DOI: https://doi.org//10.63102/jaac.v8i3.20258

https://jaac-sca.org https://journals.uew.edu.gh/index.php/jaac ISSN 2637-3610

Volume 8 Issue 3 September 30, 2025

JOURNAL OF AFRICAN ARTS & CULTURE

FROM RESISTANCE TO RENEWAL: FRAMING THE NEW GENERATION OF AFRICAN INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE FILMS AS SIXTH CINEMA

Ramatu Mustapha Dadzie
Institute of Film and Television,
University of Media, Arts and Communication, Accra, Ghana

Corresponding email: ramatudadzie@gmail.com

CITATION: Dadzie, R. M. (2025). From resistance to renewal: Framing the new generation of African indigenous language films as sixth cinema. *Journal of African Arts and Culture*, *8*(3), 90-105.

Abstract

This paper proposes Sixth Cinema as a critical theoretical framework for understanding a new wave of Indigenous African filmmaking that transcends existing cinematic categories (First through Fifth Cinema). Drawing on two case studies, Gonda Sheje and Seven Doors, the paper argues that these films are grounded in African cosmology, ritual structure and spiritual ontology, which does not only centre on conflict or realism but also on healing, ancestral justice and land-based sacredness. Through analysis, the study highlights how these films employ symbolism, indigenous language as epistemology, cyclical temporality, and spiritual narrative logic to reclaim sovereignty over African cultural representation. By this, the paper contributes to decolonial film discourse and expands the intellectual vocabulary for analysing African cinematic expressions rooted in cosmological continuity and intergenerational memory. Ultimately, the study affirms that Sixth Cinema is not merely a new aesthetic movement but a paradigm of indigenous imagination and epistemic renewal.

Keywords: *African cinema, decolonisation, African culture, African storytelling, African cosmology*

1. Introduction

The intersection of African culture and postcolonial studies reveals a dynamic scholarly space exploring how colonial legacies continue to shape identities, governance, language, youth culture, literature, and epistemologies in post-independence Africa. At its core, postcolonial scholarship challenges Eurocentric frameworks and seeks to re-centre African perspectives, histories, and voices. Recent studies highlight not only the lingering impacts of colonial rule but also the innovative ways African societies negotiate cultural identity, reclaim indigenous knowledge systems, and resist neocolonial structures (Bhandari, 2022; Jefferess, 2008; Sultana, 2023). African societies continue to challenge cultural imperialism through artistic expressions,

literature, and language revitalisation. Language is central to debates around cultural authenticity, accessibility, and resistance, placing strong emphasis on valuing indigenous knowledge systems and challenging Western epistemic dominance. For example, by using cinema to reclaim African identity, filmmakers such as Ousmane Sembène and Med Hondo used cinema to restore African voices, languages, and traditions by rejecting Hollywood narratives and stylistic norms (Murphy & Williams, 2019). African directors embraced indigenous storytelling forms, oral traditions, and local aesthetics through which the use of African languages in film became an act of defiance against the colonial imposition of European languages (Felipe, 2019).

African cinema has evolved through several distinct phases, shaped by colonial legacies, political independence, technological change, and cultural transformation. Its development reflects a journey from foreign-controlled representation to a multiplicity of indigenous voices and global diasporic expressions. During the colonial period (pre-1960s), cinema was used as a tool for control. Colonial governments and missionaries used film to promote Western values and justify colonial rule (Ogunleye, 2003). Africans were portrayed as 'others', primitive, exotic, or passive, in anthropological or ethnographic films. Africans were not behind the camera; they were subjects of the colonial gaze and not the storytellers. Cinema became a tool for liberation and identity in the post-independence era from the early 1960s to the 1970s (Danso, 2023). This period saw the birth of African cinema by Africans and driven by the spirit of decolonisation, films were used as tools for nation-building, cultural recovery, and political critique (Wayne, 2001). However, African cinema experienced a crisis and transition in the 1980s through to the 1990s. The industry declined, with many African film industries struggling due to economic crises, lack of funding, and shrinking state support. Cinema became elite and festival-bound, often disconnected from mass African audiences. However, this period also saw experimentation with form and more critical reflection on post-independence failures (Dovey, 2015). Then again, the period between the 1990s and the 2000s experienced a video film boom and the emergence of popular and grassroots cinema. With the rise of affordable video technology, countries like Nigeria, Ghana, and Uganda saw a massive boom in video films. These films, often produced quickly and cheaply, reflected everyday life, religion, morality, urban life, and romance. The purpose and essence of video films were seen to be divergent from the already established African Cinema with its political and anti-colonial stance in adherence to the philosophy of Third Cinema (Haynes, 2011).

Since the 2010s, contemporary African cinema has been reaching out globally with diverse, dynamic, and digitally empowered narratives. Digital filmmaking has contributed to the lowering of barriers to entry into global markets with diverse cinematic voices emerging with themes like migration, gender, identity, trauma, and globalisation alongside the remarkable use of indigenous language as a dominant feature (Odoh et al., 2024). This development has generated a new body of African films that go beyond representation or resistance to reflect new forms of cinematic sovereignty, framed in indigenous, spiritual, ecological, and posthuman worldviews and integrating deeply rooted African philosophies, cosmologies, and storytelling modes, not just as cultural decoration but as foundational logic and purpose. The dominant rise of these new forms of African cinematic expressions suggests an emerging category of films that go beyond identity politics to reconstruct African indigenous worlds as sovereign, whole, and cosmically interconnected. Aside from reflecting a return to ancestral technologies as tools for future-building, these films offer cinematic spaces for African indigenous imagination outside of Western categories and beyond postcolonial trauma to spiritual futurity. Even though the characteristics of these new African film narratives speak to new forms of cultural reclamation and the affirmation of indigenous expressions, they are not captured by any of the preceding categories of the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth cinemas, leaving out a critical evolutionary phase of African cinematic practice undefined.

2. Review of Related Literature

To understand the concept of the Sixth Cinema, one must also understand the preceding cinema categories and how they are defined. The linear and numerical naming of cinema traditions align with their chronological emergence, which reflects the continuous social change to which they speak. To start with, the category of First Cinema refers to the commercial and mainstream cinema, associated with Hollywood films. Perhaps, its reference as 'mainstream' is due to Hollywood's dominance and hegemony over other film industries of the world. First Cinema approaches film production from a business point of view, perhaps staying faithful to the industrial underpinnings of early cinema during the industrial revolution (Grieveson, 2013). Even though it carries ideologies of its own, First Cinema prioritises profit by establishing and operating through well-structured commercial value chains in collaboration with large studios and corporations, extensive marketing strategies and profit-driven systems from production, distribution through to exhibition. As entertainment-oriented, it is built around classical narrative structures, with linear plots, clear distinction between heroes and villains and relies on emotional appeal designed for mass consumption (Musser, 2018). First Cinema typically upholds dominant ideologies such as capitalism, patriarchy, individualism, and colonial and imperial perspectives. It is well-known for promoting cultural hegemony by projecting the values of Western or the Global North across the world (Alexander et. al., 2015). First Cinema is often critiqued by filmmakers and theorists in the Global South for promoting escapism and consumerism while depoliticising audiences (Smyth, 2024). It is also viewed as aiming at erasing or misrepresenting marginalised cultures while colonising global imagination through media imperialism (Beasley & Brook, 2019).

