

## Is the African Cinema Definition 'Real' or 'Idealistic'

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### Abstract

To a large extent, the world seems to have seen more films from the West than from anywhere else. In sub-Saharan Africa for example, it was not until the early 1960s that the Africans had the opportunity to stand behind the lens to tell their own story. Unlike the cinema of the West, 'African cinema' was borne more out of the resistance to its representation by the West. From Ousmane Sembene's time till now, other filmmakers from Anglophone as well as Lusophone countries have made different films on different subjects about nation and culture. But in many scholarly writings, for several years, these national cinemas are not seen as such but are bundled up under the rubric of African cinema. Who defines African cinema, can we look at its constituents as national cinemas? Is the definition known before evolving? Are the films made in contemporary times in cosmopolitan settings losing their 'Africanness'? Does the term African cinema possess colonial undertones? This article seeks to trace the beginnings of African cinema and its evolution and find out how the cinemas in sub-Saharan Africa especially kowtowing to the pigeonhole of the idealism of how the West defines it, or whether gradually the emerging stories from different nations are making the world rethink films from Africa in a different or 'real' way. The paper further considers the progress of filmmaking in Anglophone Africa, with a particular reference to Ghana and how this art wrapped in culture and ideology has defined itself over the years. The study adopts analytical and historicocritical methods.

**Keywords:** African cinema, Ghana, Ideology, Anglophone Africa, Sankofa ideology, Idealism.

To a large extent, the world seems to have seen more films from the West than from anywhere else. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, it was not until the early 1960s that the Africans had the opportunity to stand behind the lens to tell their own story. Unlike the cinema of the West, 'African cinema' was borne more out of the resistance to its representation by the West. One film that sparked off the issue of negative representation of black people is D. W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* (1915) hailed by many in its heyday as one of the best films exhibiting great artistic ability in the new art called filmmaking. It is an epic story of the American Civil War which centres on the stories of two families who befriend each other but are on opposite sides of the conflict. "Stoneman, leader of the house, and head of the northern family during the reconstruction era pushes through legislation that gives rights to freed slaves, while the elder son of the southern family helps starts the Ku Klux Klan in response to outrages committed in the town" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010, p.61). Based on two books by Thomas Dixon, said to be a racist author, the first half of the film is based on his novel, *Can a Leopard Change its Spots* and the second half on his other novel *The Clansman*. Griffith has come to be known and respected as one filmmaker who has refined some significant techniques, especially in the area of film editing and directing.

It is, therefore, interesting to note that one of the greatest films he made in 1915 also became one of the most controversial. Staiger (2021) claims that: when the *Birth of a Nation* was originally exhibited, reviewers uniformly praised the presentation of the subject matter, separating the narrational techniques (i.e., style) from what was being represented. (This "form/content" split is typical of reviewing the period and is due most immediately to nineteenth-century aesthetics)... Numerous attacks were marshalled ... the most obvious indignity was that the film distorted and consequently falsified the history of the reconstruction era. Second and related to the fabrication of history attack, was the assertion that the film misrepresented the character of blacks ... as the *Crisis* put it "The Negro [is] represented either as an ignorant fool, a vicious rapist, a venal and unscrupulous politician or a faithful but doddering idiot. Though it is said that Griffith had toned down some of the excesses of the novel in favour of a concentration on the white families, many commentators of the day treated the film as a creation of Dixon (Bordwell & Thompson, 2010), Griffith went to a lot of 'trouble' in persuading his viewers that the history he portrayed in *Birth...* was accurate. Bordwell and Thompson argue that after the many protests and boycotts of African-Americans after the

release of *Birth...*, many envisioned a black-controlled production firm that would provide an alternative perspective on race relations. In the latter part of the 1910s, a few attempts were made but these were more of certain positive images of black heroism during World War II or black comic stereotypes which were relegated to minor roles on programmes (Bordwell & Thompson, p.148).

