



Theatre and Performance as Social Commentators in West Africa: An Ethnographic Study from Ethiopia,

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Published: 10 January 2002 | **Received:** 31 October 2001 | **Accepted:** 26 December 2001

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18754203](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18754203)

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Abstract

Ethiopia's theatre and performance arts have long served as vehicles for social commentary, reflecting and critiquing societal norms and political climates. The research employs ethnographic methods, including participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and archival analysis to understand the role of theatre in social commentary. A key finding is that Ethiopian theatre often mirrors contemporary political struggles, with themes of corruption and ethnic tensions prominently featured in performances. The study underscores the significant role of theatre as a mechanism for social critique and community engagement in Ethiopia and beyond. Policy makers should consider supporting and fostering these arts to serve as more effective forums for public discourse on societal issues.

Keywords: *African geography, Ethnography, Performance studies, Social theory, Cultural criticism, Visual anthropology, Narrative analysis*

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