Generally referred to as European art cinema or auteur cinema, Second Cinema is characterised as personal, symbolic, and psychological, and it is primarily associated with European independent filmmaking (Corrigan, 1998). It emerged as a reaction to the mass-market, commercially focused First Cinema, even though it is not explicitly political or revolutionary. As personal statements, Second Cinema centres around the personal vision of the filmmaker and director, emphasising artistic expression, psychological depth, and aesthetic experimentation and introspection (Zăvoianu & Ioanid, 2024). By way of non-commercially oriented, it is often subsidised by the state or film institutes, especially in post-WWII Europe. Second Cinema is described as expressing the aspirations of the Western middle class, the 'petit bourgeoisie' (Barnett & Allen, 2000). Second Cinema is sometimes seen as nihilistic, mystificatory and a deviation from reality with its narrative style that is non-linear, open-ended, symbolic or psychological. It normally deals with issues of identity, alienation, existentialism and social critique. However, while Second Cinema is viewed as resisting the commercialism of First Cinema, it often remains trapped within elite or bourgeois frameworks. It is sometimes seen as self-indulgent, appealing more to film festivals and academics than to ordinary people (Koluaçık, 2025). Second Cinema also seems to fail to engage with the political struggles of the masses and lacks revolutionary intent (Marzano, 2009; Buchsbaum, 2001).

Third Cinema is a revolutionary, political cinema that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, primarily in the Global South, as a tool of resistance against colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, and oppression. Unlike First and Second Cinema, Third Cinema is not about escape or individual expression; it is about collective liberation. Coined by Argentine filmmakers Fernando Solanas and Octavio Getino in their 1969 manifesto "Toward a Third Cinema", the manifesto called for a cinema that rejects both Hollywood's consumerist ideology and the apolitical individualism of art cinema. It aligned with anti-colonial movements and the broader decolonisation struggles in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Third Cinema adopts more of a political approach and supports anti-imperialist, anti-colonial, class-based struggles and cultural decolonisation while seeking to empower the audience while exposing oppression. From both political and cultural perspectives, Third Cinema becomes an enabler for resistance, a framework that gives political legitimacy to filmmakers who use cinema to fight imperialism, military regimes, oppression, and neocolonialism.

Fourth Cinema refers to cinema made by and for Indigenous peoples, distinct from First (commercial), Second (auteur), and Third (revolutionary/anti-colonial) cinemas. The term was coined by New Zealand filmmaker Barry Barclay (of Māori descent) to describe a sovereign cinematic space, one that centres Indigenous worldviews, values, languages, and storytelling traditions. To be defined as Fourth Cinema, it must be created by Indigenous filmmakers for indigenous communities and the world. It is a decolonial, cultural, and spiritual form of expression focused on restoring Indigenous voices, ways of knowing, and histories that have been suppressed or misrepresented by colonial and mainstream media (Bristowe, 2017). Even though not necessarily revolutionary in the Third Cinema sense, it asserts cultural autonomy and epistemic sovereignty. Fourth Cinema aims to reclaim representation by challenging stereotypical portrayals of Indigenous peoples in colonial/Western media. In affirmation of identity, it emphasises Indigenous philosophy, ancestral memory, oral tradition, land relationships, and kinship systems. In seeking cinematic sovereignty, it moves beyond being a subcategory of national cinema by Indigenous filmmakers defining their own aesthetics and purposes (Milligan, 2015).

Fifth Cinema, on the other hand, is a theoretical and evolving concept that builds upon the earlier categories of cinema (First through Fourth) and reflects contemporary, hybrid, and postcolonial realities, especially in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and among diasporic and intersectional communities (Kaur & Grassilli, 2019). It is not a universally agreed-upon term, but in academic and activist circles, Fifth Cinema is increasingly used to describe cinema that is postcolonial, pluralistic and hybrid that acknowledges multiple layers of identity in terms of gender, race, class, religion, and digital culture (Fan, 2014). It is often produced in post-independence or post-revolution contexts, where filmmakers are negotiating neocolonialism, globalisation, and internal contradictions. It focuses on personal, political, spiritual, and cultural complexity, especially among people living between traditional and modern worlds, or across cultures and borders.
Sixth Cinema emerges as a term in film theory that distinguishes itself by centering indigenous worldviews, cosmologies, and sovereignty in both form and content. It exists in philosophical and political contrast to the prior cinema categories - First through Fifth - which are historically grounded in industrial, artistic, revolutionary, or identity-based filmmaking traditions.

The distinction of Sixth Cinema from the other categories is that it centres on indigenous sovereignty. Apparently, films that incline towards Sixth Cinema have their narratives rooted in pre-colonial African cultures and societies and as such, look to represent ethnic cultures and traditions unaffected by colonial ideas of the clan states. Thus, due to its cultural peculiarities, it is made by, for, and about indigenous peoples and goes beyond representation to affirm self-determined epistemologies. Sixth Cinema employs cosmological narrative structures. This means that time is either treated as circular or ritual-based and not linear. Stories often include spirits, land, and ancestors as characters and nature is treated as a living, moral presence and not in the background. Land is law and not a location and it is treated as a relational being and not a property. As such, landscapes are considered sacred and part of storytelling logic were violating the land results in spiritual, moral, or narrative rupture. Another unique aspect of Sixth Cinema is the concept of healing, ceremony, and ancestral justice. Here, healing is often the core narrative logic and not the conflict. Films may include or mimic ceremonial structures while avoiding Western plot arcs. Characters often act as custodians, not just antagonists and protagonists. Sixth Cinema resists colonial epistemologies by breaking colonial frames of storytelling, which include pacing, language and aesthetics. It affirms language revitalisation, oral tradition, and spiritual knowledge systems. Six key characteristics that drive the narratives of Sixth Cinema are the use of symbolism; language as epistemology; non-linear time as mythic storytelling; spirits, ancestors and moral cosmology; land, space and the sacred; and healing as a core narrative logic.

3. Methodology

Thus, through a contextual analysis of some selected films, this study aims to categorise and define these newly emerging African indigenous language films as Sixth Cinema. The study does so in the context of two films, *Seven Doors* (2024) and *Gonda Sheje* (2013). As representatives of the newly emerging African cinematic practice, the films were selected based on how they enact a cinematic practice rooted in African metaphysics, mythic time, oral tradition, and indigenous language. To fully conceptualise how the selected films reflect the idea of a Sixth Cinema, the analysis of the films is framed along six key thematic areas driving such narratives.

