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Who are we: bohemians or civil servants?

Employment conditions, job satisfaction, and cultural aspiration of the workforce of German city theatres – Results of an empirical survey

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Abstract

The majority of the theatres in Germany are thoroughly integrated into local government and administration. Do the institutional embeddedness and financial dependency impact on the self-perception and professionalism of the theatre's personnel? The paper addresses this question by examining employment and working conditions of the staff, active in the artistic and non-artistic field at six city theatres, three in East-Germany and three in a western region of the country. The results of the survey highlight that working at the theatre is something special and primarily determined by the passion for artistic productions. However, the theatre as a workplace definitely constitutes a facet of the

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creative industry in such a way that employment conditions are precarious and future career prospects limited. Also, performing artists are not a homogeneous group; significant differences were detected between actors/actresses, dancers and members of the orchestra. The members of these artistic divisions are very distinct with respect to hard facts such as income and working hours as well as intrinsic motivations and their appreciation of the theatre as a liberal and international workplace. While dancers come close to what might be described as precarious bohemians, actors/actresses might be characterized as long-hour creative workers, and members of the orchestra might to some extent be classified as fairly unionized civil servants.

1. Introduction

Germany is a country of theatres. There are more than 130 theatres in Germany that are heavily supported by public money (Schmidt 2019: 25). The majority of those are part of the local government that also is the prime financier. These municipal or city theatres – the German Stadttheater – are very special institutions. Very often, they were founded by local entrepreneurs who, seeking for sophisticated entertainment, setup non-profit and for-profit theatre companies. The 19th-century nouveau riches tended to copy the lifestyle of the former elites. Going to the theatre and admiring the bohemian sub-culture of the artists served as a juxtaposition of their day-to-day business routines. However, apart from the big cities and metropolitan centres, the theatres were economically not sustainable. Around the turn of the century, local governments began to subsidize the theatres; already in the 1920s, the majority of German theatres were fully integrated into public administration and almost 100% publicly financed. Today, this is still the case even though some of the theatres have been turned into quangos that are only de jure independent from government.

These German theatres are quite unique institutions because ‘theatre’ refers to both, the venue or theatre building and the personnel – artistic and non-artistic staff – engaged in the theatrical performance and the production, front of house, back of house, in administration and management. Currently, the workforce of the German theatres, financed by the government, amounts to more than 40.000 employees and constitutes a sizeable facet of the German creative industry (Schmidt 2019: 25). The vast majority of German public theatres are Stadttheater, administered and financed by local governments (Schmidt 2019: 26). However, empirical studies primarily focus on those creative workers in the performing arts who are not employees of government-financed theatres (Haak 2008). Accordingly, very little is known about work and employment conditions within this specific segment of the creative industry that is thoroughly incorporated into Germany’s public sector. Does the staff of the local theatres perceive themselves as members of the local public administration and hence show a civil servant attitude towards their work? Or on the contrary, does working at the theatre indicate something special and therefore employment at the theatre translates into something different than just having a job? What’s the self-perception of the theatres’ workforce? In particular, the theatre ensembles – the actors/actresses, dancers, and members of the orchestra – are they bohemians following an unconventional lifestyle like their predecessors in former times? What about their living conditions and particularly their salaries? Are they well off or do they form a part of the precarious creative class? These questions are addressed by drawing on the results of the empirical study *Work and Employment Conditions in the Theatre: A Survey of Six City Theatres*. The survey was conducted under the framework of a multi-centred research project, funded by the German Science

Association¹ which aims at analysing the changing political and environmental embeddedness as well as the esthetical outlook and deculturalisation of current theatrical production. In the following, we will introduce the topic of employment at the theatre as a facet of the creative industry and outline the design of the empirical study. The presentation of key results will be followed by the discussion of the topic of how the staff of German city theatres perceives themselves and how they assess their workplace.

2. Employment at the Theatre as a Facet of the Creative Industry

With few exceptions, cultural production has not been a central topic for the social sciences, until Richard Florida (2012) drew our attention to the creative industry as the driving force of post-modern economies. Creativity and innovation are both central features of this industry and the key characteristics of the new creative class of entrepreneurs and employees working in this sector of the economy. The new perspective of the creative industry on how to achieve economic growth, particularly in urban settings, continues to be welcomed and supported by politicians who perceive the cultural industries as a business sector with multiple opportunities for employment, excellent career perspectives and good chances for high rates of return on investment (Bericht NRW). However, there are also critical voices indicating that the creative industry does not unanimously and for everybody constitute a pathway to wealth and promising job opportunities. This is in particular the case for those creative workers who are working either as petty entrepreneurs or as employees in shop floor positions as architects, designers or artists in a variety of fields as empirical studies point out (Manske 2016; Loacker 2010). These creative workers are by and large poorly paid and employed with short-term contracts. Their career perspectives are limited, if not miserable, and their working conditions in terms of working hours are very often below the normal standards in other sectors of the economy. Nevertheless, the members of the creative class are proud of being part of innovative and/or artistic productions (Eikhof/Haunschild 2007). Their empathy for working in the creative industry corresponds to current societal developments or post-modern society at large with its enthusiasm for creativeness, singularity and inventiveness (Reckwitz 2012; 2017). As such post-modern societies constitute a juxtaposition of post-World War II societies that are characterized as middle class-based, oriented towards mass consumption and all in all somehow trivial. To a certain extent, the members of the creative class of today show some similarities with the former anti-bourgeois members of the creative class of the 19th century. When industrialism began to thrive and the new social class, the bourgeoisie, became trendsetting for the society, "bohemianism" developed into the juxtaposition of the bourgeois way of life. Instead of keeping to the rules, working hard and appreciating a home-sweet-home family

life, “bohemianism” translates into unconventionality, a flippy lifestyle, and high esteem for artistic and cultural production. The young artist who is not married and gives his life thoroughly to art, turned into the symbol of bohemianism that was clearly distinct from the world of the bourgeoisie as well as from the life-style of the working class (Gluck 2000; Bogusz 2007; Magerski 2019; Heinich 2014). Empirical studies analysing working conditions and employment in the creative industry refer to “bohemianism” as a very basic belief system according to which work in the creative industry constitutes the most desirable in life (Bogusz 2007). However, there are very few studies with reference to bohemianism studying work and employment in the performing arts (Eikhof/Haunschild 2007). These studies conclude that bohemianism still impacts the self-perception and career aspirations of today’s artists. All in all, however, there is only a limited number of studies on the topic of employment and working conditions in the performing arts in Germany (Schmidt 2019; Fonds Darstellende Künstler 2010; Norz 2016). Moreover, the empirical studies focus primarily on a specific segment of the performing arts, in particular on those actors/actresses, dancers and singers who are working in a setting which is titled Freie Szene in German and that refers to all those engaged in the performing arts who are not employed by government-financed theatres, venues and ensembles that are integrated into public administration.

