

sceptical of ideological and hegemonic tendencies, he establishes his argument for antagonism (Mouffe and Laclau) and Habermas's pre-illocutionary art (not illocutionary). He argues for a political theatre which is symbolic through speech, which produces an effect, which is not derivative but original, and which unsettles aesthetic conventions. Not unrelated is Fisher's critical argument for acknowledging the failure of the evolution of the proletarian subject, but he also indicates the contemporary need to recognize the multiplicity of subjectivities and intersubjective identities, which is an invaluable insight and signifies the relevance of political theatre in today's context.

He also offers an international perspective, given that the post-war/postcolonial conjuncture colluded, and the political theatres of many postcolonial nations forged strong links, with trends in world political-theatre practices. Hence the importance for Fisher of leftist street theatre practices in India, and the case study of Janam gives the work a larger perspective than many histories of Western political theatre. However, the ambivalence appears when he regards it as a vibrant practice which still exists in the global South despite the decline of left politics and the crisis of democracies. To attribute to it a flourishing practice in contemporary India unfortunately no longer reflects the precarious reality of street theatre companies such as Janam. Instead, a critique and understanding of its current precarity and marginalization are significant for its attempts to reinvent itself and develop a mode of self-reflective criticism in the form of political possibilities.

While Fisher does not disregard the need to bring back effective, meaningful theatre, which constantly strives to advance aesthetics as an exception, it also leads him into momentary pessimism. The scholarship on political theatre needs to offer hope, and Fisher holds on to the tenuous egalitarian–democratic logic of political theatre. Nonetheless, while he critiques ideological theatre, he does urge a critical aesthetic approach, possibly rooted in ideology rather than devoid of it, which challenges rather than endorses the depoliticization processes of contemporary cultures.

The book is and will be a comprehensible and invaluable study of the genealogy of political theatre contextualized and theorized particularly as it offers methodological perspectives that apply to students, researchers and academics working on politics and performances.

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It's Not Your Fault: Five New Plays on Sexual Harassment in Egypt. By

Jillian Campana, Dina Amin and the Cairo Writers Lab. Foreword by Hoda Elsadda.

Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2023. Pp. ix + 103. \$29.95/£24.95 Pb.

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Theatre cannot help but engage with society. Many playwrights choose to write in order to voice concerns and discuss problems related to the world they live in. The American University in Cairo (AUC) Press has recently published *It's Not Your Fault: Five New Plays on Sexual Harassment in Egypt*, featuring five short plays in English by the Cairo Writers Lab, a collective of Egyptian AUC students in collaboration with Jillian Campana and Dina Amin. The 2023 release, which is also available in Arabic, addresses sexual-harassment issues. The collection includes a Foreword by Hoda Elsadda.

In the Foreword, Elsadda maintains that after the 2011 Revolution, this type of book is able to broach the relatively taboo social issue of sexual harassment. She traces how individuals, groups, institutions, laws and online and social media spoke up to counter 'gender-based violence' in

the public sphere in Egypt. On the other hand, difficulty emerges in the private sphere, Elsadda opines, 'largely due to a culture of silence and silencing' (p. ix).

Section 1 of the book, written by Jillian Campana and Dina Amin and titled 'Sexual Harassment in Egypt and Using Theater as a Way Forward', explains the premises of this project of ten-minute plays. The writers also discuss definitions, statistics and developments in penal laws against such societal concern. The writing depended on a process called 'devising', with lead playwright(s) from both genders, to develop the plays in order to 'capture many voices' (pp. 8–9).

Section 2 comprises the five plays with thematic introductions. The first play, with Nour El Captan as lead playwright, is titled *Forget Him*, and speaks to the theme of 'post-traumatic stress disorder' (PTSD). The play's female protagonist, Alia, experiences PTSD due to a previous sexual assault manifested in the cryptic character of The Man who haunts her. The second play, *See Me*, has Nour Ibrahim and Omar Omar as lead playwrights and speaks to the issue of family attitudes toward sexual harassment. The play's protagonist, Nadia, grapples with her mother's passivity and her father's denial of her past abuse experience. Aunt Mervat vocalizes the prevalent attitude: 'I don't understand why anyone would want to risk their safety and reputation' (p. 52). The third play, titled *The Report*, by lead playwright Noran Morsi, is on the topic of the repercussions of reporting. Malak is hesitant to report sexual harassment by her college instructor. The fourth play, *What Do You Know*, is by Yehia Abdelghany as lead playwright and deals with domestic abuse across different social classes; both Nagah and Asmaa, the socially underprivileged, and Shahd, the socially privileged, experienced domestic violence. The last play, *When We Met*, by Marwan Abdelmoneim and Passant Faheem, is concerned with the theme of consent to physical intimacy in a relationship between a couple – Laila and Youssef. In this section, the plays' introductions seem contrived and repetitive of Section 1, but perhaps necessary as part of participatory research-based theatre (p. 16). In addition, though the themes of the plays are well chosen, a more logical arrangement of the plays would have dealt with the abuse, then the reporting, and finally the attitudes and effects.

In short, this book is a good example of how theatre addresses social problems. Its importance is not only for theatre scholars but also for readers who are interested in social and feminist issues both in Egypt and in the whole world. However, the subtitle, *Five New Plays on Sexual Harassment in Egypt*, frames the issue as particular to Egypt. The book could have been titled *Five Egyptian Plays on Sexual Harassment* in order to show that it speaks to a worldwide concern.

To conclude, theatre can play a role in achieving social justice. *It's Not Your Fault: Five New Plays on Sexual Harassment in Egypt* by Jillian Campana, Dina Amin and the Cairo Writers Lab outlines an ambitious and innovative socially committed theatre project. Using the name of one of the campaigns, 'It's Not Your Fault', as the title is a critique of the role that society plays in making the victim complicit. The project marks a mature step towards how societies can deal with such wounds. The five short plays are loud screams that break the silence and call for social solutions.

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The Palgrave Handbook of Theatre and Migration. Edited by Yana Meerzon and S. E. Wilmer. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023. Pp. xxvii + 775. £219.99/\$279.99 Hb.
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In these times of increasing movement of people due to climate change, wars, pandemics and economic crises, this handbook is a timely intervention in theatre and performance studies. This large volume of sixty chapters broadly covers themes such as refugees, migrants, exile, globalization and cosmopolitanism.