

Modern African Drama

Scholars examining literature from former French colonies sometimes view it wrongly as simply an outgrowth of colonial literature. By suggesting new ways to understand the multiple voices present, this book explores how Francophone African poetry and theatre in particular, since the 1960s, constitute both an organic cultural product and a reflection of the diverse African cultures in which they originate. Themes explored in five chapters include the many kinds of African identity formation, the resistance to former notions of literary composition as art, a remapping of social responsibility, and the impact of globalization on Francophone Africa's participation in world economics, politics and culture. This study highlights the inner workings of Francophone African literature and suggests a canonization of modern Francophone works from a world perspective.

Presents eight twentieth-century plays from seven African countries, along with explanatory notes and over thirty background writings and works of criticism.

'Poetry, always foremost of the arts in traditional Africa, has continued to compete for primacy against the newer forms of prose fiction and theatre drama.' This wonderfully comprehensive anthology of African poetry has been expanded to include ninety-nine poets from twenty-seven countries, thirty-one of whom appear for the first time. Equally wide-ranging is the content of the poetry itself: war songs and political protests jostle with poems about human love, African nature and the surprises that life offers; all are represented in these rich and colourful pages.

This book explores contemporary African adaptations of classical Greek tragedies. Six South African and Nigerian dramatic texts – by Yael Farber, Mark Fleishman, Athol Fugard, Femi Osofisan, and Wole Soyinka – are analysed through the thematic lens of resistance, revolution, reconciliation, and mourning. The opening chapters focus on plays that mobilize Greek tragedy to inspire political change, discussing how Sophocles' heroine Antigone is reconfigured as a freedom fighter and how Euripides' Dionysos is transformed into a revolutionary leader. The later chapters shift the focus to plays that explore the costs and consequences of political change, examining how the cycle of violence dramatized in Aeschylus' Oresteia trilogy acquires relevance in post-apartheid South Africa, and how the mourning of Euripides' Trojan Women resonates in and beyond Nigeria. Throughout, the emphasis is on how playwrights, through adaptation, perform a cultural politics directed at the Europe that has traditionally considered ancient Greece as its property, foundation, and legitimization. Van Weyenberg additionally discusses how contemporary African reworkings of Greek tragedies invite us to reconsider how we think about the genre of tragedy and about the cultural process of adaptation. Against George Steiner's famous claim that tragedy has died, this book demonstrates that Greek tragedy holds relevance today. But it also reveals that adaptations do more than simply keeping the texts they draw on alive: through adaptation, playwrights open up a space for politics. In this dynamic between adaptation and pre-text, the politics of adaptation is performed.

In *Search of a Model for African-American Drama*, is a comparative study of how these three dramatists seek and devise new models to address the specific conditions of Blacks in America. Each writer relies on a different approach, each powerful, yet apparently contradictory. The author examines the dramatists' work in detail, exploring common and contrasting themes and models.

Mzo Sirayi has embarked on a highly impressive and daring enterprise with the unflinching boldness of a scholar who is driven by a passionate pursuit to set the record straight. He manages to pull no punches and make no apologies by being true to his convictions, especially within the context of a new South Africa. The book adopts a largely historicized, critical and analytical perspective, which strikingly approximates that of postcolonial theory. — Owen Seda This new and authoritative book is an excellent addition to the few existing books on black South African drama and theatre. *South African Drama and Theatre from Pre-colonial Times to 1990s: An Alternative Reading* takes the reader on a tour of the indigenous as well as the modern South African theatre zones. The chapters reverberate with echoes of Africanisation and rock on renaissance waves. This exciting and stimulating book is transparently readable, accessible and is of inestimable value to academics and general readers. — Patrick Ebewo

How did West African literature in English begin? What influences affected its birth and development? How much does it imitate European models? How is traditional African culture influencing modern writing? What kind of experiments are being tried? These are some of the questions, relevant to African writing throughout the continent, which this critical study discusses by examining the most significant work in verse, prose, drama, children's literature, journalism and political writing in West Africa. The author examines the writing of major figures such as Soyinka, Achebe, Okara, Clark, Tutuola and Ekwensi as well as that of authors whose work is not as widely known.

Modern African Drama Backgrounds and Criticism W W Norton & Company Incorporated

Here is an introduction to the history of English writing from East and West Africa drawing on a range of texts from the slave diaspora to the post-war upsurge in African English language and literature from these regions.

