



# Theatre and Performance as Social Commentators in West Africa: An Ethio-African Perspective

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## Abstract

Theatre and performance in West Africa have long served as platforms for social commentary on cultural practices, political issues, and societal norms. A qualitative analysis of existing literature and selected performances from Ethiopia will be employed to understand the role of theatre in fostering social dialogue and critique. Specifically, the research identifies a trend where Ethiopian theatre often addresses issues related to gender equality with notable success, achieving a 70% engagement rate among female audiences during live performances. The findings suggest that theatre can be an effective tool for promoting social change and awareness in Ethiopia, especially when it focuses on contemporary societal concerns such as gender roles and economic empowerment. Further research should explore the impact of digital platforms on the reach and influence of Ethiopian theatre performances to gauge their broader societal impact.

**Keywords:** *African Theatre, Ethio-African Studies, Performance Studies, Cultural Anthropology, Social Theory, Ethnography, Postcolonial Criticism*

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