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## **The drama of Ahmed Yerima : studies in Nigerian theatre**

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## Stellingen

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1. Many critical works exist on Nigerian popular theatre with emphasis on Yoruba traveling theatre, but after Wole Soyinka won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986 Nigerian literary drama became the favorite topic of critics of African theatre.
2. Most critics of Nigerian drama distinguish three generations in it on the basis of ideological commitment and dramatic style of the playwrights.
3. The ideology of the third generation Nigerian dramatists is an expression of individual survivalism; an expression that emphasizes the survival of an individual in a chaotic society as opposed to collective ideals which characterized the works of the earlier playwrights.
4. The political, socio-economic and systemic corruption that plagues Nigeria is what fuels the country's production of drama. Virtually all notable Nigerian dramatists have addressed these problems in their works.
5. Ahmed Yerima leads the third generation of Nigerian dramatists. He is a dramatist of socio-political realism who uses the medium of drama to comment on the prevailing social, economic and political situation in his own country and in Africa as a whole.
6. Some of Yerima's plays reconstruct history by revisiting the issue of colonialism and resistance to it.
7. Colonialism in Africa did not only bring about the process of Westernization of Africans, but it has also sown the seed of cultural submissiveness of the people of the continent, thereby, making the people to see themselves, their religions, and culture as inferior to that of their colonial masters.
8. In a nation where holders of government appointments are known to vehemently represent the view of the government, Yerima's treatment of contemporary societal issues in his dramatic works belies his position as Assistant Director, Director and later Director-General of the National Troupe of Nigeria and National Theatre of Nigeria (1991-2010). This is so because many of his plays challenge the policies of the government.

9. Many of Yerima's plays contribute to the preservation of the people's past for emerging generations. While Islam, Christianity and Pentecostalism attempt to erase mythical and indigenous beliefs from the youth and future generations, by representing African Traditional Beliefs (ATBs) in his plays, Yerima helps to retain indigenous culture for posterity.
10. Since the introduction in 1839 of Christianity to areas known today as Nigeria, there has been visible hostility between its adherents and the practitioners of ATBs. As contemporary Nigerian society is divided between those who practice ATBs, Islam, or Christianity, Yerima looks at the hypocritical nature of many of the country's practitioners of the three religions.
11. There is always the tendency of subjectivity overriding objectivity while analyzing the works of a living dramatist, because the more you read his or her works, the more you are drawn into the world of the dramatist.
12. In the process of doing doctoral research, I discovered that the most appropriate attitude for a PhD student is patience, hard-work and discipline.