As already outlined, Germany stands out for an unique system of the performing arts: The majority of theatre companies, buildings, stage divisions (opera, dance) and philharmonic orchestras are publicly financed by the national, the regional and primarily the local government (Fülle 2013; Balme 2014; Schmidt 2017). As such, the ‘theatre’ or the performing arts are by a large part integrated into the administrative apparatus of the German government. In other words, a large part of the creative workers in Germany is basically government employees. However, the image of a German civil servant as a member of the government’s bureaucracy has indeed very little in common with the idea and concept of bohemianism. Nevertheless, the question of whether this assumption reflects the reality of the working staff at German theatres has not yet been studied. Therefore, it was specifically addressed by the survey *Work and Employment Conditions in the Theatre*. Accordingly, the survey tried to build on the current understanding of “bohemianism” as a lifestyle and particularly as an attitude to perceive working in the arts and specifically in the theatre as the most desirable in life (Eikhof/Haunschild 2007). To be all in for the arts as a basic conviction or ethos also constitutes a key characteristic of the creative class (Graña & Graña 1990; Magerski 2019; Bogusz 2007). However, the creative workers are very often entrapped into rather precarious living situations concerning employment and working conditions (Manske 2016; Loacker 2010; Florida 2012). All in all, bohemians and creative workers have little in

common with the image of civil servants who are described as conservative, somehow inflexible and less innovative (Vestheim 2012).

3. The Survey *Work and Employment Conditions in the Theatre*

The survey was conducted in six municipal theatres, three situated in East- and three in West-Germany. A comprehensive questionnaire with more than 50 questions was developed. Organised in seven thematic blocks, the questionnaire covered questions related to working conditions, salary, length of employment, work satisfaction, the role and function of the theatre and demographics. For reasons of comparability, selected questions from *Die Gute Arbeit*, a survey conducted regularly by the German Trade Unions (DGB), were xeroxed in. With the support of the management, the questionnaire was made available (in print and online) to all employees of the six theatres. Not included in the study were theatre personnel working on short term contracts (e.g. for a special performance) or a fixed honorarium (such as a temporary substitute in case of illness). From June to August 2019 the number of 2540 employees was addressed. With 828 respondents, making 33% of all employees of the six theatres, the return rate was remarkable for surveys of this kind (Fig.1).

Figure 1: Staff-Composition and Return Rate

Staff Composition			Return Rate			
Artistic Personnel	Non-Artistic Personnel	Total	Artistic Personnel	Non-Artistic Personnel	Total	Return Rate in %
1339	1201	2540	401	427	828	33

Source: PaB2019

The research team presented and discussed the results of the survey in a focus-group setting with a small group of selected members of the personnel of each theatre, amongst those the artistic and the executive directors, the chairperson of the works council, selected artistic directors of the theatre divisions (e.g. general music or opera director) and the director of the theatre workshops. The transcribed interviews provide valuable background information and are helpful for further analyses of the data.

The questionnaire of the survey considered the heterogeneity of the personnel working at the theatre. The different work assignments were specified and for the analysis of the data grouped into the following areas of work and employment:

- Non-artistic field: Communications or project work (e.g. music and drama education), Leadership/management, technical area/workshops, administration
- Artistic field: acting, orchestra, dance, singing, choir, non-performing artistic staff (e.g., dramaturgy, directing)
- On Stage: play, dance, orchestra

Figure 2: Composition of the Data-Set

Area	Non-Artistic	Artistic	On stage: Actors	Dancers	Orchestra
Number	427	401	71	27	106

Source: PaB2019

Data analysis was conducted with the full set (n=828), with a sub-set distinguishing between the non-artistic (n=427) and the artistic field (n=401) and with three major subdivision of the artistic field – play (n=71), dance (n=27) and orchestra (n=106).

4. Data-Analyses and Results

4.1 Research Questions

With a bottom-up approach and from the perspective of the theatre personnel we aim to address the topic of self-perception of the city theatres staff. Whether they perceive themselves either as members of the local administration (civil servants) or as bohemians and/or as members of the creative class who are all in for working at the theatre but often suffer from low salaries and insecure employment. In particular, the following research question guided the analyses of the data:

1. Does the German theatre impact its employees who from a legal point of view are civil servants in such a way that they have nothing in common with bohemians or the members of the creative class? Or on the contrary, does the theatre constitute a very special location for gainful employment for the members of the theatre staff?
2. Empirical research distinguishes between the 'elite' and the precarious members of the creative class by also uncovering the 'dark side' of the creative industry that is very distinct: low salaries, insecure employment, long working hours, and bad career perspectives.

To which group of the creative class does the theatre staff belong to? And are there differences between those who work in the artistic and those working in the non-artistic field?

