’ Unlike Munich or Berlin, Hamburg has never been the seat of a monarchy. There has never been a king of Kaiser who has expressed his power and glory through art collections, theatres or opera houses. Hamburg is enchanted by its new Elbphilharmonie and now considers itself a true city of culture. Rainer Moritz, the director of the Literaturhaus literary café and salon, has his doubts. ‘Hamburg was doubly humiliated- first the scandalous explosion of the construction costs for the Elphi (which came in 10 times over the budget) and then the failed 2024 Olympics bid. But that’s all water under the bridge. Now they can celebrate, says Moritz. ‘Despite all its restraint, this city secretly longs to make a big splash on the world stage.’

Ironically, the large group of sailors who helped create Hamburg’s unique character- its port, the red- light district or Reeperbahn and Portuguese quarter populated by immigrant dock workers- are no longer to be found in the city, at least not in the same numbers. Instead they have been replaced by stag parties from all parts of Europe who themselves indulge in the available strip clubs and brothels of the Reeperbahn. Es wird geglaubt…’ that there are many concerns. There are families in Hamburg for which the City Hall was always like a second home. The Sievekings or the Petersens for example. Mathias Peterson belongs to both families. Several of his ancestors, among them former senators, have parks and foundations named after them. When asked what he thought about this ‘new Hamburg’ that has the world’s attention with the flashy new concert hall and everything else, he says the same thing his ancestors might have said: ‘the people who live and have roots here don’t need this self-confidence boost. Period. We have it even if we don’t talk about it. There was never any need to say, ‘We have to build some kind of building so that the world will see us. The world has seen us through our actions and still does today. We don’t need a building like this in order for that to happen’. As a Hamburg native, Petersen says he doesn’t see it as being an absolute imperative to travel around the world and say: we’re the city with the Elbphilharmonie’. He says he’d prefer to emphasize the city’s advanced technological and research centers- like Desy, a German research institution that is currently testing the new European X- ray free electron laser.

The fine arts were to the Merchants something they could easily do without. Nowadays it is clear that the cultural reality in Hamburg is quite apparent. Many cultural institutions owe their origins to commitment of Hamburg’s citizens, such as the famous Hamburg Art Gallery which in 1997 opened a new complex for modern art. This is one of the major state museums, another of which is the neighbouring Museum of Hamburg History in Holstenwall. Apart from the main museums, Hamburg has probably more private museums than any other place in Germany.