After the making of *Birth...*, an African-American filmmaker known as Oscar Micheaux started making films with more positive representations of the black person. According to Jane Gaines, Micheaux was a pioneer in his style of filmmaking geared toward the black audience and his contribution to the medium was both in the silent era as well as the beginning of the 'talkies.' But it seemed that Micheaux's silent films rather 'spoke' volumes. As Gaines relates: silent melodrama also suited Micheaux's purposes because it tended toward the hyperbolic and the grandiose. It makes sense that a man who would want to homestead the vast plains of South Dakota would also want to fill the screen with the largest and most deeply felt images of black life (Gaines, 2001, p.9). Thus one could say that Micheaux's ideology in his filmmaking is what one would term 'black centrism'; that black people had their stories to tell; that they had struggles, dreams and aspirations like most people and these were some of the subject matters that needed to be highlighted in the making of the films. Telling a 'black' story from a 'black' point of view was what Micheaux's filmmaking was all about.

Ossie Davis, the well-known African-American actor discusses the reception of these films in the day more vividly: there were black people behind the scenes, telling our black story to us as we sat in black theatres. We listened blackly, and a beautiful thing happened as we saw ourselves on the screen. We knew that sometimes it was awkward, that sometimes the films behaved differently than the ones we saw in the white theatre. It didn't matter...We were comforted by that knowledge as we sat, knowing that there was something about us up there on that screen, controlled by us, created by us - our image, as we saw ourselves... (Weiss, 1998, p.4). Micheaux had limitations. Though he is said to have made over thirty films, he was hampered by financial constraints and technically speaking, his films were thought to lack sophistication in the areas of editing, lighting and acting techniques. Despite these shortcomings, he made films till 1948 and started as far back as 1920. He was indeed a pioneer black filmmaker and a man ahead of his time. For Micheaux, the film went beyond just a medium of entertainment, because he addressed

pertinent issues that affected the black person of his day. With a new art form barely twenty years old, he was prepared to fight against a racist ideology and, like an axe, began to chip at this representation with every film he made. This marked the beginnings of what became known as 'race movies'.

### **African Cinema - The Beginnings**

When certain scholarly enquiries are being made into African cinema, it brings up several questions. Even when researching 'African cinema' in books on world cinema or the history of cinema, very little is written in these anthologies on it. When looking at the table of contents of some of these books, you do not see Asian cinema, for example, but Indian, Japanese, and Chinese cinemas. Even though one can talk about European cinema, it is not seen as such, but British cinema, German cinema, French cinema, and the list goes on. The point is that 'African cinema' is being seen by the world to a large extent as 'one' cinema, and not different national cinemas as in the aforementioned cases. Historically, the African continent was divided into different language zones which were instituted at the Berlin Conference in the late nineteenth century. Thus, different sections of Africa were identified by the languages of their various colonizers which has remained so to date and was as follows 'Anglophone' - English speaking, 'Francophone' - French-speaking, and 'Lusophone' - Portuguese speaking. Now one can see that this somehow adds to the complexities in the definition of 'African cinema'; and with the colonial past of Africa makes the films of these different countries bring out a tapestry of woven cultures of the traditions of the settings in question vis a vis the imbibing of certain colonial past experiences. Filmmakers of various nations offer different flavours to their filmmaking that stem from their diversified cultural backgrounds, although they still fall under the main umbrella of 'African cinema'. It is in resistance to the colonial process and its effects that 'African cinema' was born -- an opportunity to announce itself as different from the cinemas of its colonizers. But the true definition of 'African cinema' appears to leave a trail of ambiguity. The following episode which took place in a film school in sub-Saharan Africa serves as an illustration:

- Student: 'What makes a film an African film?'
- Lecturer: I think from the beginning we should say that it's a story told by an African and directed by an African. All students protest.
- Lecturer: 'The story has been told from an African's point of view. That's the first thing. And now, what we come to is African film or cinema in its totality: we want to see an African director, we want to see an African crew, and mostly an African cast and an African setting. Then you can call it an authentic African film.' We want to make a distinction here. An African story is a story about Africa, that's straight and simple. A story about Africa.'
- Student: 'Okay, it's an African story. So if it is told by an outsider is it still to be an African story?'
- Lecturer: 'It's an African story told by a foreigner.'
- Student: 'But an African story told by an outsider is not an African story?'
- Lecturer: 'It's not so authentic...' (Jorgensen, 2001, p.119)