3. If living for the art is a key-characteristic for bohemianism and constitutes an important incentive for seeking employment at a theatre, are there differences with respect to

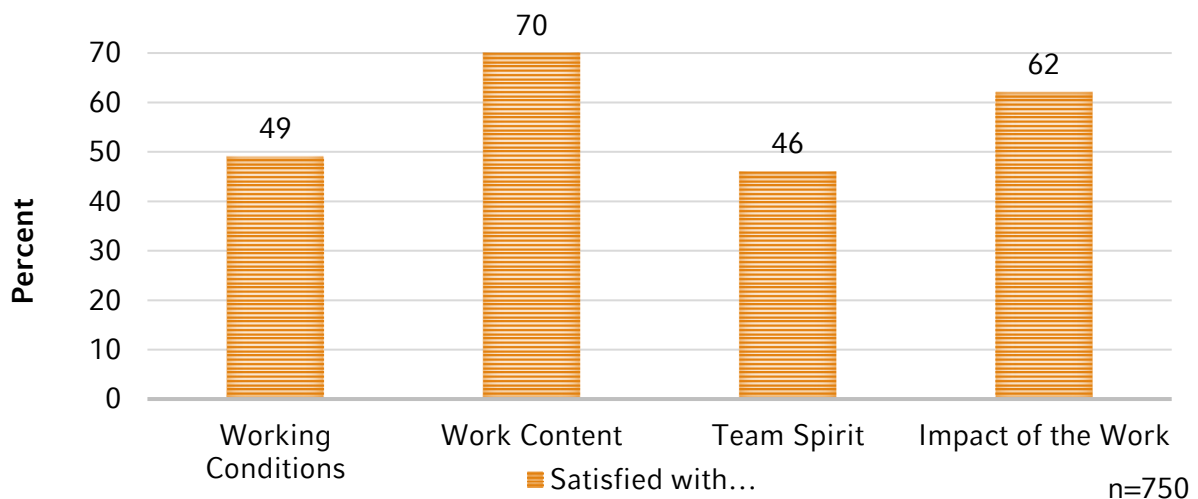
the degree of bohemianism amongst the members of the work-force and the artistic staff in particular. Or to put it differently, is the habitus of a civil servant equally in place, and are there no differences between members of the orchestra, the acting ensemble (play) and the dancers?

4.2 Results

4.2.1 Theatre Aficionados

The first question was addressed by looking at the perception of the entire staff of the theatre without differentiation. It turned out that the respondents are very proud of working at the theatre. Most of the personnel are real theatre aficionados and highly satisfied with the content and impact of their work at the local theatre. To a lesser extent, they are also satisfied with the team spirit and the working conditions in the theatre (Fig. 3).

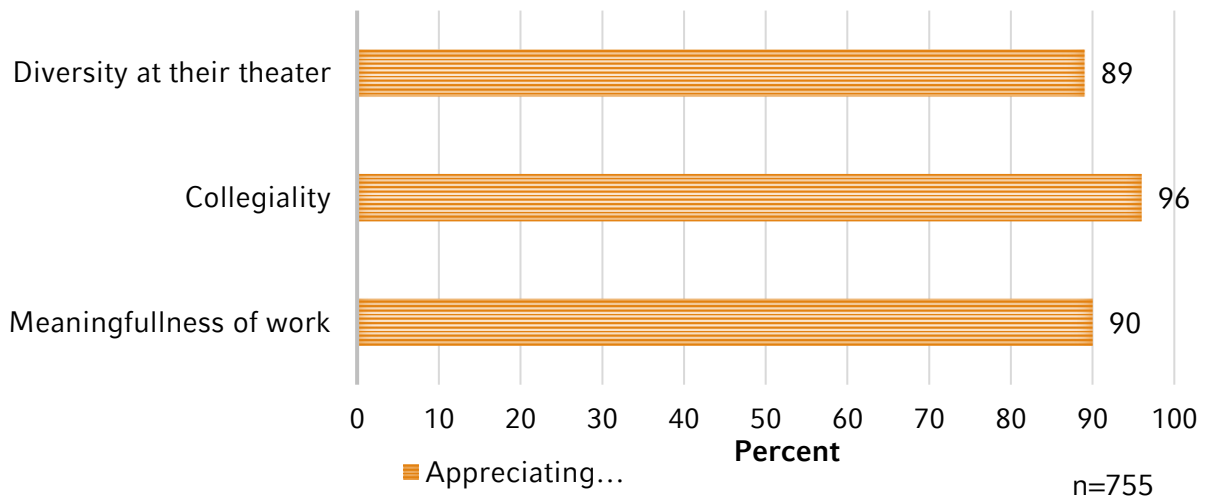
Figure 3: Theatre Aficionados



Source: PaB2019, Q22: At this theatre, how satisfied are you with...

In the focus group interviews, it turned out that three executive directors used to work for the municipal public administration. They unanimously highlighted that they never want to be in this position again because they specifically like their position at the theatre that provides according to their statements a very demanding but at the same time also a very rewarding working environment. "You have to burn for the theatre, otherwise you are not the right person for the job", the executive director of one of the theatres summarized the attitude towards the theatre as a working environment.

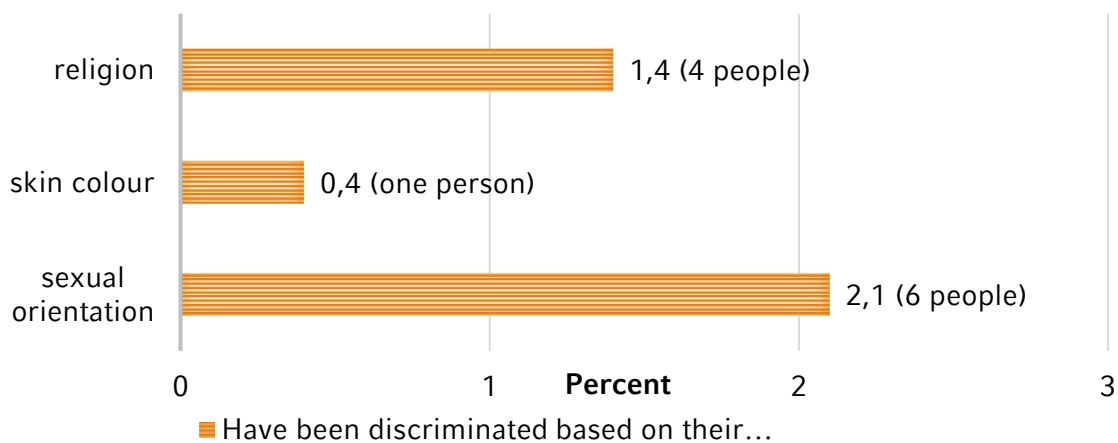
Figure 4: A highly Valued Workplace



Source: PaB2019, Q12: What do you value about your job in particular?

Asked what they do value about working at the theatre, the respondents underline the meaningfulness of their work. They perceive theatre in general and their home theatre in particular as a multifunctional and very important institution for the society at large and specifically for their local community. The respondents also highlighted the theatre's function in conveying cultural education through artistic performances. The results reveal a strong relationship of the personnel towards the theatre as an area of professional activity as well as a collegial, heterogeneous, and diverse community.

