

**EXAMINING THEMES AND STYLE IN KWAW
ANSAH'S CREATIVE WORKS**

BY

HELEN TSOTSOO ARYEE

(10246324)

**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO UNIVERSITY OF GHANA LEGON,
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE
AWARD OF MPhil THEATRE ARTS DEGREE.**

JULY, 2015

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research, and that no part of it has been represented elsewhere with all references duly acknowledged.

.....

HELEN TSOTSOO ARYEE

STUDENT (10246324)

Date:



SUPERVISORS

.....

DR. SAMUEL BENAGR

.....

DR. GRACE ADINKU

Date:

Date:

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on some films of one of Ghana's foremost filmmakers - Kwaw Ansah whose works have won many international awards. Ansah has a number of films to his credit as well as plays, commercials and documentaries. In spite of his internationally acclaimed status as a legendary filmmaker, much has not been done in terms of a critical and an in depth analysis of some of his well-known films such as *Love Brewed in the African Pot*, *Heritage Africa*, *The Love of AA* and *Suffering to Lose*. Therefore, this work sets out to critically examine the thematic concerns and styles as used in the selected films above with the view to highlighting the contributions of Ansah to the Ghanaian film industry, on one hand, and on the other hand, that of Africa as a whole. This research adopted the qualitative method of study involving focus group discussions for a controlled number of participants who viewed the four films. It was followed by an in-depth analysis and discussions on the styles and themes as espoused in the four films. The theoretical framework of this study has underpinnings from the Post-Colonial theory. This theory was used to explore the personal style of Ansah and how he creatively manipulates the themes in his works. Some of the findings of this work are that Ansah is a conscious filmmaker whose thematic concerns border on socio-political issues ranging from widowhood rights to the marginalization of such women. Other subject matters he tackles include family, friendship, and cultural advocacy. Furthermore, some of his films deal with issues of cultural alienation as well as the acculturation of western culture. The study also found that the filmmaker employed different techniques like the use of lights, shots, music and camera movements to convey all the above messages. One major contribution of this work to existing knowledge is the attempt at bringing to the fore Kwaw Ansah as a pioneer filmmaker who has consciously imbibed African mores and values in his filmmaking art.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated foremost to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, I dedicate it to Kwaw Ansah, in celebration of his artistic ingenuity and immense contribution to filmmaking in Ghana.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To God be the glory.

I appreciate the efforts of those who contributed in one way or the other towards the successful completion of this thesis.

My deepest appreciation goes to my supervisor Dr. Samuel Benagr whose stringent guidance ensured that I stayed focused from the beginning of this work to the end. My sincere gratitude also goes to Dr. Grace Adinku, my second supervisor, for being thorough in proofreading and making suggestions to better shape this thesis.

A very special thanks goes to the entire Aryee family for their love, support and encouragement throughout the entire process. To all the members of my focus group discussions, I thank you for your views and time you spent on my research.

For all those who have contributed in diverse ways towards the completion of this work, especially my colleagues Maxwell, John Paul, Phaniel, Martin, Shelter, Obiyaa, Beatrice, Bless, Sena, Atsu, Benedictus and Abigail, may God richly bless you in all your endeavours.

HELEN TSOTSOO ARYEE

JULY, 2015.

INTEGRI PROCEDAMUS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT	3
1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	4
1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.....	4
1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY	4
1.6 METHODOLOGY.....	5
1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY	5
1.8 OUTCOME OF THE STUDY.....	5
1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY	6
CHAPTER TWO.....	7
LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 OVERVIEW	7
2.2 STYLE AND THEME.....	7
2.3 THEMATIC APPROACH TO AFRICAN CINEMA	10
2.4 THE DEVELOPMENT OF FILMMAKING IN ANGLOPHONE AFRICA	12