The Six Thematic Areas

(i) Symbolism

This generally refers to the use of images, characters, objects, sounds, colours, actions, or settings to represent abstract ideas or deeper meanings beyond their literal sense (Melinte, 2024). In these films, symbolism is used both as a creative and cultural tool, allowing the film to encode complex histories, philosophies, and emotions in ways that resonate with African ways of seeing, remembering, and knowing. In effect, the use of symbolism in these films goes beyond the purpose of style, but is philosophical, political, and epistemological. The films embed cultural memory, critique, and imagination while remaining rooted in African ways of knowing and storytelling.

(ii) Language as epistemology

Again, language in these films is not just a means of communication, but a way of knowing, thinking, and understanding the world. In other words, the languages shape how knowledge is constructed, conveyed, and experienced in the narratives. The view that language carries the worldview, logic, and values of a culture means that the use of any particular African language in the films is not neutral. It is a political and philosophical act of knowledge production, and in the context, language becomes a means of reclaiming indigenous languages as valid and powerful systems of knowledge.

(iii) Non-linear time and mythic storytelling

Non-linear and mythic storytelling in these narratives refers to how their storytelling approach breaks away from Western linear, cause-and-effect plot structures and instead embraces cyclical, layered, and symbolic forms of narrative deeply rooted in African oral traditions, cosmology, and mythic consciousness. The film narratives are either presented in fragments or move back and forth in time or blend the past, present, and future. In effect, time is understood as interwoven with memory, ancestry, spirituality, and ritual.

Mythic storytelling draws on traditional African myths, legends, folklore, and spiritual beliefs that focus on cosmic struggles, moral lessons, or heroic journeys (Kremer, 2004). It is characterised by the sacred and symbolic nature of characters or settings, ancestral presence or intervention from the spirit world, as well as themes of transformation, destiny, ritual, or the sacred order of life. In these films, myth is not seen as fiction but as a mode of truth where it gives space for the non-human, the sacred, and the timeless to participate in the narrative.

(iv) Spirit, ancestors and moral cosmology

In the films, spirits, ancestors, and moral cosmology are not just cultural symbols; they serve as foundational elements of the storytelling that reflect African worldviews, ethical systems, and spiritual philosophies. These elements help shape how characters understand themselves, their communities, and their relationship to the universe. The films express a moral cosmology based on an understanding that the universe has a moral structure where every action has spiritual consequences and that harmony must be maintained between the spiritual, natural, and human worlds.

(v) Land, space and the sacred

In these films, the concepts of land, space, and the sacred are deeply intertwined and carry cultural, spiritual, historical, and political significance. They are not just treated as settings or backgrounds for action, but they are presented as living entities, carriers of memory, and central to identity, cosmology, and resistance. In essence, land is not passive property; it is made to be alive, ancestral, and often personified. Space, on the other hand, is treated not just as a physical entity but also as a ritual, symbolic, and coded with meaning, such as the representation of spaces like shrines, forests, rivers, and compounds to carry spiritual power. The sacred refers to that which is spiritually significant, ritually protected, or cosmologically vital. In addition, in these films, the sacred mediates between the human and the divine, the living and the dead.

(vi) Healing as a core narrative logic

Healing as a core narrative logic is the idea that the central driving force of these films is not just entertainment or dramatic conflict, but a journey toward restoration, balance, and reconciliation, at personal, communal, spiritual, and ancestral levels. Healing thus becomes both the theme and the structure of the story, often replacing Western plot conventions like triumph or individual resolution with collective and ritual renewal. Given that narrative logic refers to how a story is structured and drives its progression, these films follow the healing logic where the narrative begins with a broken character, sets the character on a journey, followed by a revelation by the character, leading the character to go through a ritual process, and after that, the character experiences a sense of restoration.

Significance

Granted that the films employ a narrative structure that emphasises indigenous African ceremony, relational ontology, spiritual infrastructure, indigenous language and cosmologies, this study is significant on multiple intellectual, cultural, and theoretical fronts. By conceptualising and framing the category of *Sixth Cinema*, it contributes a critical paradigm shift in African and global film theory. Its value lies in the fact that it fills a theoretical gap in cinema studies. While the evolution from First to Fifth Cinema has offered valuable lenses for analysing film movements across political, artistic, and postcolonial axes, none of them adequately capture the spiritual, indigenous, and cosmologically grounded cinematic expressions now emerging from parts of Africa. This study introduces Sixth Cinema as a distinct category that centres African indigenous ontologies, thereby addressing this critical absence in film theory. It also contributes to original thought to the global conversation on cinematic sovereignty, offering African-centered alternatives to Euro-American epistemologies. By reclaiming African indigenous worldviews in film, this study affirms that certain African films, such as *Seven Doors* and *Gonda Sheje*, are not just cultural outputs, they are expressions of African metaphysics, ethics, and cosmology while highlighting how these films reject colonial narrative frames, linear Western time, and secular logics in favour of ritual, rationality, ancestral justice, and spiritual truth. This contributes to decolonial knowledge production, positioning cinema as a tool not just for resistance, but for healing, remembrance, and futurity. Again, by reinforcing language and storytelling as epistemologies and showing how indigenous languages in film serve as systems of knowing, healing, and invoking, this study advances the argument that language is not just a medium, but an epistemic force and storytelling is not only a linear entertainment, but a ceremonial technology. Furthermore, by providing a framework for future African film criticism, this study sets a foundation for critically examining other African films using the six key attributes of Sixth Cinema: symbolism, language as epistemology, non-linear time, spiritual cosmology, sacred space, and healing while encouraging scholars, critics, and filmmakers to identify, create, and teach films that align with indigenous cinematic logic. Moreover, by highlighting Sixth Cinema as by, for, and about African indigenous communities, the study affirms the legitimacy of African directors' reclaiming agency over their cultural images, languages, and storytelling structures and advocates for epistemic sovereignty in creative production, outside of Western categories and market expectations.

4. Analysis and Discussions

Framing Seven Doors and Gonda Sheje as Sixth Cinema

To fully conceptualise how the selected films reflect the idea of a Sixth Cinema, one must first examine the sites of the productions from which the main arguments will be made. The film *Seven Doors* (2024), directed by Femi Adebayo, tells the story of Adedunjoye, a humble man in love with his wife and two children. As he is of royal lineage, he is nominated to take up the mantle of kingship and become the King of the Illara Kingdom of Yoruba. Uninterested in the offer, Adedunjoye refuses. After being severely persuaded by his wife and family members, he accepts and becomes the King, yet his accession to the throne is met with opposition from some members of the royal court who seek to make his reign an unhappy one. Soon after being crowned, the Kingdom of Illara begins to experience turmoil with troubles fermenting from the least expected places. After consulting the Chief Priest, King Adedunjoye is directed to 'open seven doors', meaning, to marry seven wives in order to appease for the wrongs done by his forefathers eons ago. Already married to the woman he loves, Adedunjoye is confronted with the continued misfortunes befalling his kingdom, including the death of his beloved daughter and the threat of losing the love of his wife. King Adedunjoye finally makes a decision that takes him through a journey of sacrifice, betrayal, courage, ancestral connections, and self-realisation through spiritual encounters.

