

his career, and could be read with a strategic view toward Bolger's agency within them.

Without this information, though, Bolger's narrative feels anchored by his work in *The Wizard of Oz*, around which much of the book's explication revolves. In fairness, *More than a Scarecrow* takes on an understandably difficult task; it tries to honor the legacy of a known yet underappreciated performer, even as it tries to complicate that legacy. Van Leuven scores some notable successes on this count, especially by emphasizing the degree to which Bolger's wife, Gwen, dictated the finer points of her husband's career. Many of the comedian's signature looks, gags, and roles only manifested because Gwen had the foresight—and creative ability—to discern their suitability within the broad arc of Bolger's career (174). By decentralizing the concept of "creation," the book models an exciting challenge to the stable notions of authorship still at work in much dance, theater, and performance studies scholarship. What's more, such a project would pose a substantial confrontation to the historical erasures Van Leuven evokes in her justifications for the book. Overall, though, *More than a Scarecrow* remains committed to a "great-man" vision of performance history—a commitment which, ironically, diminishes the life of an eminent entertainer.

Barry Brannum
University of California

Works Cited

- Bordman, Gerald. 2001. *American Musical Theater: A Chronicle*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dodds, Sherril. 2011. *Dancing on the Canon: Embodiments of Value in Popular Dance*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Emery, Lynne Fauley. 1989. *Black Dance from 1619 to Today*. 2nd ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Book Company Publishers.
- Foster, Susan. 1992. "Dancing Bodies." In *Incorporations*, edited by Jonathan Crary and Kwinter Sanford, 487–502. New York: Zone Books.
- Foulkes, Julia. 2003. *Modern Bodies: Dance and American Modernism from Martha Graham*

- to *Alvin Ailey*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Franko, Mark. 2002. *The Work of Dance: Labor, Movement, and Identity in the 1930s*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press.
- Gottschild, Brenda Dixon. 1996. *Digging the Africanist Presence in American Performance: Dance and Other Contexts*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- . 2000. *Waltzing in the Dark*. New York: St Martins Press.
- . 2012. *Joan Myers Brown and the Audacious Hope of the Black Ballerina*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Hill, Constance Valis. 2000. *Brotherhood in Rhythm: The Jazz Tap Dancing of the Nicholas Brothers*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kenrick, John. 2010. *American Musical Theater: A History*. New York: Continuum Books.
- Monroe, Raquel. 2011. "I Don't Want to Do African ... What About My Technique? Transforming Dance Places into Spaces in the Academy." *Journal of Pan African Studies* 4 (6): 38–55.
- Woll, Allen. 1991. *Black Musical Theatre: From Coontown to Dreamgirls*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press.

Aesthetic Citizenship: Immigration and Theater in Twenty-First-Century Paris

by Emine Fişek. 2017. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press. 240 pp. \$34.95 paper. \$99.95 hardcover. ISBN: 9780810135673. doi:10.1017/S014976771900024X

The history of French integration politics—from assimilationist, universalist, and multiculturalist initiatives—has frequently received international attention, and scholars from a variety of disciplines have documented consequent modes of resistance and social activism. However, a comprehensive study devoted to the theatrical response in Paris did not exist until Emine Fişek's *Aesthetic Citizenship: Immigration and Theater in Twenty-First-Century Paris*. In this ambitious portrayal of the political intervention of theater, Fişek compellingly argues that "theatrical immigration activism in early

twenty-first-century Paris provides key insights into the evolution of notions of immigrant rights, integration, and experience in postwar France” (180). She keenly establishes parallel structures between French aesthetics and politics in reaction to immigration and the resulting modes in which theatrical practices can generate national and cultural belonging. The emphasis is not on representation of immigrant identity *on* the stage; rather, Fişek underscores the very potential to animate citizenship *by* the stage, for those whom the national platform tends to occlude. In this way, Fişek’s monograph is a necessary foray for dance scholars, too, beyond scholars of French and francophone theater, as it intervenes in the hegemonic legacy affiliated with the French stage and performance traditions, including ballet and other dance forms.

Several questions motivate Fişek’s research on immigration politics and theatrical practices:

Is theater a primarily semiotic practice that transmits a series of meanings? Or is theater a space of subject constitution that foregrounds its habit-forming capacities? ... What then are the unique meanings associated with these distinctions in the context of French debates on immigration? With what meanings are theater, collective identity, and bodily life endowed in contemporary France? (5)

To address these questions, *Aesthetic Citizenship* sources archival materials, ethnographic studies, and self-conducted interviews with actors and activists beginning in 2008 Paris. Through a sophisticated application of performance study theories, Fişek successfully frames the relationship between embodied social practice and citizenship construction through aesthetics of the theater. By focusing on the actors’ bodies, rather than their scripted roles and speech, Fişek argues that the performers themselves undergo change in the process of staging, rather than merely representing alternative political realities for their audiences to witness. Thus, the stakes at play move beyond aesthetic interpretation and instead gesture toward the risk and political potential embodied by the immigrant actor.