2.5 ORALITY AND AFRICAN CINEMA	14
2.6 THE DEVELOPMENT OF FILMMAKING IN GHANA.....	16
2.7 POSTCOLONIALISM AND AFRICAN FILMMAKING	19
2.8 AUTEUR THEORY	25
2.9 ANSAH: IN THE MILIEU OF AFRICAN FILMMAKING	25
CHAPTER THREE	30
3.1. METHODOLOGY.....	30
CHAPTER FOUR	35
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF SELECTED FILMS	35
4.1 INTRODUCTION	35
4.2. <i>HERITAGE AFRICA</i>	35
4.2.1. Introduction.....	35
4.2.2 Cultural Alienation and Its Repercussions.....	37
4.2.3. The Dilemma: Christianity and African Traditional Religion	46
4.3. <i>LOVE BREWED IN THE AFRICAN POT</i>	49
4.3.1. Introduction.....	49
4.3.2. Acculturation of Western Culture	51
4.3.3 Consequences of our Choices	53
4.4 <i>SUFFERING TO LOSE</i>	54
4.4.1 Introduction.....	54
4.4.2 The Plight of Widows: losing rights through rites.....	56

4.4.3 Love and Gratitude.....	61
4.5 <i>THE LOVE OF AA</i>	62
4.5.1 Introduction.....	62
4.5.2 Love and Dialogue for Peace	63
4.6 STYLE	64
4.7 CONCLUSION	73
CHAPTER FIVE	76
SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION.....	76
5.1 INTRODUCTION	76
5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS	76
5.3 FINDINGS.....	78
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS	79
5.5 CONCLUSION.....	80
REFERENCES	81
LIST OF SELECTED FILMS	84
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS	85
APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE	86
APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE	87
APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE	88
APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE	89
APPENDIX E: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION RECRUITMENT ADVERTISEMENT.....	90

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Ansah is a dramatist, musician, a set designer as well as a playwright, with two plays to his credit; *Mother's Tears* and *The Adoption*. Ansah studied film production at R.K.O Studios. In 1977, he started his own production company, Film Africa Limited, based in Accra. This gives an idea as to how he started filmmaking and how his background goes a long way to influence his works.

Ghana's involvement in film making can be traced to the colonial period in the 1940's. Between the 1940's and the 1960's, the Ghana Film Industry Corporation could boast of possessing the best equipment in sub-Saharan Africa (Sutherland Addy 265).

The Ghanaian film industry, from the past, has enjoyed great success in movie productions. For instance, Kwaw Ansah of Film Africa (his production company), whose two films, *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980) and *Heritage Africa* (1988) have won many awards cannot be ignored in African filmmaking history. Also movies of comparable quality to Ansah's films have been produced in the 1980s and 1990s. Some of these include *Diabolo* (1990), *Baby Thief* (1992), *Harvest at 17* (1992), *Kanana* (1992), *Fatal Decision* (1993), *Matters of the Heart* (1993), *Mama Mia Italiano* (1995) and *Indecent Favour* (1998) (Aveh 284-291).

Since the 1980's, contributions by notable filmmakers like Kwaw Ansah, Leila Djansi and Shirley Frimpong –Manso cannot be ignored. Kwaw Ansah's great strides in movie production in Ghana culminated in him being the first Ghanaian filmmaker as well as the first Anglophone African to win the top prize at FESPACO (Pan African Film Festival of Ouagadougou) in 1989.

Kwaw Ansah, one of Africa's leading filmmakers was born in 1941, in Agona Swedru, Ghana. He is a dramatist, musician, set designer as well as a playwright, with two plays to his credit: *Mother's Tears* and *The Adoption*. In 1977, he started his own production company, Film Africa Limited, based in Accra. His first motion picture, *Love Brewed in the African Pot* was released in 1980. The film won a number of international awards including the Oumarou Ganda prize at the 1981 FESPACO held in Burkina Faso. His second fiction film, *Heritage Africa*, was made in 1988 and the following year, it received the "Etalon de Yennenga" prize at FESPACO. For the purpose of this work, I will be considering four of his films, *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980), *Heritage Africa* (1988), *The Love of AA* (2010) and *Suffering to Lose* (2011).

