

Acknowledgements

This dissertation owes its existence to many people. Above all, I express my gratitude to my *Doktorvater*, Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Schneider. He guided me through all phases of research, generously shared his knowledge, and encouraged me to relentlessly search for ways to bridge the gap between theory and practice. His trust in my capacities motivated me to evaluate the diversity discussions in German cultural policy and performing arts from a political and discrimination-critical perspective.

I would like to sincerely thank my second supervisor, Prof. Dr. Serhan Ada for his constructive comments, especially his advice to observe migration-related diversity through a multidisciplinary lens and to conceive of it as a dynamic concept. Envisioning cultural diversity *in motion* has been inspired by our extensive conversations in Berlin and Istanbul.

I am grateful to *Zentrum für Bildungsintegration* (ZBI; Centre for Diversity, Democracy, and Inclusion in Education) of the University of Hildesheim, especially Prof. Dr. Viola B. Georgi, director of ZBI, and Nurten Karakaş, coordinator of the doctoral programme of ZBI. Without the doctoral grant of ZBI, this research would have required several more years to complete. More importantly, I benefited greatly from the exchanges of ZBI's doctoral colloquiums. Notably, the chapter on systematic exclusion and structural racism was enriched by the discussions with my colleagues.

Considering my short history in Germany, being an “outsider” provided advantages I had never imagined having. My position gave me the opportunity to obtain a necessary closeness and distance to be able to read the layers of cultural-political meaning and suggest an equality-based cultural policy framework for the performing arts scene in Germany. Through this humble attempt, I would also like to thank countless researchers, scholars, and artists who dedicated themselves to the pluralisation of the White German performing arts field. I can only hope that my research will be a contribution to their tremendous efforts towards the production and circulation of theatrical knowledge outside the Western canon.

One of the main objectives of this study was to explore the meaning of a diversity-oriented performing arts scene, and consequently to introduce the

indicators of a fairness-based diversity concept. I am indebted to the theatre initiatives *boat people projekt*, *Hajusom*, and *Ruhrorter* as well as the *PostHeimat* network, which constitute the empirical part of the study. This transdisciplinary knowledge exchange enabled me to reify and determine various attributes of the conceptualisation. Here, I take the opportunity to thank to all interview partners. Their views provided valuable insights into the lack of cultural diversity in the German performing arts field.

Among many other people, firstly, I express my gratitude to Murat Canyürek. Without his encouragement and support, I would not have even dared to apply for a doctoral study in Germany. I thank my dear friend and colleague, Dr. Meike Lettau, for her wholehearted support and invaluable comments. With the help of my copy editor Antonina Kovačević, I am able to convey my ideas more clearly. I sincerely thank her for her meticulous work. Additionally, I offer thanks to Kutse Altın, Rumeysa Kiger, Ulrike Müller, Claire Saillour, Jens Schmidt, Serhan Şahin, Müge Ünay, and my mother for believing in me and supporting me at difficult phases of this research.

Finally, one last note to myself. Writing a doctoral thesis is a challenging and exhausting task for almost everyone who has the audacity to engage in such intellectual struggle. It was an awkwardly ambivalent process for me since most parts of the writing were completed during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. Paradoxically, in these turbulent times, the doctoral thesis itself became a way to cope with the bizarre feeling of being away from Istanbul, the place I once called home.