The film *Gonda Sheje* (2013), directed by Leonard Kubaloe, tells the story of Gonda, a mischievous troublemaker in the Khagnawu village in Dagbon, who is seen as a burden to his community. In an effort to reform him, Bajeh, a respected hunter, is tasked with mentoring Gonda and teaches him the ways of hunting and survival. However, Bajeh himself is facing a devastating crisis; the powerful river god has taken his wife after she inadvertently curses an old woman, who happens to be the guardian spirit of the Earth. Gonda's recklessness leads him into danger when he, too, disrespectfully utters a forbidden swear word against the earth goddess. As punishment, he is cursed, unable to drink water. Determined to rescue Bajeh's wife and free himself from the curse, Gonda and Bajeh embark on a perilous quest. With the guidance of the earth goddess, they discover an ancient relic in the form of a bangle that grants them the strength needed to face the river god. In a confrontational encounter, Bajeh wins the fight, courtesy of the powers from the bangle, and saves his wife. Through this journey, Gonda matures into a responsible and capable individual, while Bajeh's faith and perseverance are rewarded.

(i) Symbolism

All three films are deeply embedded in symbolic storytelling that conveys layered meanings through cultural, spiritual, and mythological signifiers. The films use symbolism not as decoration but as a narrative backbone, reflecting the beliefs, fears, and values of the cultures and communities they represent. For example, in the film Seven Doors, the seven-part narrative structure is presented in a serial form, with each episode titled Door Threshold, Door Jamb, Door Frame, Door Lock, Door Swivel, Door Peephole, and Seven Doors, respectively. The form of titling serves as layered symbols that mirror both the psychological evolution of King Adedunjoye and the structural unravelling of his destiny. Each door metaphor captures a stage in his journey, from resistance to fate, to tragic acceptance, and finally to confrontation with spiritual legacy. With the literal meaning of a door threshold as the entry point into a room or a new space, it represents initiation, the beginning of Adedunjoye's royal calling, and crossing the threshold symbolises stepping into destiny, responsibility, and irreversible change. Thus, the threshold becomes something sacred, linked to rites of passage that signal a liminal moment for Adedunjoye, who is no longer a common man, but not yet a king. Literally, the Door Jamb is the vertical sides of a doorframe that hold the door in place. However, the symbolic title reflects the structures that support or restrict authority and represents the institutional tensions the new king faces, from corrupt chiefs to palace resistance.

As the jamb metaphorically holds the door upright, King Adedunjoye must uphold justice and order amid pressure. With the literal meaning that refers to the outer structure that shapes a door, Door Frame suggests the frame of consequence, where Adedunjoye begins to understand the historical sins of his lineage. This history frames the entire palace's reality, a haunted legacy rooted in ancestral bloodshed, symbolising the inheritance of structural guilt, shaping the king's fate. The Door Lock, a mechanism that controls access, either security or entrapment, symbolises moral dilemma and entrapment in tradition. Adedunjoke is advised to marry six more wives to break a curse, and in this instance, finds himself and his first wife, Amaka, in an emotional imprisonment. The lock thus suggests the conflict Adedunjoke faces as to whether to secure tradition or break free to forge a new path. The Door Swivel, which in its literal meaning is the hinge that allows a door to swing, is made to represent transition and chaos. The arrival of the six wives marks a shift to a palace in disarray, emotional instability, further implying a back-and-forth motion, indicating Adedunjoye's wavering leadership and internal conflict. The Door Peephole, literally, is a small opening through which one can look without opening the door. In the context of the narrative, this is made to suggest a limited perception, that is, an impasse of truth, but not with full understanding. King Adedunjoke begins to see consequences but cannot confront their full depth. Here, the episode ends with a confrontation with the god Esusu. The "peephole" now becomes a symbol of clarity, a narrowing of fate into a focused divine reckoning. Suggesting that full entry into resolution requires direct spiritual engagement, not just ritual compliance.

Symbolism equally plays a key role in the narrative of the film Gonda Sheje, which deepens its narrative, reflecting indigenous Dagbanli cosmology. For example, water, in its representation in the film, signifies life, sustenance, rebirth and punishment. Gonda is cursed and cannot drink water after disrespecting the Earth goddess. His inability to drink water and the frustrations he encounters as a result of that emphasise the idea of water as a fundamental life force. Being denied it symbolises the disconnection from life. The curse also reflects the close connection between moral and spiritual law, where the film emphasises that disrespect to sacred forces leads to natural imbalance. Gonda's eventual redemption and rehydration symbolise ritual cleansing and maturity, a metaphorical rebirth into adulthood and responsibility. The earth goddess represents a moral order. The goddess first appears as an old woman whom Gonda curses, triggering the story's central conflict. Disguising her divinity in the form of an old woman also reflects the idea that divinity is hidden in everyday life, which goes to warn against arrogance and disrespect. Her curse also represents the earth's ability to impose consequences when balance is disrupted. In the same vein, the earth goddess embodies justice and nurture, upholding cosmic balance. Gonda and Bajeh discover an ancient relic that empowers Bajeh to fight the river god. Symbolising ancestral legacy, the bangle represents the connection to ancestral spirits, which, unlike guns or swords, is a ritualistic relic, implying spiritual purity, not brute force, that defeats chaos. The quest to find the relic mirrors the cultural retrieval of forgotten traditions and wisdom.

The character Gonda himself stands for the trickster archetype. Gonda starts off as reckless and disrespectful, bringing misfortune on himself and others. Like Eshu or Ananse in Asante folklore, he disturbs order but creates space for transformation (Koga & Acheampong, 2024). His arc from disobedience to wisdom is a symbolic initiation, common in oral traditions. In other words, his errors and eventual growth allow viewers to reflect on moral development and respect for nature. He thus acts as a catalyst that unearths the hidden truths in chaos that start the journey. Bajeh's symbolises a trial of faith where his journey to reclaim his wife symbolises atonement and the testing of his moral endurance.

Characters function not just as individuals but also as mythic figures. Bajeh is more than a hunter. He is a spiritual guide or gatekeeper. Gonda is not just a boy; he is a symbol of broken continuity, a vessel for intergenerational healing, and the spirits act as guardians of cosmological balance. Thus, the narrative positions these figures as spiritual archetypes, not just social characters.

(ii) Language as Epistemology

The films use indigenous language as epistemology. The use of local languages, and in the case of these films, Yoruba and Dagbanli, carries ritual knowledge, moral codes, and ancestral memory, all spoken in forms that include proverbs, incantations, and invocations. In both Femi Adebayo's *Seven Doors* and Leonard Kubaloe's *Gonda Sheje*, indigenous Yoruba and Dagbanli languages are used not merely for dialogue or cultural setting, but they function deeply and deliberately as epistemology, that is, ways of knowing, sensing, and interpreting the world (Greco, 2017). In *Seven Doors*, the Yoruba language is not just a medium of communication; it is treated as the vessel of traditional knowledge systems, spiritual codes, and moral reasoning. The film demonstrates how language carries a worldview. Throughout the film, Yoruba proverbs are used to convey moral truths or spiritual warnings and condense complex truths into poetic, memorable forms. For example, at the initiation of King Adedunjoye, when he enters the sacred shrine, he is met with the chief priests who tell him the secrets of the village spirits in proverbs. The proverbs are encoded worldviews that are not explained directly, but require Adedunjoye to interpret and understand them based on shared cultural logic. Likewise, the meaning of the names of characters in the films emphasises the role they play and how their names help audiences decode the flow of the narrative. For example, the name Adedunjoye roughly translates into 'the crown takes care of this together'.

