

On Missing Archives and Permanent Conditions of Crisis – Theater and Migration in Germany

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When I recently contacted the *Bundesvereinigung Soziokultureller Zentren e. V.* (German National Association of Socio-Cultural Centers) for information regarding theater groups and theater makers from the first immigrant generation, the answer was short and clear: they can't help me but wish me good luck! When I asked for the reason, they stated that they don't have any data or material on this issue. This is the latest example of occurrences, particularly during my research on artists and theatermakers from the first immigrant generation, where I received multiple similar answers from German cultural institutions and funding organizations. There are almost no public archives on (art and) theater done by immigrants before the beginning of post-migrant theater. On the other hand, in the past three years a lot of money/funding has been given to (mainly white) cultural institutions and theaters for (art and) theater projects with refugees to *handle* the emergence of the 'migration crisis'. This approach decouples the recent events from the historical emergences of migration influxes and leaves out evolved knowledge and structures, which are f.e. established by immigrants themselves. And it remains in a structure of colonial hierarchy where a dichotomy is (willingly or unwillingly) set up between what is considered German and the Other. And interestingly enough, the funding for migrant and post-migrant theater hasn't changed, and the actual diversification of the cultural institutions and theaters taking a notable slow turn.

In my presentation, drawing from my current research on a (post)migrant theater history, I want to carry out how the discourse on migration in German theater is still dominated by a colonial or at least hierarchical frame of reference where a continuity of migrant and post-migrant theater has been made (willingly or unwillingly) inaccessible.