

African Cinema AFR

Course Description:

African Film/Cinema, which is a broad topic, has taken on a new concept and new image within the last few decades. The term 'African Cinema' generally refers to films in Africa south of the Sahara because the Mediterranean countries, including Egypt, have a more advanced film industry. We will limit our studies to films made in Africa south of the Sahara.

African Cinema provides an alternative route to our knowledge of Africa. The images of Africa have been created from our 'knowledge' of Africa. This 'knowledge' comes from various sources—literature, history, geography, etc. Many images may have been distorted for various reasons. One such distortion in colonial writings describes Africa as a continent without history or culture. Because of such distortions, Africans themselves, through written documentation and film, have begun to correct these stereotypes. African cinema also provides a medium of engendering or fostering discussion among artists, teachers, scholars, film directors, audiences, film critics etc, thus enriching and (re)defining our thoughts and ideologies both on traditional and modern Africa. One cannot, however, ignore the roles played by the rest of the world in the political and economic production of films in Africa. In this course, we will examine films in francophone and anglophone west Africa (pre-colonial to post-colonial).

Course Objective: The course, which is a general introduction to culture in Africa, seeks to develop in students an understanding and appreciation of African cinema as an alternative approach to studies on Africa. It allows students to increase awareness and engage in effective, meaningful dialogue on religion, education, politics, socio-economic, gender relationships and representations, traditional values, the role and status of women in the society, and moral issues that pertain not only to Africa but also to the West. Attention will be paid to issues concerning film making practices in Africa, and how language is used to address issues in the films.

Required Texts: Available at the University Co-op

- Armes, Roy. *Studies in North African Film*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004, ISBN: 0-253-21744-X

-Diawara, Manthia. *African Cinema: Politics and Culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992 , ISBN : 0-253-20707-X Paperback Edition

-Ukadike, Nwachukwu Frank. *Black African Cinema*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, ISBN 0-520-07748-2

- Smith, Pamela Olubunmi, *Efúns etán Aníwùrà, Ìyálóde Ègbá: Two Yorùbá Historical Dramas*. Translator. (Author: Akinwumi Isola). Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press Inc., 2005

Required films: Thunderbolt, Efunsetan Aniwura, Moolade, Xala, and Faat Kine

Grading Policy:

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| Attendance and Participation: | 10% |
| First Term Paper | 30% |
| Group Term Paper | 40% |
| Group Oral Presentations | 20% |