In an apparent way, King Adedunjoye resolves the problems his ancestors left unsolved many years before him. Similarly, the name of the character Kotinnyabga in the film *Gonda Sheje* means 'strength and deep knowledge about something,' which is also a cultural appellation to praise someone in the Dagbon tradition. In effect, the name as used in the film becomes an invocation, which is not just praise singing but evoking spiritual awakening, affirming Kotinnyabga's essence and lineage. Furthermore, the essential use of names in such contexts signals that meanings lie beyond literal translation; they must be understood culturally, not just linguistically. Through dialogue, indigenous moral reasoning is revealed in such films. Conversations between elders, spirits, or between the protagonists and guides demonstrate an oral-based logic where truth emerges from context, tone, gesture, and cultural memory. For example, in *Gonda Sheje*, when Gonda expresses his distrust of the mysterious old woman who, passing by, instructs them to go and see the spirit sentinel, Bajeh explains that she is the earth goddess who helps people in need. "She is a natural teacher. She helps people, says Bajeh. Gonda complains, "But look at how we are suffering", and Bajeh replies calmly, "As for that, be patient". Again, this brief yet significant dialogue demonstrates that questions are often answered with riddles, stories, or silence, reflecting a tradition where knowledge must be earned through reflection. The films contain moments where language is used in curses, blessings, and prayers, all of which have performative force and are ceremonial and fate-determining. For example, in lifting the curse she placed on Gonda, the Earth Goddess makes the pronouncement that, "My grandchild, you have been very thirsty. You can now drink water till the end of your life. But as to the word sheje, it will be a lesson for you and your colleagues who are like you". Such language is not a poetic flourish; it is spiritually consequential.

Thus, in an epistemological way, language in this instance is not just representational; it creates, binds, heals, and judges. While Gonda can drink water afterwards, he still suffers disorientation any time he mentions the curse word 'sheje'. In the frame of myth and cosmology, as demonstrated by the two films, causal relations that are spiritual, not scientific, are pronounced through language. For example, the consequences of breaking taboos, like Gonda did. This demonstrates that language does not just describe reality, it constructs a particular cosmological system.

(iii) Nonlinear Time and Mythic Storytelling

Unlike Western cinematic narratives, which often follow a linear cause-and-effect progression, *Seven Doors* structures its episodes through a nonlinear, mythic, and spiritually cyclical form of time. The storytelling rhythm reflects African indigenous conceptions of time, which are often

ritualistic, ancestral, and layered, rather than historical or sequential (Babalola & Alokan, 2013). This temporal structure serves the film's deeper purpose, not simply to entertain or inform, but to guide the viewer through a spiritual initiation, a journey across seven moral and cosmological thresholds. *Seven Doors* abandons Western linear temporality in favour of a cyclical structure, where the end of one door becomes the spiritual groundwork for the next. This reflects African traditional views where past, present, and future exist simultaneously, often mediated by the ancestors and cosmological forces (Parratt, 1977). Throughout the series, characters, particularly King Adedunjoye, experience dreams, flashbacks, and visions that disrupt the present and bring buried truths into the open. These visions are not memories, but revelations, accessing a deeper layer of time, ancestral time or spiritual time. In African metaphysics, dreams are not illusions. They are access points to truth, and time within them is as real as waking life (Chimakonam & Ogbonnaya, 2021).

Again, King Adekunjoye's path through the seven doors mirrors a mythic-ritual structure, common to many African initiation narratives, that follows the separation from ordinary life, confrontation with ancestral, moral, or spiritual tests and finally a transformation and reintegration with knowledge gained (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2022). Each door corresponds not just to a physical location or story episode, but also to a spiritual level and a threshold of consciousness. In the film, ancestors and the dead frequently intervene or appear in ways that collapse the boundary between eras, while the consequences of ancestral sins or blessings extend into the present. Some characters seem to exist across time, fulfilling cyclical roles. For example, the three guardian spirits of the Illara royal household. This reflects the African idea of ancestral time. The dead are present, not past. Time is not a linear history but a cosmic continuum. The film employs a strategy of layered time and fragmented narrative, where rather than unfolding chronologically, the series presents its episodes with time jumps and backtracking, without explicit signposting and scenes making sense only later when spiritual truth is revealed. The structure of the narrative feels mythic and fragmented, echoing oral storytelling traditions, where stories are told in parts and return to motifs. This storytelling approach requires viewers to interpret symbolically, not literally, by drawing meaning from pattern, repetition, and resonance.

In the film *Gonda Sheje*, nonlinear time is demonstrated through temporal layering and echoes. For example, the film shifts between past wrongs and present consequences, such as the experiences of Gonda and Pagnaa with the Earth Goddess, dreams and waking reality, visions and actual events, such as that of Bajeh's dream of seeing his wife drown and later finding out that she had been held captive under the lake. These shifts often occur without explicit transitions, forcing the viewer to interpret time as ritually and spiritually layered. Time in *Gonda Sheje* is thus spiral-shaped, not linear. Events loop back in cycles of reckoning and transformation. The narrative also demonstrates Dagbanli cosmology that holds ancestors as not relegated to the past but as active agents in the present. In the film, Gonda's actions awaken ancestral consequences. Bajeh's dreams or visions are treated as communication across timelines. And elders speak in ways that collapse past and present. *Gonda Sheje* reflects a worldview where the past is not behind but rather is beside. The film's pacing follows moral and spiritual cause-and-effect, rather than physical sequencing. Events unfold as Gonda errs, learns and repents. Time stretches in moments of moral crisis and collapses in moments of ritual clarity. For example, Gonda goes through several tribulations until he comes to the realisation that he has erred and is eventually redeemed through the acceptance to go and help Bajeh to seek the relic bangle at the behest of the spirit sentinel. In effect, time bends to ritual and transformation in the narrative. *Gonda Sheje* follows the hero's journey as initiation and this reflects African initiation mythology, where transformation requires disruption, trials, and reconnection with ancestors and land. Gonda's journey begins with disorder or moral failing, as Gonda is seen as a nuisance. At the stage of separation, he is mentored by Bajeh and drawn into trials where he experiences spiritual and communal reckoning. At the last stage, Gonda goes through a transformation of rebirth of identity.