Figure 5: Only a few have experienced Discrimination at their Theatre



Source: PaB2019, Q28: Have you personally experienced discrimination at this theatre?

Overall, the theatre staff perceives the theatre as a liberal and not discriminatory working environment. Asked whether he or she has personally experienced discrimination at her or his theatre, just about one-third of the respondents indicated that he or she had experienced discrimination during all the time of his or her professional career at the theatre. Moreover, sexual orientation, the colour of the skin and religious orientation, very often

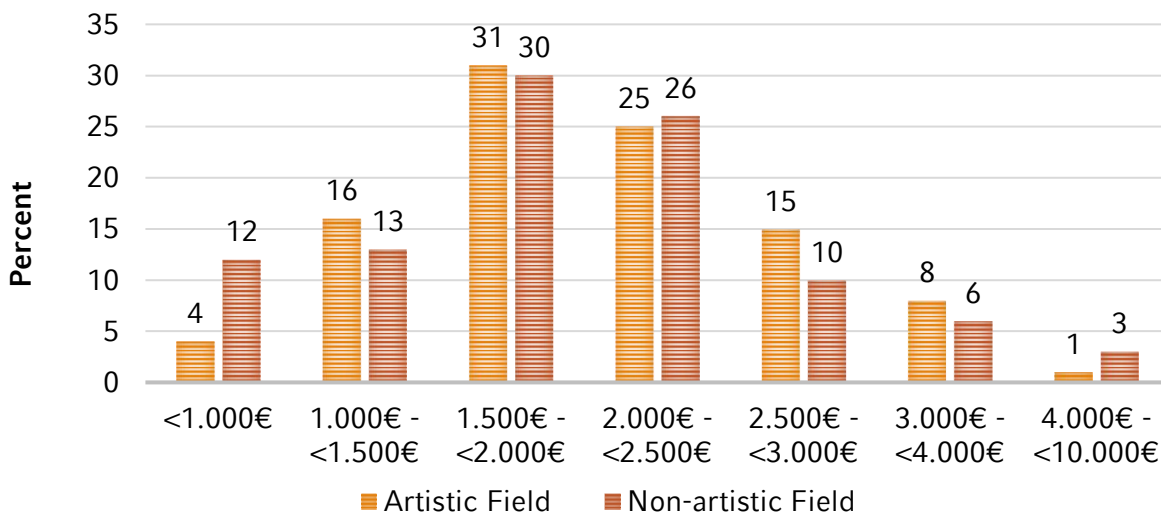
referred to as reasons for discrimination, do not play a prominent role at the theatre and hence were not specifically mentioned to by the participants of the survey.

Indeed, the results of the survey clearly indicate that self-perception of the theatre's workforce has very little in common with the image of a civil servant who perceives his or her work as a job and not as a passion.

4.2.2 Precarious Creative Workers

The second research question addresses the topic of whether the personnel of the theatre belongs to the 'elite' of the creative class or the less well-off in terms of salary, working conditions and career prospects.

Figure 6: Low Salaries especially for Artists

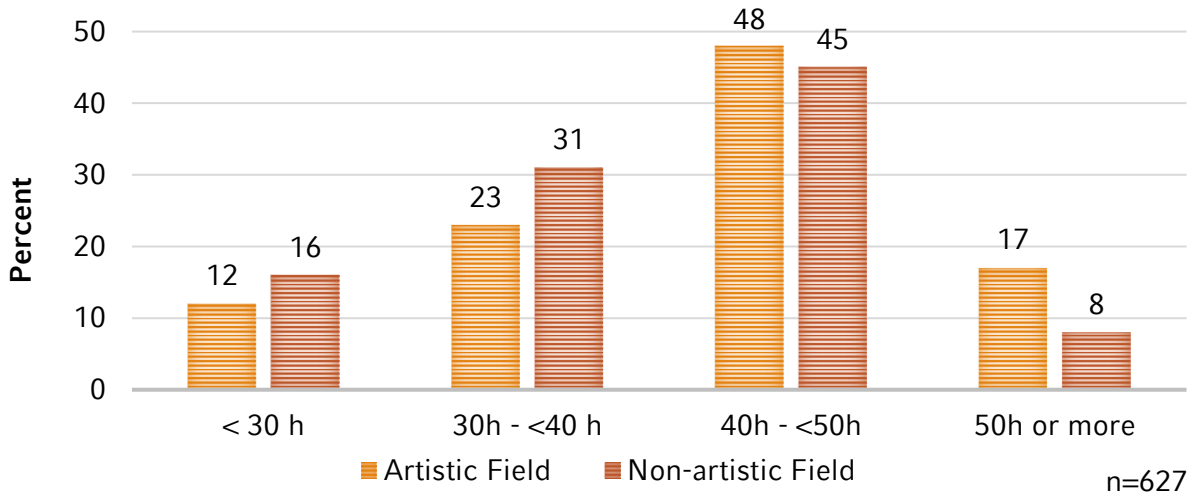


Source: PaB2019, Q31: What is currently your average net monthly income from your employment in this theatre?

There is no doubt that the staff of municipal German theatres does not belong to the elite of the creative class. In the contrary, salaries are quite low, particularly for artists. With respect to financial remuneration, working at the theatre, indeed, translates into a passion as a profession. There are only very few members of the theatre personnel who might be characterized as high earners. During the focus group interviews, it was mentioned repeatedly that nobody seeks employment at a municipal theatre because of the excellent perspectives to make money. Bohemianism in the sense that the most important in life is to work in the artistic field is strongly in place amongst the workforce of theatres. However, particularly compared to other working environments, the working conditions and the employment sit-

uation at municipal theatres are rather modest, or to put it differently, they have a comparatively low standard.