The introduction provides a detailed history of immigration and integration politics in France, dating from the immigrant-workers crises of the 1970s through Sarkozy era policies. Fişek also contextualizes key terms—such as integration, universalism, and animation—within their historical conversations particular to France, to clarify their subsequent use in her publication. Chapter 1, “On the Paris Stage,” rewinds to 1970s Paris to trace the development of theatrical immigration activism within the broader context of social and political transformations of the nation. In particular, Fişek focuses on two Arab-French theater troupes, Al Assifa and La Kahina. Tensions established in these oral interviews, such as precarious politics of staging representation of gender and racial identities, are amplified in her selection of contemporary case studies. For example, gender is continued as a common element of chapter 2, “Prendre la Parole,” as Fişek concentrates on personal-narrative performance within the Festival au Féminin, an annual women’s art festival, and the civic organization Accueil Goutte d’Or, both from the early 2000s. Fişek references Rachida Khalil’s one-woman show, *La Vie rêvée de Fatma*, to delineate the oppositional complexities of universality and particularity in performance, as Khalil navigates enacting her own personal narrative for public gaze without falsely generalizing, and subsequently imposing, her specific experience onto other immigrant bodies.

Chapter 3, “The Integrated Actor,” explores the role of theater as a mechanism for immigrant integration, as employed by two nongovernmental agencies, Réseau Education Sans Frontières (RESF) and La Climade. A close analysis of RESF’s *La Plume sans papier* reveals that “for these aid organizations, integration meant both *enmeshment* within a larger collective infrastructure and *autonomy* from such collective formations” (91), probing how the individual actor maintains agency while operating within a larger system. This chapter includes a brief digression back into 1980s era politics of Chirac in the section “Autonomy, Individuality, and Integration,” before turning to the specific (re) workings of asylum in La Climade’s theater workshops. Ultimately, Fişek rethinks the potential of France’s *vivre-ensemble* attitude through theater’s dual role as a process (for the actor) and a product (for the audience). Chapter 4, “Rethinking Community and Culture,” broadens

the border of Paris to include theatrical practices of the banlieue. Fişek engages *Quelques unes d'entre nous*, a women's collective of the Maison des Tilleuls in the Parisian suburb of Black-Mesnil, by contextualizing the group's production, *Le Bruit du monde m'est rentre dans l'oreille*. Through rigorous analysis of this play, staged for the first time in 2005 when tensions from the banlieue manifested themselves in a series of highly publicized riots, Fişek asserts the complexities of community and culture particular to twenty-first-century France and troubles of an Anglo-understanding of community-based theater. The most contemporary section, chapter 5, "Theater without Borders?" delves into the "humanitarian turn in French integration policy, whereby the moral imperative to relive human suffering has replaced long-standing political criteria in evaluation of migratory flows and asylum" (33). Fişek intersects three productions—a benefit performance at RESF, an unnamed piece from a midsize and well-known arts center, and Théâtre du Soleil's *Le Dernier Caravansérail*—through the specifics of témoignage, and the consequential privileging of "the affective, rather than the political, dimensions of these individuals' life experiences" (175).

Although the subtitle emphasizes twenty-first-century Paris, much of *Aesthetic Citizenship* features a nuanced review of French politics, in particular the tradition of national republicanism, from the 1970s onward. Such historical references are not limited to the introduction, but repeatedly referenced throughout. This constant doubling back in time, coupled with the multitude of anonymous actors and parade of philosophical interlocutors introduced—from Bourdieu to Butler, Fanon to Foucault, and Rancière to Rousseau, lest we forget the references to Derrida or Levinas—at times leaves the reader distracted from the immediacy of the argument at hand. Yet as a result of the breadth of references and methodologies employed, Fişek expands her expert contribution beyond performance studies, and instead invites philosophers, historians, politicians, and social activists from fields such as migration studies, French cultural theory, and ethnographic practice. Indeed, this robust repertoire mirrors the diversity and complexity of immigration and theater in

twenty-first-century Paris, and appropriately forces the reader to attempt to reconcile the multifaceted subject matter.

Fişek explicitly centers herself as the arbitrator between historical fact, political controversy, and the personal narrations of her interviews. In self-reflexively recognizing her own involvement, Fişek takes responsibility for her subjective interpretations, encouraging the reader to think with, and at times against, her own voice. She avoids "seeking theatrical ideals to celebrate, as well as to stop short of condemning the discrepancies between artistic ideals and their inevitably complex and contradictory realizations" (180) at the risk of not establishing her own scholarly intervention. However, she poignantly details how and why French integration politics and aesthetics deserve to be read together, to successfully assert the high stakes of immigrant theater.

From *communautarisme* and *intégration*, *Aesthetic Citizenship* underscores the fraught tensions between universality and particularity that trouble both French politics and immigrant theater—as well as our own field of dance studies—addressing the modes in which individuals must simultaneously enact themselves and the collective on stage. Fişek expertly negotiates the complicated role of the stage as both representative and constitutive, to heighten our understanding of the actors' role in integration. Through her emphasis on bodily ways of knowing, Fişek invites us to think: How does dance operate with or alongside immigrant theater? How does the corporeal emphasis and reading of the body of immigrant actors demand that we critique our own methods of reading the dancing body? Ultimately, she deftly validates the unique political potential of "the complexity of lived theatrical experience" (180) in twenty-first-century Paris and convincingly argues that the French aesthetics of politics and theater must be read in tandem when citizenship is at stake.

Anna Kimmel
Stanford University