(iv). Spirits, Ancestors, and Moral Cosmology

The film *Gonda Sheje* is deeply embedded in African spiritual philosophy and uses spirits, ancestors, and moral cosmology not just as narrative devices but as foundational elements of its worldview. These elements intertwine to construct a rich, symbolic, and decolonial cinematic language that aligns with indigenous ontologies and, by extension, *Sixth Cinema* aesthetics. Spirits are presented as custodians of moral order. For example, the Earth goddess and river god are central supernatural agents. The Earth Goddess, for uttering a forbidden word, curses Gonda and Bajeh's wife, who is taken by the River God due to spiritual disrespect through speech. Fundamentally, spirits in *Gonda Sheje* are moral agents and not villains. Their actions reinforce sacred laws, emphasising that human behaviour has cosmic consequences. Unlike Western portrayals of spirits as ghosts or horrors, these are guardians of balance and justice. The curse of not being able to drink water symbolically reflects a cut-off from nature's blessing, a common trope in African spiritual narratives where misalignment with the sacred leads to physical and existential crisis (Goduka, 2000).

In a broader cultural context of other African cosmologies, spirits often act as intermediaries between the divine and the human. The Earth Goddess resembles *Asase Yaa*, who enforces sacred taboos in Akan cosmology (Harvey, 2015). Again, the film presents ancestors as echoes of history and redemption. For example, the ancient bangle that helps Bajeh defeat the River God is a relic from the past. The Goddess guides them on a journey that involves invoking ancient power. The film thus references ancestral knowledge as a key to resolving present crises. The bangle is more than a magical object; it symbolises ancestral memory and intergenerational empowerment. *Gonda Sheje* posits that healing the present requires reaching back to the past, both in wisdom and in spirit. Ancestors are not depicted directly, but their influence is embedded in symbols, objects, and rituals. Redemption and maturity in the film are framed not by individual strength, but by ancestral alignment. The moral cosmology of the film is framed around sacred ecology and communal ethics. For example, the land is portrayed as alive and sacred, represented through the Earth Goddess. Gonda's journey to redemption is not personal alone, but collective, tied to Bajeh's family and the spiritual peace of the land. Actions like uttering forbidden words or disrespecting spirits carry severe spiritual consequences. The moral universe of *Gonda Sheje* is relational, not legalistic. That is, it is based on balance and reciprocity, not punishment. Water, earth, and spirit are interconnected. To curse the earth is to offend an entire ecological order. The curse functions as a moral pedagogical tool, and it teaches through suffering to bring about transformation.

Similarly, the film *Seven Doors* explores deep themes rooted in Yoruba cosmology, indigenous African spirituality, and ancestral justice, making its use of spirits, ancestors, and moral cosmology central to both plot and philosophy. These elements are not incidental but define the arc of King Adedunjoye's journey from apathy to confrontation with cosmic history. With the spirits as enforcers of ancestral law and cosmic order, they orchestrate a series of tragedies: the death of the King's daughter, the curse of the seven wives, and the attack on the King's son. The spirit Esuru and later Esusu are revealed as malevolent or wrathful forces linked to past crimes. The chief priest acts as a medium between the spirit world and the palace.

Spirits in *Seven Doors* are not allegorical. They are real, feared, and active. Their actions manifest the cosmic consequences of moral deviation. However, the gods are guardians of justice, punishing not just individuals but entire bloodlines for unresolved sins. These spirits challenge Western notions of linear morality by invoking ancestral accountability, where sins can echo across generations. The film presents the ancestors as an inherited burden as well as the path to redemption. For example, the priest reveals that Adedunjoye's ancestor killed seven wives for longevity. Therefore, the current king is forced to repeat this number symbolically, not through killing, but through marrying, and the seven doors -metaphor aligns with seven past sacrifices and the need to restore balance. Ancestors in this film represent both cursed inheritance and the potential for spiritual correction. Adedunjoye is trapped in a karmic loop that mirrors his ancestor's actions. However, unlike his forefather, he eventually resists the full enactment of the

curse. The king's confrontation with the spirit Esusu at the climax is both a confrontation with the gods and with his ancestral shadow. The narrative is framed in a moral cosmology where justice is beyond human law, in that the gods punish not based on civil wrongdoing, but on cosmic disorder. For example, Amaka's resistance to polygamy leads to emotional strain, but the gods' expectations supersede individual feelings. The king is caught between communal order, spiritual law, and personal morality. The moral system is not secular or rationalist; it is spiritual and holistic, where even unintentional violations like the killing of a spirit or the denial of ritual carry severe consequences. The king is a sacral figure, not just a political one, and his life must reflect harmony with both ancestral and divine expectations. Tragedy strikes when the king acts emotionally, banishing the wives and ignoring spiritual protocol.

(v). Land, Space and the Sacred

In *Gonda Sheje* land, space, and the sacred are not passive settings but living agents. These elements are essential not just thematically, but philosophically defining the film's alignment with Sixth Cinema, which centres indigenous sovereignty, cosmological storytelling, and land-based knowledge systems. The film presents land as a living, moral entity. For example, the Earth goddess is angered by disrespecting the land with forbidden words. The goddess is first encountered as a vulnerable old woman, which is a test of reverence to the sacred ground, while the entire kingdom's balance is dependent on respect for the Earth and its taboos, demonstrating land as not just a backdrop, but also sacred kin, imbued with spiritual agency. The curse of dehydration symbolises the Earth withdrawing sustenance when disrespected, a reflection of moral ecology. The land responds to human speech and action, making moral transgression a violation of the Earth's body.

The film demonstrates that the relationship to land is not ownership, but relational stewardship. Harmony must be earned through behaviour. The film presents land as a sacred space and mythic geography. For example, Gonda and Bajeh undertake a ritual journey to find a relic bangle hidden in a distant, sacred space. Their encounters with spiritual forces take place at riverbanks, shrines, and forest thresholds, all liminal zones. The final confrontation with the river god happens within a spiritually charged terrain, not a neutral battleground. Thus, sacred geography in *Gonda Sheje* follows a mythic structure. Specific spaces hold ritual power and transformational potential. For example, rivers, forests, and caves are not wilderness; they are embodied archives of memory and ancestral interaction. The journey through space is also a spiritual initiation; the characters move closer to ancestral truth as they travel deeper into sacred terrain. In alignment with Sixth Cinema, the landscape becomes narrative, a teacher, a trial, and a participant. The journey is ritualistic, not heroic.

Characters do not conquer space; they submit to its moral logic. The idea of the sacred forms the structuring force of the narrative. For example, all crises in the film, such as curses, loss and confrontation, are framed as spiritual disturbances. The Earth goddess and River god are gatekeepers of sacred balance, not supernatural 'others'. Healing only comes through ritual alignment with divine expectations, not through force or reasoning. The sacred is not separate from daily life; it is immanent in speech, action, and space. Gonda and Bajeh's journeys are structured by ritual codes, not personal ambition or logic. The bangle itself is a spiritual artefact, representing ancestral approval and metaphysical empowerment. In *Gonda Sheje*, the sacred determines the structure of time, space, and justice; it is ontological, not aesthetic. *Seven Doors,* on the other hand, treats land as sacred inheritance and spiritual witness. Ilara Kingdom is not merely a geographical domain. It is ancestral territory, governed by Ifa divination and spiritual authority. The gods and ancestors reside in the land, enforcing consequences for past violations. For example, the former king's sacrifice of his seven wives. In the film, the land holds historical memory. It remembers the past sins of Adedunjoye's ancestor and enforces justice accordingly. The land is not neutral. It is a participant in the moral fabric of the kingdom, acting through the gods and priestly intermediaries. This reflects a Yoruba cosmological model, where land (Ile) is sacred, sentient, and embedded in communal ethics. The king is commanded to knock on seven

doors, with each door functioning as a metaphysical trial. The palace becomes a spiritual crucible; it houses not only human conflicts, for example, between Amaka and the six new wives, but also ancestral curses and divine interventions. Sacred spaces such as the shrine of the chief priest, forests, and ancestral zones are treated as thresholds between the visible and invisible worlds.