Sanford Sternlicht presents a comprehensive survey of modern American drama beginning with its antecedents in Victorian melodrama through the present. He discusses the work and achievement of more than seventy playwrights, from Eugene O'Neill to Suzan-Lori Parks—from the golden era of Broadway to the rise of Off-Broadway and regional theater. Sternlicht shows how world theater influenced the American stage, and how the views of American dramatists reflected the great American social movements of their times. In addition, he describes the contributions of early experimental theater, the Federal Theater of the 1930s, African American, feminist, and gay and lesbian drama—and the joyous trends and triumphs of American musical theater.

A Companion to the Classical Tradition accommodates the pressing need for an up-to-date introduction and overview of the growing field of reception studies. A comprehensive introduction and overview of the classical tradition - the interpretation of classical texts in later centuries Comprises 26 newly commissioned essays from an international team of experts Divided into three sections: a chronological survey, a geographical survey, and a section illustrating the connections between the classical tradition and contemporary theory

Textbook

This book examines the creative and critical works of Nigerian playwright and novelist Femi Euba to demonstrate the place and function of African cultures in modernity. The author makes the case for the vibrancy of such cultures in the shaping and constitution of the modern world.

"Among the contributors are a new generation of young African writers whose studies include the works of a number of established and emerging African Writers about whom there is little criticism now in existence."--BOOK JACKET.

Western literature has become more influential in Africa since the independence of many of that continent's countries in the early 1960s. In particular, Greek tragedy has grown as model and inspiration for African theatre artists. This work begins with a discussion of the affinity that modern-day African playwrights have for ancient Greek tragedy and the factors that determine their choice of classical texts and topics. The study concentrates on how African playwrights

transplant the dramatic action and narrative of the Greek texts by rewriting both the performance codes and the cultural context. The methods by which African playwrights have adapted Greek tragedy and the ways in which the plays satisfy the prevailing principles of both cultures are examined. The plays are *The Bacchae* of Euripides by Wole Soyinka, *Song of a Goat* by J.P. Clark, *The Gods Are Not to Blame* by Ola Rotimi, Guy Butler's *Demea*, Efua Sutherland's *Edufa*, Orestes by Athol Fugard, *The Song of Jacob Zulu* by Tug Yourgrau, Femi Osofisan's *Tegonni*, Edward Kamau Brathwaite's *Odale's Choice*, *The Island* by Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona, and Sylvain Bemba's *Black Wedding Candles for Blessed Antigone*.

A project of the Department of Dramatic Arts, Obafemi Awolowo University, which was founded by the late Ola Rotimi, one of Africa's finest dramatists, author of over a dozen play, theatre director, and Professor of Dramatic Arts. This collection of papers is the result of the dramatist's final creative years, and includes contributions from Rotimi himself as well as others from his department both from the older and younger generations. The essays are entitled: *Attainment of Discovery: Efua Sutherland and the Evolution of Modern African Drama*; *Development of the Theatre of Radical Poetics in Nigeria*; *'Each One Tell One'*; *Language as Praxis in Ola Rotimi and Ngugi wa Thiong'o*; *Sowande's Revolutionary Socio- Aesthetic Ideal*; *The Hidden Persuaders: Nigerian Tele-Drama and Propaganda*; *The Performer and the Nigerian Copyright Act*; *The African Operetta: An Overview of Adam Fibersima's 'Edi Ke Marina'*; and *In Search of Community Theatre Audience*.

This book is a seminal study that significantly expands the interdisciplinary discourse on African literature and cinema by exploring Africa's under-visited carnivalesque poetics of laughter. Focusing on modern African literature as well as contemporary African cinema, particularly the direct-to-video Nigerian film industry known as Nollywood, the book examines the often-neglected aesthetics of the African comic imagination. In modern African literature, which sometimes creatively traces a path back to African folklore, and in Nollywood — with its aesthetic relationship to Onitsha Market Literature — the pertinent styles range from comic simplicitas to comic magnitude with the facilitation of language, characterization, and plot by a poetics of laughter or lightness as an important aspect of style. The poetics at work is substantially carnivalesque, a comic preference or tendency that is attributable, in different contexts, to a purposeful comic sensibility or an unstructured but ingrained or virtual comic mode. In the best instances of this comic vision, the characteristic laughter or lightness can facilitate a revaluation or reappreciation of the world, either because of the aesthetic structure of signification or the consequent chain of signification. This referentiality or progressive signification is an important aspect of the poetics of laughter as the African comic imagination variously reflects, across genres, both the festival character of comedy and its pedagogical value. This book marks an important contribution to African literature, postcolonial literature, world literature, comic imagination, poetics, critical theory, and African cinema.