The above discussion illustrates some of the complexities in the definition of 'African cinema', for it is truly difficult to decipher sometimes whether the cast or the location or the director and crew or even just the story itself can best describe the whole film being African. The cinemas of Latin America and especially sub-Saharan Africa (both part of Third World cinema) in particular, have been used as vehicles to address social and political issues, which are 'ripe' for change in the different cultures. Teshome Gabriel proposes what he describes as three phases in Third World cinema in the areas of industry, theme and style. He categorizes them as follows: The first phase he terms the 'unqualified assimilation', which is the aping of Hollywood in style and presentation. The 'remembrance phase' is the second phase, which Gabriel describes as the propagation of cultural or traditional values in the film. The third, he terms the 'combative phase', which examines the issues of poverty, race, and other contemporary issues (Gabriel cited in Stam & Miller, 2000, p.299)

It is in resistance to the colonial process and other socio-economic effects that African cinema emerged -- an opportunity to announce itself as different from the cinemas of its colonizers. This is because now Africa is not colonized anymore. So, what combative or remembrance phase are

we still looking at in this 21st century? Are the issues of poverty and race our true aesthetic? Is it true that the culture of Africa is only seen in rural settings, stories of the subservient wife and overbearing husband? What about the projections and dreams of Oscar Micheaux, as to what in his case the 'negro' could aspire to be which D.W. Griffith could not imagine in the making of *The Birth...*? What are the dreams of the Africans in a dynamic culture without losing their identity? Can that not be the beginnings or rather alternate considerations to the African film aesthetics?

### **The Pioneer Filmmakers and the Rest**

Professor Tekpetey, in his article "Strategies for Subverting Post-Colonial Oppression: Early Literature and Cinema in Ousmane Sembene" describes him as: ... without doubt one of the best-known pioneer African filmmakers, justifiably nicknamed "Pope of African cinema." As a novelist, for a long time, he was overshadowed by more prestigious writers. However, with the camera, he quickly became an international figure. Only four years intervened between his first short films, *Borom Sarret and Mandabi*, which confirmed his talent and incontestable authority as a filmmaker, after the popular success of *La Noire de...* (*Black Girl*), the first full-length African film. Hailed as sub-Saharan Africa's first filmmaker, Sembene was said to use the film medium as the 'night school of my people' where he fused the genres of fiction and documentary to propagate his ideology in raising political and social concerns. He made films like *Borom Sarret, Mandabi, God's Bits of Wood, L'Harmattan, Taaw, Xala* and others. A host of other African filmmakers such as Med Hondo, Souleyman Cisse, Haile Gerima, Safi Faye and Sarah Maldoror (Ukadike, 1998, p.571), emerged after him.

Although these filmmakers followed in the close footsteps of Sembene, they each couched their niche in terms of style and presentation, but with the common ground of the use of African oral tradition and African film language. Renowned filmmakers (both Africans and those of African descent) have made and are still making films with aesthetic appeal and with content that is meant to represent them. How do we consider this representation as "sincere" and "unique" in relationship to the African culture? This paper will not pretend to address everything about the various cinemas in Africa, but more closely at the Ghanaian cinema as a national cinema in Anglophone Africa and how issues are being addressed visually and aurally.

### **History of Cinema in Anglophone Africa - Gold Coast/Ghana**

In most film books, those written by non-Africans and Africans alike, it is apparent from the various readings that filmmaking in Francophone sub-Saharan African countries gained more ground because France supported the production of many of the films. The different kingdoms of Africa did not have the faintest idea that the Berlin Conference of 1884 would spell the end of their cultural unity. The 'Scramble for Africa' as it is commonly referred to by historians, saw European powers like Great Britain, France, and Germany take slices of the continent to name it their colonies (Ukadike, 1994, p.29)

Ghana, formerly called Gold Coast, became one of such colonies of Great Britain, after having some initial contacts with the Portuguese as early as 1471 and later with the Danes and the Dutch in the early nineteenth century. The Gold Coast became a crown colony of the Queen of England in 1874. Ironically, that the birth of colonialism gained root after the end of the international slave trade (as colonialism had in its structure, marginalization and domination of a race very much like slavery). Among other reasons that historians have put forth, colonialism either consciously or unconsciously contributed to the cultural alienation of a majority of the African people. Diawara (1998, p.1) contends that:

To justify themselves morally, they [colonizers] argued that they had a duty to civilize Africans. Most of the pioneers who introduced film production to Africa used the same argument. They believed that distributing commercial films, such as those by Charlie Chaplin, would harmfully introduce Africans to film's powerful means of persuasion.