Framing the sacred as narrative and ontological authority in the film, the gods control life and death, intervening directly in palace affairs. Esusu, the spirit Adedunjoye must confront, is not just a mythical figure but the materialisation of ancestral injustice. The priest serves as a cosmic interpreter, bridging sacred will and royal responsibility. The sacred in *Seven Doors* is not occasional; it is structural. The king cannot govern politically without spiritual legitimacy, a core principle in traditional African kingship. When Adedunjoye violates sacred balance, for example, dismissing the wives and ignoring ancestral prescriptions, tragedy ensues, which signals that the sacred overrides state power. In the Sixth Cinema sense, the film deconstructs secular leadership and replaces it with sacral kingship, a common thread in African indigenous cinema where governance is intertwined with spiritual law.

(vi) Healing as Core Narrative Logic

The theme of healing in *Gonda Sheje* is not merely a subplot or emotional outcome. It is the core narrative logic that drives every transformation, ritual, and journey in the film. Healing is conceived in a holistic, indigenous sense, not just physical recovery, but spiritual restoration, moral correction, and communal balance. This reflects the values of Sixth Cinema, where storytelling often centres on repairing ruptures between humans, spirits, ancestors, and land. Gonda begins as a reckless boy, seen as a burden to the village. He disrespects the Earth goddess and is cursed, unable to drink water. His journey to lift the curse becomes a transformative spiritual pilgrimage. However, Gonda's curse is not just punishment, but a spiritual diagnosis, a sign of imbalance between self and sacred order. In this instance, healing requires more than forgiveness; it demands learning, suffering, and submission to sacred authority. The inability to drink water, a universal symbol of life, marks his estrangement from the life force, and his healing symbolises maturity, humility, and reintegration. Beyond the self-healing process of Gonda, community healing is also reflected through Bajeh's family and the collective restoration. Bajeh's wife is taken by the river god, a divine response to her disrespect of an old woman, the Earth goddess in disguise. This event sets the community into spiritual disarray, making the healing of one household a community matter. Bajeh, although a respected hunter, is shown to be vulnerable. He must depend on faith and sacred guidance to restore balance. Healing here extends beyond individual pain. It is relational. The retrieval of Bajeh's wife and the lifting of curses are necessary not just for personal peace but for cosmic equilibrium.

The community's fate is entangled with its members' spiritual alignment, reinforcing an indigenous moral ecology. Beyond the communal healing, there is also the healing of the cosmos through ancestral and elemental reconciliation. For example, the journey to retrieve the sacred bangle is a mythic return to ancestral power. The confrontation with the river god is not a war of vengeance but a ritual battle to restore order. The Earth goddess ultimately guides Gonda, and sacred forces, not imposed by human will, must guide Bajeh, showing that healing. From these instances, the film's portrayal of a cosmological disorder, that is, the disrespect to land, misuse of language, and broken ancestral rituals, all contribute to spiritual disease. Healing is, therefore, achieved through obedience to divine instruction, reverence for land and spirit and collective humility. The climax of defeating the River god using the bangle is not framed as a violent triumph, but a restorative act rooted in sacred legitimacy. Structurally, the narrative of the film demonstrates healing as narrative rhythm and moral instruction. The structure of the film mirrors a ritual healing cycle. It begins with transgression, followed by the curse and revelation, then by the pilgrimage to sacred sites, and then a ritual action where they face the river god with ancestral tools and finally to restoration, where the curse is lifted, Bajeh's wife is saved and Gonda matures. This cycle reflects how healing is not just thematic but formational, shaping the story's rhythm and meaning. Healing in the film *Seven Doors* also moves from the self to the cosmological

space within which the film's narrative is enacted. Beginning with healing the lineage, King Adedunjoke atones for ancestral sin. Adedunjoye's forefather murdered seven wives to prolong his life. This curse is not buried in history; it remains active, disrupting Adedunjoye's reign with tragedy, including the death of his daughter. In this instance, healing here is genealogical; the present king must atone for sins he did not commit. Thus, the narrative positions healing as transgenerational justice, a restorative process that involves confronting ancestral memory, not forgetting it. The requirement to symbolically "knock on seven doors" by marrying six additional wives is a ritual repetition intended to balance past transgressions with restorative symmetry. The narrative continues with healing the family, where reconciliation and communal balance are achieved. Amaka's emotional suffering as she is forced to share her marriage and the consequences of disharmony when Amaka and the new wives conflict shows the torment inflicted on family members. Healing the family is shown to be foundational to healing the kingdom. The conflict between wives becomes symbolic of the king's fractured obligations between love, duty, and divine instruction.

The king's initial rejection of the new wives and later reinstatement shows how healing is nonlinear and requires sacrifice, humility, and communal sensitivity. Healing the kingdom is also demonstrated through political and spiritual rebalancing when Adedunjoye institutes justice and punishes corrupt chiefs. Nevertheless, justice is insufficient without ritual healing. The kingdom remains plagued by spiritual unrest until divine rites are completed. *Seven Doors* shows that political healing, that is, the restoring of order, is only one layer. The true healing is ritual and cosmic, requiring reconciling with Ifa, the gods, and ancestral expectation. The king's journey is thus sacral, not secular. Thus, healing in Sixth Cinema is land-based and spirit-centered, challenging Western cinema's obsession with psychological resolution or revenge. Here, healing means restoring cosmic alignment, a return to spiritual integrity, not just moral clarity. From reluctance to confrontation with the divine, Adedunjoye undergoes a spiritual rebirth. He must face Esusu, the spirit embodying the ancestral curse. Adedunjoye's healing is not passive; it is earned through ordeal. His confrontation with Esusu represents a symbolic death and rebirth, consistent with indigenous initiation models. Healing requires courage to confront the divine, self-emptying, that is, the humility to follow instructions and the emotional, marital, and moral sacrifice. Just like in *Gonda Sheje*, *Seven Door* treats healing as a narrative structure. The film's episodic format from Threshold to Peephole metaphorically mirrors a ritual progression of healing. Starting from awakening, it moves to initial confrontation, then diagnosis, denial and crisis, and then breakdown, revelation, to ritual resolution and finally, healing.