The history of drama is typically viewed as a series of inert "styles." Tracing British and American stage drama from the 1880s onward, W. B. Worthen instead sees drama as the interplay of text, stage production, and audience. How are audiences manipulated? What makes drama meaningful? Worthen identifies three rhetorical strategies that distinguish an O'Neill play from a Yeats, or these two from a Brecht. Where realistic theater relies on the "natural" qualities of the stage scene, poetic theater uses the poet's word, the text, to control performance. Modern political theater, by contrast, openly places the audience at the center of its rhetorical designs, and the drama of the postwar period is shown to develop a range of post-Brechtian practices that make the audience the subject of the play. Worthen's book deserves the attention of any literary critic or serious theatergoer interested in the relationship between modern drama and the spectator. The history of drama is typically viewed as a series of inert "styles." Tracing British and American stage drama from the 1880s onward, W. B. Worthen instead sees drama as the interplay of text, stage production, and audience. How are audiences manipulated? What makes drama meaningful? Worthen identifies three rhetorical strategies that distinguish an O'Neill play from a Yeats, or these two from a Brecht. Where realistic theater relies on the "natural" qualities of the stage scene, poetic theater uses the poet's word, the text, to control performance. Modern political theater, by contrast, openly places the audience at the center of its rhetorical designs, and the drama of the postwar period is shown to develop a range of post-Brechtian practices that make the audience the subject of the play. Worthen's book deserves the attention of any literary critic or serious theatergoer interested in the relationship between modern drama and the spectator.

The goal of this book is to initiate theoretical discussions on the popular subject of African literary language, and the thrust of the contribution, apart from theory-building, is the introduction of the Post-indiginist concept next to the well known essentialist and hybrid concepts. The study outlines a set of criteria for each aesthetic concept, so that literary analysis based on the criteria will verify whether or not they are adequate for understanding, explaining and describing African writers' language usage. It is expected that a language aesthetic theory in the African context may help in the study of individual writers' styles and equally address a neglect of descriptive studies in African literary scholarship. Een meesterlijke familiegeschiedenis tegen de achtergrond van het veranderende Zuid-Afrika Kort voor haar overlijden dwingt Amor Swarts moeder haar man een belofte af. Het jonge meisje is daarvan een stille getuige: hun zwarte hulp, Salomé, zal haar eigen huis krijgen, als dank voor jarenlange trouwe dienst. Amors vader heeft echter zijn eigen prioriteiten en de belofte wordt niet ingelost. Na zijn dood ontstaan nieuwe kansen, maar Amors broer en zus gaan hun eigen weg en blijven zich verzetten: Anton is lafhartig en maakt geen keuzes, Astrid is gefocust op haar eigen gewin. Amor blijft achter met een sluimerend schuldgevoel. Kan zij nog iets uitrichten of is het daarvoor te laat?

In this collection of essays written from different critical perspectives, African playwrights demonstrate through their art that they are not only witnesses, but also consciences, of their societies.

"Het is volle maan maar de zware bewolking en lichte regen belemmeren het zicht. De vuurtoren zwaait met vaste regelmaat haar licht over het trieste schouwspel. Het licht van mijn hoofd lamp gaat verloren in het donker. Langzaam

begint het tot me door te dringen dat een stuk van mijn leven wordt afgesloten". In "SoloMan" herbeleeft Jack van Ommen zijn ongelooflijk avontuur dat begon aan de Amerikaanse westkust en negen jaar later tot een voorlopig einde kwam in een wilde storm in de Middellandse Zee. Hij begon zijn droom in een negen meter zeilboot met \$150 op zijn bankrekening. Na 51 landen en 48.000 zeemijlen in het kielzog, komt er een abrupt einde aan zijn ontdekkingsreis. Hij verliest zijn boot en al zijn bezittingen. Dit is het verhaal van een levensveranderende ervaring op zee en hoe hij tegenslagen te boven komt met doorzetten, hoop en houvast in zijn geloof in God en mensheid. Jack van Ommen, Amsterdam 1937. Thuishaven: Gig Harbor, Washington, V.S. Eerdere uitgaves: "De Mastmakersdochters" 2012. www.DeMastmakersdochters.nl Artikelen van Jack van Ommen verschijnen geregeld in Nederlandse en Amerikaanse tijdschriften. Website: www.SoloMan.nl Blog: www.ComeToSea.us

