

Yerima – a play which deals with the tragedy of violence and alienation of young people in oil-rich southern Nigeria. While Osita Ezenwanebe offers a reading which sees the work as a moderate piece focusing on human cost, Adebisi Ademakinwa claims that much of the script is lifted directly from speeches and goes on to claim that the villain is a representation of Ken Saro Wiwa, the Ogoni playwright and activist murdered by the regime of Sani Abacha in 1997. Since I write from Nigeria I have been asking numerous theatre academics about these readings. The latter is universally seen as perverse, and a government-promoted distortion. What is interesting is what these opposing views tell us about how politicized theatre remains in Nigeria.

Elsewhere, articles of particular interest are Ngozi Udengwu's study of the commercial superstar of Nigerian playwrights, Stella Oyedepo; and Ola Johansson's thoughtful and challenging paper on community-based AIDS theatre in Tanzania. I also note a growing focus on dance across the continent with three papers on dance theatre from Nigeria.

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Shulamith Lev-Aladgem

**Theatre in Co-Communities:
Articulating Power**

Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, 200 p.

£50.00.

ISBN: 978-0-230-55519-8.

The notion of a 'co-community' is the unifying concept which brings together the range of case studies of theatre practices discussed in Lev-Aladgem's book. The idea is derived from the communication theorist Mark Orbe's (1998) work on 'co-cultures' and is intended to promote a politics in which no single culture is considered to be superior or the norm within a given society (the US in Orbe's case, Israel in Lev-Aladgem's). This political stance has led the author of this book to work with the elderly, young, or sick and to study the work of others with marginalized ethnic groups, principally Mizrahi community groups (Jewish Israelis of Middle-Eastern or North African origin) and young people of Jewish Ethiopian origin.

The nine main chapters in the book each presents an account of theatre practices, sometimes her own and sometimes those of others, involving one particular 'co-community' group, and develop an analysis of their politics and aesthetics. The case studies are drawn from a period within which she traces a development of community-based theatre practice in Israel from the early 1970s into the 2000s. Whilst not setting out to provide a history as such, the book therefore

provides some useful resources for students and scholars attempting to fill in the gaps in Israeli theatre histories, or indeed of histories and geographies of applied/community theatre. Chapter 5 in particular focuses overtly on a history of community-based theatre in Israel, associating its origins predominantly with work by, with, and for the Mizrahi 'co-community'.

The author's mode of analysis shifts with the case studies. This is understandable given the difference in contexts and the different levels of access the author might have had available, although it does sometimes make the overall thread of the argument elusive. However, this does not detract from the interest of the chapters individually. Perhaps inevitably, it is the earlier chapters, which seem to be most closely based on the author's own sustained practice in a geriatric day-care centre, that provide the most vividly drawn descriptions of key moments and therefore produce the most convincing illustrations of the way she regards theatre as a means of 'making do' (in De Certeau's terms).

In Chapter 3 there is a detailed and memorable account of a series of interactions between the author and three elderly men. Lev-Aladgem describes rather poignantly how these interactions shifted subtly between ritual, play, and what might loosely be characterized as drama. It is here, in her account of Sadik, Jacob, and Abudy's mix of jokes, transient role-playing, and mild flirtation, where the book seems to come closest to identifying the dynamics and limitations of the transformational potential of community-based theatre.

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Ian Brown, ed.

The Edinburgh Companion to Scottish Drama.

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256 p. £61.75.

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Any reader possessing the preconception that Scottish drama is a site of sporadic and uneven activity will be corrected by this comprehensive and welcome collection of essays. Covering the range of Scottish drama in all its forms, including theatrical translation and non-theatrical drama, the collection's reach extends from the nation's earliest dramatic activity to the most recent publications and performances.

Taking a chronological approach, the *Companion* begins with Sarah Carpenter's excellent essay on Scottish drama until 1650, which analyses both 'theatrical and quasi-theatrical performance' in the contexts of religion and Reformation, town and city life, the court, and political conviction. Following this is the editor's survey of both