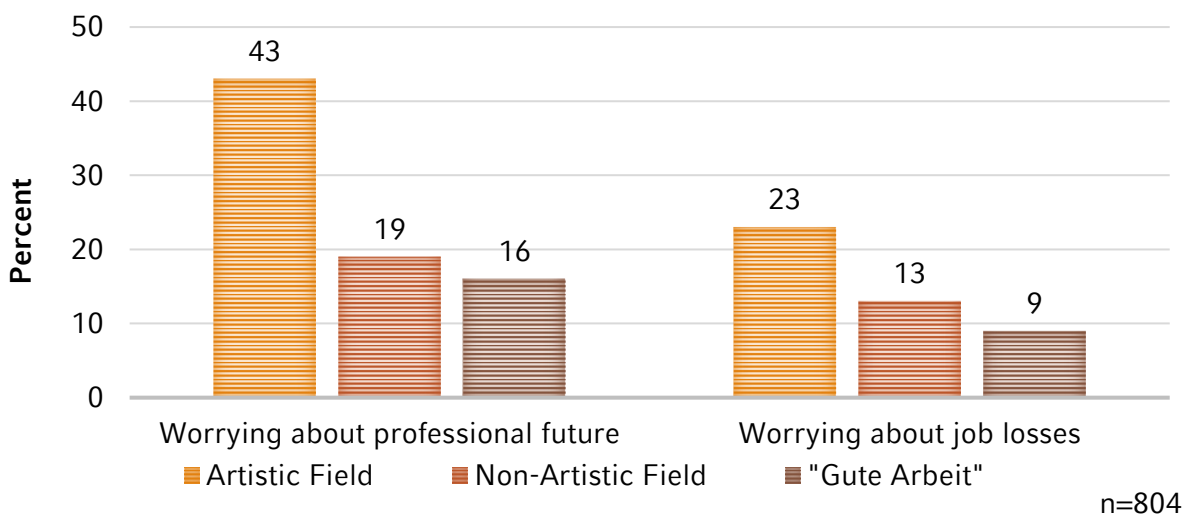
Figure 7: Long Working Hours



Source: PaB2019; Q07: On average, how many hours do you work in a week?

Employment conditions in the theatre are not worker-friendly. Particularly, those who are performing on stage are working long hours, far beyond regular working hours regulations. Salaries are very low as more than half of the questioned actors/actresses and more than 70% of the dancers earn less than 2.000€ per month, confirming creative arts research and the bohemian ethos that performing arts do not follow financial aspirations (Bogusz 2007; Norz 2016).

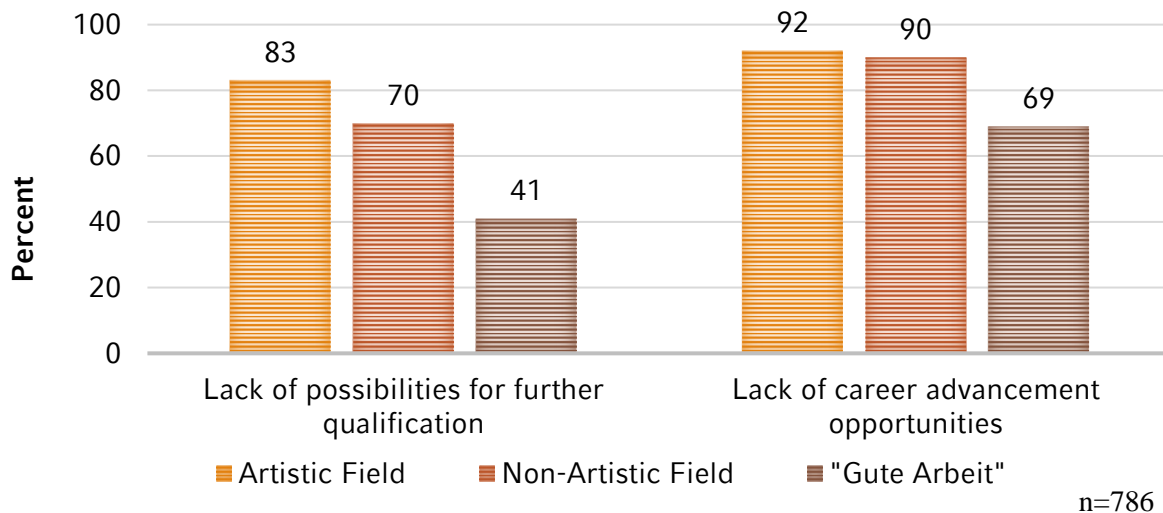
Figure 8: Unsure Employment Situation



Source: PaB2019, Q13: To what extent do the following charges apply to your current employment relationship

Employment and working conditions are particularly precarious in the artistic field. Almost every second of the respondents employed in the artistic field perceived his or her professional future to be insecure and therefore worried about career prospects. Compared to the results of the survey *Gute Arbeit* that covers the full spectrum of working areas and business sectors in Germany, the responses of the theatre personnel active in the artistic field is quite striking. Whereas throughout the German economy, about 16 percent of the employees are worried about their professional future, 43 percent of the respondent artists expressed uncertainty and insecurity in terms of their career prospects. Almost every fourth of the respondents, employed in the artistic field was even afraid of losing his or her engagement at the theatre.

Figure 9: Lack of Career Prospects



Source: PaB2019, Q15: To what extent do the following statements apply to your employment at this theatre?