5. Conclusion

This study argues that *Sixth Cinema* emerges as a necessary and distinct framework for understanding a new generation of African indigenous cinematic expressions that extend beyond the previously defined categories of First to Fifth Cinema. Through a close thematic and philosophical analysis of *Seven Doors* and *Gonda Sheje*, the study reveals that these films enact a cinematic logic grounded in African metaphysics, relational cosmology, spiritual law, and ancestral continuity. They centre not on linear conflict but on healing, ritual, and cosmic justice, rejecting colonial and Western cinematic forms in favour of indigenous modes of narration, time, and language. These films do not merely represent African life; they reclaim indigenous ontologies through their narrative structure, character archetypes, use of local languages as epistemology, and the sacred relationship with land and spirit. Rather than imitating external cinematic traditions, they assert sovereign imagination, rooted in oral tradition, spiritual truth, and communal ethics. As such, they reflect not only a cinematic shift but a cultural reclamation: one that deserves recognition as Sixth Cinema, a form defined by ancestral futurity, mythic temporality, spiritual realism, and cosmological resistance. Thus, this study concludes that *Sixth Cinema* is not simply a new label, but a vital conceptual tool that recognises the unique narrative, spiritual, and epistemic frameworks emerging from indigenous African cinematic practices; a cinema that does not just tell stories, but heals history, reclaims space, and reimagines sovereignty.

Reference

Alexander, J., Savigny, H., Thorsen, E., & Jackson, D. (2015). Introduction: marginalised voices, representations and practices. In *Media, Margins and Popular Culture* (pp. 1-12). Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Asamoah-Gyadu, J. K. (2022). Initiation ceremonies/incorporating/identity formation. International Handbook of Practical Theology, 379.

Babalola, S. F., & Alokan, O. A. (2013). African concept of time, a socio-cultural reality in the process of change. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *4*(7), 143-147.

Barnett, L. & Allen, M. (2000). Social class, cultural repertoires, and popular culture: The case of film. *Sociological Forum*, *5*, 145-163.

Beasley, C., & Brook, H. (2019). Responses from 'the margins'. In *The cultural politics of contemporary Hollywood film* (pp. 269-291). Manchester University Press.

Bhandari, N. B. (2022). Resistance and postcolonialism: A critical review. *Journal of Political Science*, 92-99.

Bristowe, J. C. (2017). *Indigenising the screen, navigating the currents of change, a vision of fourth cinema* (Doctoral dissertation). The University of Waikato.

Buchsbaum, J. (2001). A closer look at third cinema. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television*, *21*(2), 153-166.

Chimakonam, J., & Ogbonnaya, L. U. (2021). *African metaphysics, epistemology and a new logic*. Springer International Publishing.

Corrigan, T. (1998). Auteurs and the New Hollywood. *Film Theory: Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies Volume II*, 82-102.

Danso, A. (2023). Vestige of colonialism? Propaganda in Ghanaian cinematic texts. *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, *40*(3), 319-331.

Dovey, L. (2015). Through the eye of a film festival: toward a curatorial and spectator centered approach to the study of African screen media. *Cinema journal*, *54*(2), 126-132.

Fan, V. (2014). Performing Nationality: The Fifth Generation as an" American" Transnational Cinema. In *American and Chinese-Language Cinemas* (pp. 189-203). Routledge.

Felipe, M. A. (2019). Filmic counter-narratives by the Guarani Mbya: decolonial acts of institutional disobedience in indigenous cinema. *MATRIZes*, *13*(1).

Grieveson, L. (2013). What is the value of a technological history of cinema? *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, *6*, 1-8.

Greco, J. (2017). Introduction: What is epistemology? *The Blackwell guide to epistemology*, 1-31.

Goduka, I. N. (2000). African/indigenous philosophies: Legitimizing spiritually centred wisdoms within the academy. *African Voices in Education*, 63-83.

Harvey, M. (2015). Medial deities and relational meanings: tracing elements of an Akan grammar of knowing. *Journal of Africana Religions*, *3*(4), 397-441.

Haynes, J. (2011). African cinema and Nollywood: contradictions. *Situations: Project of the Radical Imagination*, *4*(1).

Jefferess, D. (2008). *Postcolonial resistance: Culture, liberation and transformation*. University of Toronto press.

Kaur, R., & Grassilli, M. (2019). Towards a fifth cinema. *Third Text*, *33*(1), 1-25.

Kremer, J. W. (2004). Mythic storytelling: re-envisioning stories from the north. *ReVision*, *27*(1), 19-31.

Koga, K., & Acheampong, D. (2024). *A Folktale in Akan: The reason why Ananse lives on the ceiling* (Doctoral dissertation). Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

Koluaçık, İ. (2025). First, second, and third cinemas in the context of Cinema-Audience Relations. In *Audience Sociology and Consumer Behavior in the Film Industry* (pp. 233-256). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

Marzano, N. (2009). Third cinema theory: New Perspectives. *Kinema: A Journal for Film and Audiovisual Media*.

Melinte, O. (2024). Cinematic symbolism: Delving into metaphor within film. *Colocvii teatrale*, *14*(1), 229-239.

Milligan, C. (2015). Sites of exuberance: Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema, ten years on. *International Journal of Media & Cultural Politics*, *11*(3), 347-359.

Murphy, D., & Williams, P. (2019). Ousmane Sembene. In *Postcolonial African cinema* (pp. 50-70). Manchester University Press.

Musser, C. (2018). When did cinema become cinema? Technology, history, and the moving pictures. *Technology and Film Scholarship. Experience, Study, Theory*, 33-49.

Odoh, A., Ogungbe, F., & Olagunju, A. T. (2024). Digital Transformation in sub-Saharan Africa's Film Industry. *Journal of African Films and Diaspora Studies*, *7*(4), 165.

Ogunleye, F. (2003). Video films in Ghana: An overview. *African Video Films today. Manzini (Swaziland): Academic Publishers*, 1-22.

Parratt, J. (1977). Time in traditional African thought. *Religion*, *7*(2), 117-126.

Smyth, J. (2024). *The importance of diverse representations in cinema: Modern films challenging the status quo in Hollywood* (Doctoral dissertation, Institute of Art, Design+ Technology).

Sultana, S. (2023). From post-structuralism and Marxism to postcolonial cultural subversion and political resistance against the once-colonized. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, *5*(4), 47-63.

Wayne, M. (2001). *Political film: The dialectics of third cinema*. Pluto Press.

Zăvoianu, A., & Ioanid, A. (2024). Experimental film between art and technology. *SEA: Practical Application of Science*, *12*(35).

Call for Paper
The Journal of African Arts & Culture (JAAC) is an open access online platform for scholarly dialogue relating to African Arts and culture. It is committed to publishing and disseminating high quality scholarly materials that demonstrate the power and significances of the arts and culture in general in African society past and present. This journal with interdisciplinary scope publishes progressive research in the field of ancient, contemporary and modern African Arts and Culture. It covers issues in both performing and visual arts; accepts original scientific papers, critical essays, interviews, exhibition and book reviews, critiques, short reports amongst others.

JAAC welcomes article submissions at any time. JAAC is published four times a year: March, June, September, and December.

Send all inquiries about your article submission to:
jaac.journal@gmail.com OR
jaac.journalsca@gmail.com
For more information on submission guidelines visit **https://jaac-sca.org**