



# Theatrical Stances in Social Commentary: An Ethnographic Study of Theatre and Performance in West Africa with Focus on Ethiopia

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## Abstract

Theatrical performances in West Africa, including Ethiopia, have long served as a platform for social commentary and cultural expression. Fieldwork was conducted in urban and rural settings across Ethiopia, involving interviews with community leaders, theater practitioners, and audience members. Ethnographic methods were employed to capture cultural nuances and social dynamics. Theatrical performances often feature themes of social inequality, political corruption, and traditional values under contemporary pressures, reflecting a significant thematic direction in Ethiopian theatre. This study underscores the enduring influence of theatrical arts as a vehicle for societal critique and cultural preservation. Further research should prioritise longitudinal studies to track changes in thematic content over time and investigate cross-cultural comparisons within West African contexts.

**Keywords:** *African geography, Ethnorelativity, Phenomenology, Staging practices, Cultural performance, Ethnography, Anthropology*

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