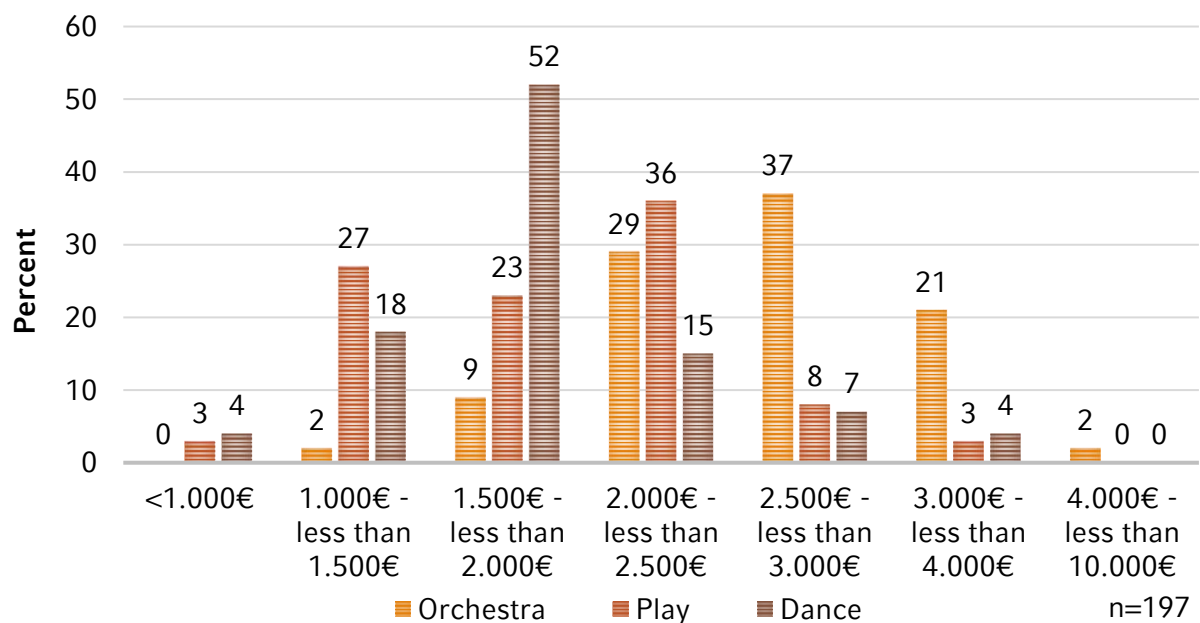
The majority of city theatres are middle-sized enterprises. This translates into a situation in which opportunities for career advancement within the local theatre are limited. Particularly in the artistic field, the next career step is almost always linked to a new position and new employment or engagement at a different theatre. The job prospects at local theatres are far more limited compared to other areas of employment as the results of the *Gute Arbeit* indicate. The results of the theatre survey also elucidate that local theatres do not take much effort to invest in its personnel. The respondents complained about a lack of possibilities for further qualification on the job. Although providing further training in the artistic field might be very complicated or even not possible for local theatres, the high percentage of theatre staff in the non-artistic field that complained about the lack of possibilities for further education should be taken seriously by the management of the city theatres.

All in all, concerning both working conditions as well as salaries and job security it might be correct to characterize the personnel at local theatres as precarious creative workers.

4.2.3 Bohemians or Civil Servants?

The third research question is linked to the heterogeneity of the artistic field. In accordance with the topic of the investigation *Who we are: bohemians or civil servants*, the data was analysed with the aim of addressing the research question whether the artists engaged in a particular theatre division differ concerning their life-style, job aspiration and working conditions. Generally, city theatres unite at least dance, play, opera (orchestra) and sometimes also children's and youth as well as puppet theatre under one roof. For reasons of practicality, we focused on dance, play and orchestra as prominent divisions of the performing arts. With regard to size, the orchestra dominates the artistic staff in local theatres. Whereas the dance company often encompasses from ten to fifteen artists or less; the ensemble of actors/actresses consists of not more than twenty actors/actresses for the most; members of the orchestra amount to at least sixty and up to one hundred musicians. We want to know whether the artistic field of local theatres is thoroughly inspired by bohemianism or on the contrary, a civil servant mentality has infiltrated the theatre and spread equally among the members of the different artistic divisions, orchestra, play and dance.

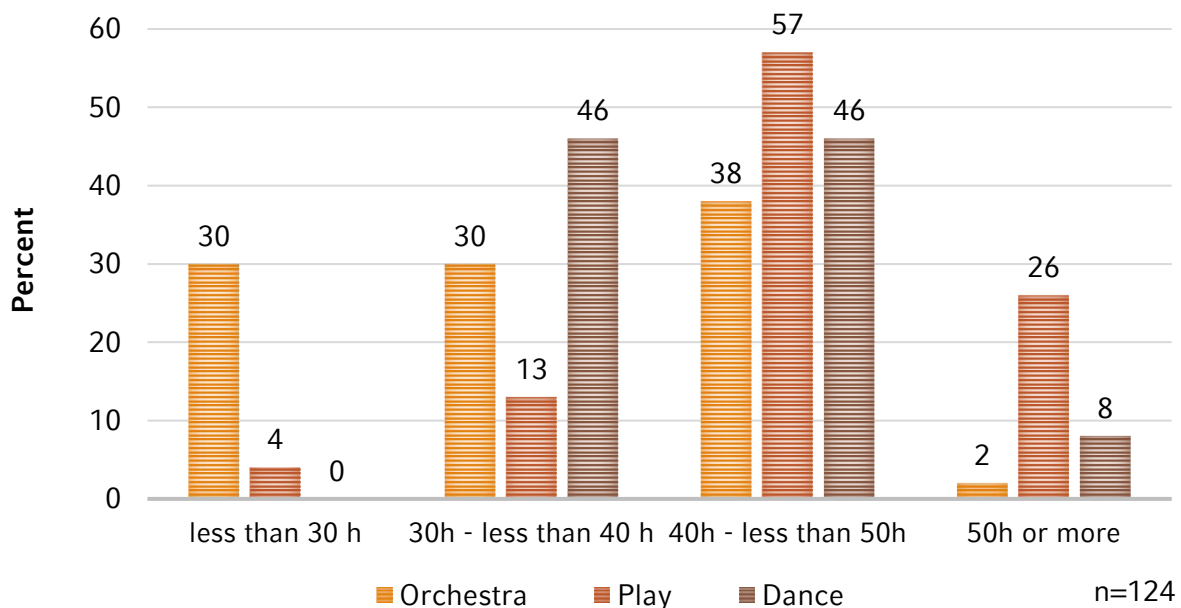
Figure 10: Hard Work for Little Money



Source: PaB2019, Q31: What is currently your average net monthly income from your employment in this theatre?

As regards monthly salaries, the differences between the theatre divisions are quite striking. In particular, dancers receive low salaries; actors/actresses are slightly better off in terms of their remuneration, while musicians are not generously paid but receive a decent salary in the range between € 2.000 and € 3.000 of net income per month. The monthly net-income of every fifth musician who took part in the survey was even in the range between € 3.000 and € 4.000. In contrast, more than every second dancer who took part in the survey received a net monthly income between € 1.500 and € 2.000. These figures indicate that among dancers and actors/actresses bohemianism, as a passion for the artistic profession, must be strongly in place when he or she is willing to accept these low salaries. One reason for the different working conditions of these divisions can be found within the collective agreements, which are, in the case of the orchestra, well negotiated. Rounding up the picture, it has to be mentioned that the time-span of being actively engaged in the profession is very limited for dancers who normally have to find something else for making a living in their mid-thirties. Career prospects are less time-limited for actors/actresses. But there are very few roles for actresses and older actresses in particular.