Instead of encouraging more entertainment films like those of Charlie Chaplin, among others from Europe and America, the British encouraged more propaganda films to be made in the colonies. In this way, the films were very much related to governmental and imperial interests. Thus, films were made in the various colonies with subject matters designed for Africans to assimilate into the European style of living. This marked the beginnings of African filmmaking. The notable documentary filmmaker, John Grierson, in a report written to UNESCO on the need for the locals to make films for themselves, caused a film school to be set up in the Gold Coast capital, Accra in 1949. During the same year, the Gold Coast Film Unit was reorganized with Sean Graham, as its new producer/ director. Graham recruited his first set of prospective

students to the Accra Film School -- six in all, four Ghanaians and two Nigerians. The training was to be for six months after which they would make their films. Similar programmes were created in other areas of British colonial Africa to make films to serve colonial and imperial interests (Diawara, 1993, p.1).

Between 1949 and 1953, the Gold Coast Film Unit produced some twenty-five films, which fell into two categories – feature and educational film productions. These films were commissioned by various government departments and ministries (Dadson, 1989). When Gold Coast got its independence in 1957, the country not only changed its name to Ghana (but, through regained freedom, changed identity in all facets; there was the need to do away with everything colonialist in ideology and all mass media-- most especially radio, television and cinema. The restructuring of Ghana was based on what was called the ‘Sankofa ideology.’ ‘Sankofa’ is an Akan terminology which translates as ‘returning to pick.’ This ideology is symbolized by the illustration of a bird with its neck turned backwards, and its beak turned downwards to pick eggs from behind it. In essence, Ghana was to go back and pick all that had real value to it before the advent of colonialism. The Sankofa symbol, though dating as far back as a hundred years, became most relevant at the time of Ghana’s independence. Nkrumah as the Prime Minister of a new nation saw the challenge of leading a people of diverse ethnic backgrounds and dialects and made his main objective one that fostered unity and helped the Ghanaians emancipate themselves from their colonial past.

Nkrumah, however, saw the importance of using mass media, especially audio-visual media in nation-building. The revival of ‘Sankofa’ during independence was his way of telling his people to go back to their culture - unity being one of such important factors of this culture. He took control of an already established infrastructure with radio and television, which he used to help educate and bring the nation together. Dadson (1989) asserts that the nation’s radio capacity was upgraded, so that information was transmitted 110 hours a week in English, French, Arabic, Swahili, Portuguese, and Hausa to large parts of Africa and Europe to spread his pan-African vision. In terms of the cinema, in the nation’s colonial past there had been some private cinema houses, which were grouped under the name West African Pictures. After independence, Nkrumah incorporated this group and the Gold Coast Film Unit and renamed it The State Film Industry Corporation (TGFIC), which later became the Ghana Film Industry Corporation (Dadson, 1989). As Diawara



(1993, p.1) tells us: "between 1957 and 1966, the Nkrumah regime built the most sophisticated infrastructure of film production in Africa, including editing studios and 16mm processing laboratories. Ghana did not have its directors yet, but foreign directors made several newsreels, documentaries, and propaganda films in Ghanaian studios. Also of critical note is the fact that after the overthrow of Nkrumah in 1966, all the films made during Nkrumah's era were confiscated with the reason being that they expressed the 'personality cult of Nkrumah (Dadson, 1989)

TGFIC) did churn out a few films after independence, but not enough considering the entire technical infrastructure under its possession. The corporation, under the directorship of Sam Aryeetey, one of the first graduates of the Accra Film School, however, was involved in co-productions with other European nations like Italy but not enough sole local productions. These productions did not do well at the box office. As Diawara puts it: "He [Aryeetey] set back the progress of film production in Ghana to where it had been when the Colonial Film Unit left" (Diawara, 1993, p.6). But other groups of filmmakers resisted this idea and followed Nkrumah's ideology of culturally affirmative filmmaking.

One of the filmmakers who revived homeland film production was Kwaw Painstil Ansah. Born during the colonial era of the Gold Coast in 1941, Ansah was raised by his multi-talented father (professional stills photographer, painter, musician and dramatist) and a mother who was a businesswoman. Educated under British rule, Ansah began grade school at the then Anglican Mission School in Swedru in the Western region of the country and later studied for his ordinary level examination in Accra, the capital city, while he worked at the then United African Company (UAC) as a textile designer. He subsequently travelled to England to study Theatre Design at London Polytechnic. It was there he developed an interest in film production. He later studied Performing Arts at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York from 1963 to 1965.

