



Theatre and Performance as Social Commentators in West African Ethnic Groups of Ethiopia,

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Abstract

Theatre and performance in West African ethnic groups of Ethiopia have long served as vehicles for social commentary on various societal issues. The research methodology employed a thematic analysis approach, incorporating semi-structured interviews with community members and archival documents to understand the dynamics of social commentary through theatrical performances. A specific theme emerged in the findings related to gender roles, with significant proportions (45%) of performances addressing issues such as female empowerment and traditional gender norms. The study concludes that theatre and performance serve as powerful tools for challenging societal taboos and advocating for social change within West African ethnic groups in Ethiopia. Further research should include a longitudinal analysis to track changes over time and explore the impact of digital media on traditional theatrical forms. Theatre, Performance, Social Commentary, West Africa, Ethnic Groups

Keywords: *African Studies, Ethnography, Theatre Studies, Performance Anthropology, Cross-Cultural Analysis, Discourse Analysis, Cultural Studies*

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