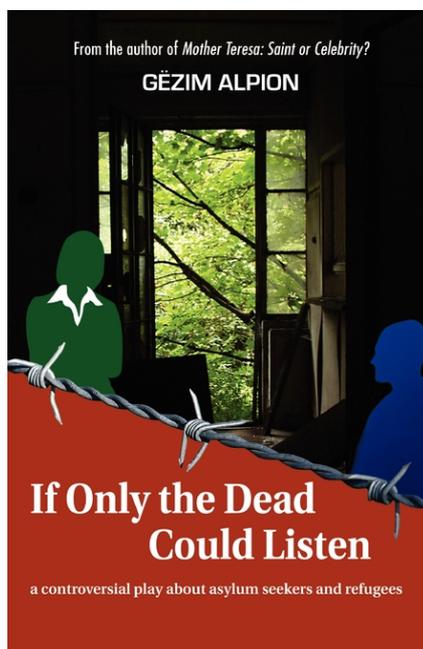


Press Release: *If Only the Dead Could Listen*, by Gëzim Alpion

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For Immediate Release

Announcing the publication of *If Only the Dead Could Listen*, By Gëzim Alpion
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July 9, 2008 (Chapel Hill, NC, USA) – How do Albanian asylum seekers live in the United Kingdom? Some people in Britain would claim that asylum seekers and refugees live comfortably on the social services extended to them. *If Only the Dead Could Listen*, a shocking and politically incorrect new play by Dr Gëzim Alpion, disturbs that vision. The drama follows the saga of Leka, an asylum-seeker who finds himself entangled in the British legal system one day during a trip to Harrods.

Alpion's second play *If Only the Dead Could Listen* has already disturbed British audiences with its black humor and tragedy. The public finds itself succumbing to emotional twists and turns as the main character's emotions metamorphose through states of anger, patriotism, bereavement, aggression and alienation. The play depicts experiences universally faced by refugees as they reluctantly uproot themselves from their homeland and find themselves taxed by personal and social trials in a foreign place.

'My intention is for the spectators to leave the theatre at the end of the show with questions whose answers they have to find for themselves,' says Alpion. 'The play is about the sacredness of human life and dignity, and if spectators are disturbed, I take it to be a good sign. Art is at its best when it is therapeutic and therapy is not always a pleasant thing to go through.'

Sponsored by Arts Council England, the dramatic interpretation of *If Only the Dead Could Listen* premiered in February 2006 at the MAC Theatre in

Birmingham, UK. The March 2008 performances at the MAC Theatre and the Arena Theatre in Wolverhampton were sponsored by *r:evolve*, a Consortium of the Arena Theatre, the Midlands Arts Centre (MAC), and Black Country Touring.

Gëzim Alpion is Lecturer in Sociology and Media Studies at the University of Birmingham, UK. He received a PhD from the University of Durham, UK, in 1997. His books include *Vouchers, Foreigner Complex: Essays and Fiction about Egypt* (2002), *Mother Teresa: Saint or Celebrity?* (2007), and *Encounters with Civilizations: From Alexander the Great to Mother Teresa* (2008).

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