

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## THEATRE AND MIGRATION: THE PRODUCTIONS AND AESTHETICS OF SHIFTING SPACES

23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> November 2025  
LMU Munich, Carl Friedrich von Siemens Foundation

Organized by the ERC projects T-MIGRANTS (LMU Munich) and DYBBUK (TAU)

Space is a fundamental concept in human experience, shaping our environments and how we orient ourselves within them. Traditionally viewed through the lens of geography, the “spatial turn” has brought space into focus across disciplines. As Kim Solga observes, the spatial turn “made issues of space and place central to the investigation of meaning-making in theatre, in staged or curated performances outside traditional spaces, and in everyday life” (Solga 2019, 14). This conference builds on this understanding to broaden the concept of space in light of crucial debates on globalization and migration. It aims to explore not only the aesthetic aspects of theatre and its spaces, but also their sociological dimensions. We will examine how theatre and migration reshape social and aesthetic spaces, asking: How have theatre migrants challenged, imagined, and redefined spaces? What historical transformations have emerged through these migrations?

We invite contributions that explore the production, negotiation, and imagination of space in migration processes from comparative, transnational, contemporary, or historical perspectives.

Submissions may address (but are not limited to) the following themes:

### **Mobility: Mapping New Paths and Spaces**

Migrants reach their destinations after long and often unplanned journeys, commonly hampered or delayed. In this we wish to focus the limelight on passages, transitional corridors, trajectories, and migratory ebbs and flows. We invite discussions on:

- Which routes and paths did theatre migrants choose? Which did they establish? And how did these influence the production of culture and aesthetics?
- What were the migrants' experiences of the passage?
- How do dramatic works, personal memoirs or other records reflect the experience of travel and transit?
- In what ways have liminal spaces - transit zones, borders, or points of passage - emerged as sites of creativity and performance?
- What kind of new spaces have been created as result of theatre migration?



Carl Friedrich  
von Siemens Stiftung



Yiddish Popular Theatre  
1880-1920: Performance  
as Knowledge



The Yolanda and David Katz  
Faculty of the Arts  
Tel Aviv University



# CALL FOR PAPERS

## Contact Zones: Encounters and Conflicts

Metropolitan centers are often diverse contact zones where different migrant groups interact with local publics and earlier waves of migration. This dynamic transforms cultural and social spaces, giving rise to both creative exchange and conflict. We thus ask:

- What social and spatial patterns emerge when theatre migrants settle in urban centers?
- How do theatre migrants influence the cultural landscape of these cities?
- In what ways do contact zones foster negotiation, conflict, or hybridization? How do theatrical works or performances portray these encounters and the entanglement of cultures?

## Nation-building: Participation and Challenges

Theatre migrants navigate tensions between national identities and transnational migration flows, contributing to both the creation and contestation of national cultures. Their work often challenges state-imposed restrictions that marginalize them as outsiders while simultaneously requiring their participation. We invite discussions on:

- How do theatre migrants assert belonging and inclusion despite exclusionary policies?
- In what ways do theatre migrants contribute to or challenge the formation of national cultural narratives?
- How are performances by theatre migrants shaped by, or in opposition to, state controls?
- How do theatre migrants navigate inclusion and exclusion within the broader nation-building process?
- What creative strategies do theatre migrants use to respond to these challenges?

## Imagined Spaces: Migratory Fictions

The world-making fictions and imaginations that theatre migrants create redefine the character of the spaces they occupy. Theatre migrants imaginatively produce, or challenge, accepted forms of communal life and political organization, in keeping with their fragile agency as displaced people. Thus, we ask:

- How do theatre migrants perform and reflect concepts like 'home,' 'utopia,' 'empire,' or 'diaspora'?
- What role does imagination play in creating fictional or symbolic spaces within their works?
- How do migratory fictions reshape political and social understandings of space and affiliation?
- Which transnational networks have been built through theatre migrants and how do they reshape local cultures?

## Submission Details

We welcome proposals for 20-minute papers. Please submit a 200-word abstract and a 100-word bio by May 15, 2025, to [tmigrants@lrz.uni-muenchen.de](mailto:tmigrants@lrz.uni-muenchen.de)

Funding assistance may be provided for accommodation and travel. Selected papers will be invited to contribute to an edited volume.

This conference is organized by Berenika Szymanski-Düll (LMU Munich) and Ruthie Abeliovich (TAU).



Carl Friedrich  
von Siemens Stiftung



Yiddish Popular Theatre  
1880-1920: Performance  
as Knowledge



The Yolanda and David Katz  
Faculty of the Arts  
Tel Aviv University