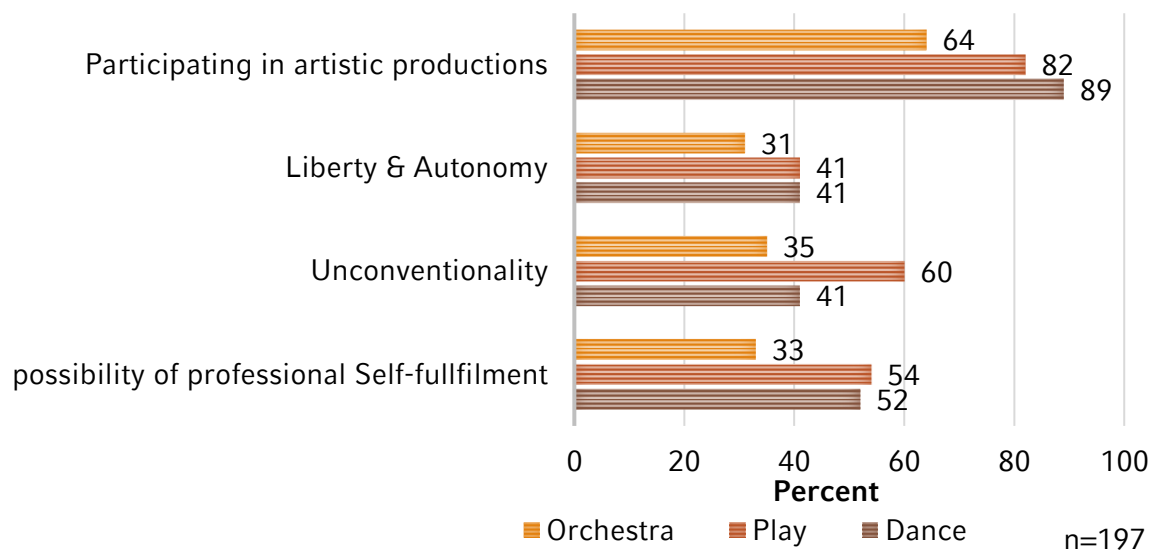
Figure 11: (Too) Many Working Hours



Source: PaB2019, Q07: On average, how many hours do you work in a week?

Compared to so-called normal workers, artists at the theatre are working long hours. Again, this is particularly the case for dancers. Not for every actor/actress but at least for the majority working at the theatre also translates into long working hours. Every fifth actor/actress who took part in the survey indicated that he or she works more than fifty hours per week on average. Compared to their artistic colleagues – dancers and actors/actresses – the members of the orchestra enjoy far better working conditions at municipal theatres as regards to their weekly working hours assignments.

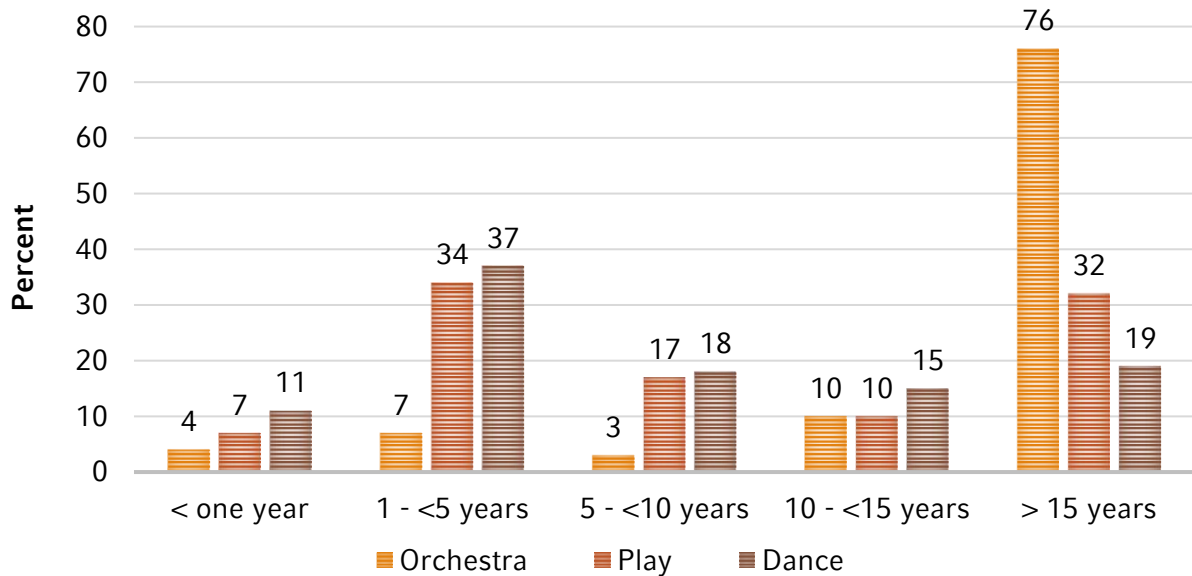
Figure 12: Passionate Nerds - Dancers and Actors



Source: PaB2019, Q12: What do you value about your job in particular

The passion for the arts constitutes a key-aspect of bohemianism. It might be the case that dancers and actors/actresses are 'passionate nerds' who indeed burn for performing and theatre life. According to the results of the survey, "participating in artistic production" is highly valued throughout the artistic professions. However, it is particularly valued by dancers (89%) and actors/actresses (82%) compared to members of the orchestra (64%). Moreover, working at the theatre and performing translates for more than every second dancer and actors/actresses who took part in the survey into "professional self-fulfilment". The theatre provides the artists with the possibility to do what they desire professionally. This is highly appreciated. However, only one-third of the musicians are in a position that working at the theatre is highly valued as a "possibility of professional self-fulfilment". Also, there are differences between the members of the professions – dance, play and music – when it comes to the evaluation of certain aspects or criteria that are often perceived as being typical for the work in the performing arts such as liberty, autonomy and unconventionality. Unconventionality is highly appreciated by members of the acting ensemble; not quite every second dancer also perceives this as a particular value in connection with his or her profession. In contrast, members of the orchestra are rather reluctant with respect to unconventionality; compared to dancers and actor/actress, they also perceive "liberty and autonomy" as less valuable attributes that come along with their profession. Might it be the case that members of the orchestra constitute a special community within the artistic field that is less bohemian compared to members of the other theatre divisions?