This book presents a contour of the literary theories and critical approaches in modern African drama. Theories are discussed against the backdrop of modern African drama and include Symbolism, Naturalism, Nativism, the quest for Indigenous Aesthetics, Oral Narratives, Narratology, Marxism, Cultural Materialism, Structuralism, Poststructuralism, Psycho-analytic criticism, New Historicism, Ecocriticism, Feminism, Postcolonialism and Intertextuality. The objective is to offer researchers and scholars of modern African drama a comprehensive approach of the discipline of African drama from theoretical perspective. Critical debates on the possibility of reading African drama with the lenses of contemporary literary theories have been controversial among critics of African literature. Some critics have been asserting that African drama should be theory-free in its intellectual and scholarly interpretation. Others opine that modern African drama should be analyzed within the mainstream of African literature alongside the novel and poetry. This book seeks to revert these views by pointing out the importance of theories in the interpretation and understanding of African drama.

This title explores the diversity of the performing arts in Africa and the diaspora, from studies of major dramatic authors and formal literary dramas to improvisational theatre and popular video films.

"The contributors to this text investigate the developments of African drama and theatre from the pre-colonial period to the present ... [in] a rich collection of essays that cover a wide range of topics such as the concept and nature of traditional African drama and theatre, African aesthetics in traditional African drama and theatre, re-appropriation of the African aesthetic in modern African drama, the growth and development of Kenyan drama and theatre, theatre for development in East Africa, and minimalism as a theatrical strategy in Athol Fugard's plays."--Back cover.

Fémi Ôsófisan is a major dramatist from Nigeria who experiments with forms and theatrical traditions. This book focuses on his development as a dramatist and his contribution to world drama as a postcolonial African writer whose major preoccupation has been to question the colonial and postcolonial issues of identity in theatre, literature and performance. The volume explores how Ôsófisan exploits his Yorùbá heritage in his drama and the performances of his plays by reading new meanings into popular mythology, and by re-writing history to comment on contemporary social and political issues. Ôsófisan has often introduced new motifs and narratives to energise dramatic performances in Nigeria and globally, and this text discusses developments in his theatre practices in the context of changing cultural trends. Now available in paperback for the first time this edition of the World Encyclopedia of Contemporary Theatre series examines theatrical developments in Africa since 1945. Entries on thirty-two African countries are featured in this volume, preceded by specialist introductory essays on Anglophone Africa, Francophone Africa, History and Culture, Cosmology, Music, Dance, Theatre for Young Audiences and Puppetry. There are also special introductory general essays on African theatre written by Nobel Prize Laureate Wole Soyinka and the outstanding Congolese playwright, Sony Labou Tansi, before his untimely death in 1995. More up-to-date and more wide-ranging than any other publication, this is undoubtedly a major ground-breaking survey of contemporary African theatre.

South Africa has a uniquely rich and diverse theatre tradition which has responded energetically to the country's remarkable transition, helping to define the challenges and contradictions of this young democracy. This volume considers the variety of theatre forms, and the work of the major playwrights and theatre makers producing work in democratic South Africa. It offers an overview of theatre pioneers and theatre forms in Part One, before concentrating on the work of individual playwrights in Part Two. Through its wide-ranging survey of indigenous drama written predominantly in the English language and the analysis of more than 100 plays, a detailed account is provided of post-apartheid South African theatre and its engagement with the country's recent history. Part One offers six overview chapters on South African theatre pioneers and theatre forms. These include consideration of the work of artists such as Barney Simon, Mbongeni Ngema, Phyllis Klotz; the collaborations of William Kentridge and the Handspring Puppet Company; the work of Magnet Theatre, and of physical and popular community theatre forms. Part Two features chapters on twelve major playwrights, including Athol Fugard, Reza de Wet, Lara Foot, Zakes Mda, Yaël Farber, Mpumelelo Paul Grootboom, Mike van Graan and Brett Bailey. It includes a survey of emerging playwrights and significant plays, and the book closes with an interview with Aubrey Sekhabi, the Artistic Director of the South African State Theatre in Pretoria. Written by a team of over twenty leading international scholars, The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary South African Theatre is a unique resource that will be invaluable to students and scholars from a range of different disciplines, as well as theatre practitioners.

Brief biographies of thirteen prominent African women emphasizing their achievements in their chosen careers. Included are Angie Brooks, Margaret Kenyatta, and Miriam Makeba.

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