

Claire Cochrane maps the experience of theatre across the British Isles during the twentieth century through the social and economic factors which shaped it. Three topographies for 1900, 1950 and 2000 survey the complex plurality of theatre within the nation state which, at the beginning of the century, was at the hub of world-wide imperial interests, and after 100 years had seen unprecedented demographic, economic and industrial change. Cochrane analyses the dominance of London theatre, but redresses the balance in favour of the hitherto marginalised majority experience in the English regions and the other component nations of the British political construct. Developments arising from demographic change are outlined, especially those relating to the rapid expansion of migrant communities representing multiple ethnicities. Presenting fresh historiographic perspectives on twentieth-century British theatre, the book breaks down the traditionally accepted binary oppositions between different sectors, showing a broader spectrum of theatre practice.