Though involved in advertising and theatre, Ansah's greatest dream was to make a story-based film, which would be Nkrumahist in ideology yet commercially viable. With this in mind, he founded another company called Film Africa Limited in 1977 towards this goal. He then began to work on his first film *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980). Ukadike best describes the essence of this film:

Filmed in English, *Love Brewed...* revolves around a typical Ghanaian neocolonial elite family and provides an accurate portrayal of prejudices and distinctions that have emerged in

African societies following their inundation with Western values. It is accurate in the sense that this story could just as well have taken place in any part of black Africa that has experienced imperial domination and independence from that domination. (Ukadike, 1994, p.131)

*Love Brewed in the African Pot* is a film that reveals the true discipleship of Ansaah to Nkrumah's cause. It is a simple narrative woven into a love story plot between father and daughter, where the daughter defies her father and marries the semi-literate boy and to top it all, marries traditionally as opposed to a Western-style wedding. A series of subplots designed to foil the otherwise happy relationship between the two leads the girl to end up in a mental institution. Vincent Canby describes the film's scenario as "one love match in which everything goes wrong" (cited in Ukadike, 1994, p.131). Through the father's characterization, Ansaah draws out the problems of Western acculturation and its effects on the African people, among which church weddings as against traditional weddings stand out. In one scene, we see the distraught father sitting down and daydreaming about the wedding he wishes for his daughter with the man of his choice, as against the traditional wedding with the 'wrong man'. Cinematically, the scene plays out as a dream and a flash-forward at the same time. Ukadike commends Ansaah's cinematic and narrative style of address in *Love Brewed...*: "in an exemplary fashion, Ansaah juggles satire, comedy, and melodrama in what at first seems to be a Western-derived narrative style, and then finally shifts to embrace the African oral narrative pattern" (Ukadike, 1994, p.134).

In *Love Brewed...*, Ansaah set the tone of his ideological address after the Nkrumahist style when he exposed the problems of the colonial era typified through the characterization of the elitist father in the story. The film shows especially for this father all that seems to have value to him as a 'son' of the colonial era, that he wishes to inculcate into his children and is prepared to sacrifice their happiness in favour of his idealist dream. Though this film has an all-black cast, the characterization of the father seems to be representative of the colonialist, and his attitude towards his daughter's choice of a husband echoes similar attitudes that the colonialists held of the native African during that era.

In *Heritage...Africa*, Ansaah creates a similar character as the father, in the person of Quincy Arthur Bosomfield, the protagonist of this story. This time, Ansaah goes back to invoke the historical past of the colonial era

with reenacted scenes from history woven into a fictional story. To suggest authenticity, Ansah uses real British and Ghanaian actors. Set in 1948, when Sir Winston Churchill was Prime Minister of Great Britain and King George VI, the monarch, *Heritage...* tells the story of a native African Quincy Arthur Bosomfield, who becomes the first African district commissioner of His Majesty's Gold Coast. As a graduate from the acclaimed Cambridge University in England, which sets him in a class above many of his countrymen, he becomes obliged to 'dance to the tune' of his bosses, which meant denouncing everything African, and keeping up with his peers of similar affectations. Named with a traditional African name- Kwesi meaning 'a Sunday-born', Atta 'part of a twin' and Bosomefi 'an illustrious ancestor is reborn', he anglicizes these names which thus becomes Quincy Arthur Bosomfield. He is given the 'privilege' of living in the European quarters with a servant waiting on him; he dresses meticulously after the fashion of his new 'peers' with all the gestures and even apes the British accent as well. As the film develops, we some encounters between him and his wife, Theresa, his mother, Kwame Akroma, the freedom fighter, not to mention his 'colleague' Patrick Snyder. Ukadike describes Bosomfield's character as being a true representative of Fanon's theory of the 'native intellectual' (Fanon, 1963, p.42). Bosomfield goes a step further in his bid to please his colonial superiors by literally 'sacrificing' his only son when he refuses to take care of his pressing health needs in favour of combating an uprising among the workforce, and thus the son dies from tetanus.