Figure 13: Duration of Engagement at the Same Theatre



Source: PaB2019, Q01: How long have you been engaged at this theatre?

Flexibility and restlessness are further ingredients of bohemianism (Graña & Graña 1990). Accordingly, the length of service at the respective theatre also constitutes an indicator of bohemianism. Again, there are significant differences between the members of the artistic-divisions dance, play and orchestra. While members of the dance companies show a high degree of job-flexibility and seem to be continuously 'on the road', this is also the case, although to a lesser extent, for actors/actresses. Almost every second dancer participating in the survey was less than five years employed at the current theatre, the number of actors/actresses who fell into this category was about 40%. In contrast, 76% of the respondents working in the orchestra claim to be employed for more than 15 years at the respective theatre. Taking into consideration that 10% of the musicians were employed between ten and fifteen years at this theatre, it becomes clear that the orchestra constitutes the largest ensemble and the longest lasting one in terms of years of engagement. As indicated before, reasons for that can be found in the collective agreements of the orchestras which do not only define a comparatively high salary but also complicate terminations, especially after 15 years of service. It might be summarized that bohemianism is not equally spread among the artistic personnel. If we take further indicators such as demographics and the personal living situation into account, the differences between the divisions of the artistic field become even clearer.

Figure 14: Artistic Heterogeneity

In percent		Orchestra	Play	Dance
Higher education / university studies (n=195)		93	55	46
Age (n=200)	Younger than 26	2	3	26
	26- 45	19	46	52
	46-65	79	51	18
	66 and older	0	0	4
Member of a labour union (n=195)		81	27	26
Married (n=200)		64	45	27
Living with a partner (n=198)		90	84	67

Source: PaB2019

The results of the survey reveal striking differences between the members of the orchestra and the dance company at city theatres. In terms of number or size, the orchestra dominates the artistic workforce at the theatre, while the dance ensembles are generally very small (5 to 15 members). The two groups differ significantly with respect to various criteria: Dancers are generally quite young. In our sample, they constitute the youngest group of the respondents, while members of the orchestra are comparatively senior. Also, members of the orchestra are quite organised compared to their artistic colleagues. More than 80% of the musicians were members of a trade union, compared to 26% and 27% of the dancers and actors/actresses. A university degree (93% of the respondents) seems to be, according to the respondents, the entrance ticket for gainful employment at the theatre for musicians, while this is not necessarily the case for dancers. "Living with a partner" is very popular amongst the members of the artistic professions, however, a vast majority of musicians are married, while this is less common among dancers and also actors/actresses.

Going back to our research questions – Who we are – and taking into consideration the attributes of 'bohemianism', 'members of the creative class' and 'civil servants', the results of the survey provide a quite detailed and multi-faceted picture of the artistic personnel of city theatres. The most passionate and the most poorly paid are the dancers who also do not stay very long at a certain theatre. They are also generally quite young, not married and live

for their passion: ballet dancing. Therefore, they might be characterized as 'Precarious Bohemians'. Members of the orchestra differ from the precarious bohemians in many ways: They enjoy better salaries and do not suffer from extraordinary working hours. They are far more senior, highly unionized, predominantly married and tend to stay lifelong at the same theatre. They are artists, but self-fulfilment is not their key incentive for working at the theatre. All things considered, the members of the orchestra might come close to the lifestyle and job attitude that is said to be typical for professional civil servants. Finally, the actors/actresses are somehow in-between these two distinct groups: They are better paid than dancers but do not come close to the salaries of members of the orchestra. They are more senior than the dancers but in general younger than the musicians. They work very long hours; like the dancers they burn for their profession and they highly appreciate the unconventionality of the theatre as a special workplace. Hence, 'Long-hour Creative Workers' might fit best as a characterization for the actors/actresses.

5. Summary

The German municipal theatres that look back upon a long tradition have been in the centre of critique for many years (Freytag 1999; Hippe 2015; Schmidt 2017). However, the theatre's staff does not go along with the harsh criticism put forward by e.g. acting directors or cultural policy experts. Instead, working at the local theatre is highly appreciated by the staff that perceives their theatre as an extraordinary workplace. Accordingly, the theatre's workforce unanimously highlights the impact of the artistic productions with which they are particularly satisfied. However, working at the theatre has also a flip side. Specifically, the artistic field stands out for low salaries, long working hours and short-term employment. It is true that artists or specifically actors/actresses employed at a municipal theatre are in terms of working conditions and monthly income better off than actors/actresses without a theatre engagement and working independently in a setting called Freie Szene in Germany (Norz 2016; Fonds Darstellende Künstler 2010). However, if the theatre is compared with other workplaces, it becomes clear that with respect to working conditions, salaries, benefits and job security, the workplace theatre ranks far below the standard of both the public and the private sector (DGB 2019). Against this background, working at the theatre indeed translates into 'passion as profession'. Within the theatre, differences between the artistic and the non-artistic field, are not that significant as expected. Low salaries are a characteristic of both areas the artistic and the non-artistic field; the same holds true for working hours, although the workplace theatre is both more demanding and more precarious in terms of job security for artists than other for non-artistic staff members. Finally, the results of the survey of municipal theatres clearly elucidate that those who are working on stage at

the theatre, dancers, actors/actresses and musicians respectively, are a very heterogeneous group with very different outlooks as regards their job situation (income, working hours), their professional aspirations (duration of employment) as well as their lifestyle and degree of unionization. Addressing the question of who are the artists employed at the theatre, are they bohemians or civil servants, we suggest a characterization or typology of the theatre personnel on stage that distinguishes between the division of dance populated by 'Precarious Bohemians', the division of play characterized through 'Long-hour Creative Workers', and the orchestra where highly professionalized civil servants constitute numerically the backbone and largest division of the performing personnel at the theatre that also stands out for its high degree of unionization.

¹Krisengefüge der Künste: <<https://www.krisengefuege.theaterwissenschaft.uni-muenchen.de/index.html>>.

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