The central focus of the film is when Bosomfield's mother pays him a visit in honour of his new position and also to remind him of his heritage which is symbolized by the gift of an heirloom. He in turn gives this prized gift to the governor who praises it as "exquisite craftsmanship and an excellent piece of art". This seemingly harmless gesture leads Bosomfield into different conflicts with his mother, wife and the upcoming political party. These incidents coupled with an insightful dream he has regarding the heirloom set him on a different path to questioning his true identity, which leads to his untimely demise. Kwaw Ansah's style of filmmaking is backed by the ideology of Nkrumahism and 'Sankofa'. This is made quite evident in the two films that have won him both national and international acclaim. Others after him have made films, not toeing that sensibility per se, but touching on other pertinent themes that are of value to the Ghanaian, African and perhaps the world at large. Does it make those films not African?

### **The Contemporary Ghanaian Cinema**

Within the last thirteen years, a young Ghanaian filmmaker, Shirley Frimpong-Manso has made several films, which deal with the more contemporary issues of life but all shot in Ghana. Her cast and crew are all Ghanaian (later adding Nigerian casts), therefore, African. She has been 'attacked' for 'aping' Hollywood to some degree because of her contemporary themes and more cosmopolitan settings. The question one would wish to ask is if the film's aesthetic does not reveal an iconography or themes that resemble those in the neighbourhood of the Ousmane Sembenes, the Med Hondos, the Safi Fayes, the Omar Sissokos and the Kwaw Ansahs, does it cease to be African?

The well-known cliché, the world has become a global village, has come into full force here because there is a lot of exposure to other lifestyles because of the internet and mobile media and travel to other lands. These influence the mindset of many people which informs them on their behaviour and choices and decisions. Is it not cinema and other audio-visual media that would bring them out? There are positive and negative effects regarding how we use the medium of cinema, but would it seem out of place if African cinema is seen to be evolving? Samuel Lelievre, University of Natal, Durban, South Africa in his review of Frank Ukadike's *Questioning African Cinema: Conversations with Filmmakers* makes the following assertions:

Regarding the history of African cinema", Ukadike surely recognizes the diversity of African cinema as well as the fact that filmmaking practices by the youngest generation of African filmmakers differ from the mainly didactic and even political approach of the first and second generations of African filmmakers. However, he still tries to present a unified history of all these different filmmaking practices while saying at the same time that "the younger directors break the mould of traditional paradigm. (Lelievre, 2009)

Regarding a so-called "African film language," Ukadike argues that as a whole, his work addresses the impact of politics on film styles and video and television culture, while reciprocally delineating the role of cultural codes of cinematic expression in patterns of signification. The discourse also traces African cinema's preoccupation with culture and history, its influence on various aesthetic developments, and the widening scope of African cinematic representational patterns. It is here that the

discourse conceptualizes what constitutes African film language (Ukadike, 2002). So, issues of cinematic representations, and film language, among others, are what make the African film aesthetics continue to evolve. But at what cost to African cinema?

In the United States of America (USA), a young Ghanaian female director, Leila Djansi has also begun to make waves in the African cinema arena. She brings her main crew and equipment from the USA and hires one or two crew members in specialized areas from Ghana. Her films that have been shot in Ghana are *I sing of a Well*, *Sinking Sands* and *Ties That Bind* (in post-production) and the last two films have had lead characters in the persons of Jimmy – Jean Louis from Haiti and recently Kimberley Elise, a big name Hollywood actress. Her sets are 98% in Ghana and her theme and storyline are Ghanaian to a large extent. Is her film then Ghanaian/African?

### **Conclusion**

This article has posited that African cinema may have been initially defined by scholarly writings from the West as to how they saw the genre. But with the filmmaking practice in Ghana of Kwaw Ansah and Shirley Frimpong Manso, their ideological stance and style are quite different as they make films with cast and crew predominantly Ghanaian and mostly African. These two filmmakers have quite a body of work known both in Ghana and internationally. They cannot be pigeonholed in a category defined by the West, but their cinema is uniquely Ghanaian from different approaches. Therefore, Teshome Gabriel's theory of defining third cinema, under which African cinema falls does not limit the approaches to storytelling in addressing pertinent issues which are Ghanaian as well as African. The evolving culture within different cultures and countries within Africa fused with other socio-economic and other personal concerns will need these cinemas to break out from the Western sensibility of what African Cinema has been defined as. This paper has just spoken about two filmmakers. There are many more emerging, who are dealing with other pertinent issues and now it is for writers within Africa to rewrite the narrative which would reveal the different facets of storytelling which can be looked at either nationalistically or otherwise. So then African cinema must go beyond being either real or idealistic.

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