Researchers such as Birgit Meyer have done some work on Ansah. Meyer in her article, "Popular Ghanaian Cinema and "*Heritage Africa*"" , discusses the emergence of popular cinema industry in Ghana and how the movies mirror the struggles of urban life and how people dream about a modern way of life (Meyer 93-114). Another scholarly appraisal of his work is by Kofi Anyidoho in, 'The Struggle for Liberation Is Not Yet Won: Kwaw Ansah's *Heritage Africa*'. This article discusses the premier of the movie at the Banquet Hall of the State House in Accra on 23rd October 1988. Anyidoho comments on the life and death of Quincy as well as the performance of actors and asserts that, the film is "in the final analysis, Africa's continuing fight for liberation and selfhood" (318).

Francoise Pfaff's interview with the filmmaker, 'Conversation with Ghanaian Filmmaker Kwaw Ansah', looks at Ansah's biography, his experience as a filmmaker, and how he funds his films. Pfaff further discusses both *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980) and *Heritage Africa* (1988) briefly (186-193).

A published interview by Kofi Anyidoho, 'On Ghanaian Theatre and Film', focuses on a workshop Ansah attended in Zimbabwe for filmmakers, as well as the Ghana Film Industry Corporation and the situation of filmmaking in Ghana. It also discussed the life and training of the filmmaker and the difficulties associated with filmmaking.

The above works have tackled different issues such as how Ansah funds his films and his experiences. However, this research seeks to study the themes in some of Ansah's films, his style as a filmmaker and the relevance of his films to society.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Due to supposed "superiority" of the Western gaze as Barlet puts it, African filmmakers' first act "would be to assert the authenticity of their perception of their own reality" (8). This assertion is true and is clearly evident with most first and second generation African filmmakers whose themes revolve around how they perceived themselves. He views this as "an attempt by filmmakers to go back to their roots in their region of origin" (Barlet 9). And because the filmmaker has the power of film, he uses this medium to tell the story of his people.

Ansah's works revolve around the re-establishment of the African identity and culture with little or no reference to imperialist's influences. He is the first Ghanaian filmmaker to attain international recognition and with the availability of literature on other filmmakers worldwide, it is therefore not out of place to devote this research to his works.

Ghanaian cinema is not well known due to the fact that, not much has been written on the subject. A number of scholarly works have been done on Ansah by Birgit Meyer, Kofi Anyidoho and Françoise Pfaff. In as much as some works have been done on the

filmmaker, they have focused on other areas such as, his experiences as a filmmaker, how his career in filmmaking commenced and financing for his films. Other works also devote a little attention to *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980) and *Heritage Africa* (1988). Nothing, however, has been written on *The Love of AA* (2010) and *Suffering to Lose* (2011). This research focuses on these four films in relation to their themes and style and will contribute to literature in the field.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To know Kwaw Ansah and his place in the Ghanaian film industry.
2. To identify the themes in his films and their relevance to society.
3. To identify the techniques he employs in his films.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to appreciate the man and his creative works by looking at his themes and style, it is important that the right questions are posed. The research hence asked the following questions that guided the study and consequently addressing the objectives of the research.

1. Who is Kwaw Ansah and how can we understand his works?
2. What are the main issues he focuses on in his films?
3. How are the issues in the films presented?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

In spite of the fact that Ansah has gained international recognition and won many awards and made Ghana proud, many people still do not know his works. The study presents an

in depth analysis of a selected number of his works. The study probed into the themes and style of the four films which have not been answered by previous studies of the filmmaker. The study would therefore be an additional scholarly work on the filmmaker and a supplement to existing literature in the field. The study also outlines some challenges that the filmmaker faces in the industry.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

Based on the objectives of the research, a qualitative research design was employed. In this study, the researcher analysed selected films based on their themes and the style of the filmmaker. Other sources consulted included books, articles from journals both online and print relating to the filmmaker and his works. There were Focused Group Discussions of four of his movies. *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980), *Heritage Africa* (1988), *The Love of AA* (2010) and *Suffering to Lose* (2011) are the films that were used for the study.

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Ansah's creative works include plays, commercials, documentaries and films. The focus of this research, however, was on his films, out of which four were selected: *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980), *Heritage Africa* (1988), *The Love of AA* (2010) and *Suffering to Lose* (2011). The focus was on the analysis of their themes as well as the style of the filmmaker.

1.8 OUTCOME OF THE STUDY

This study offers additional perspectives to the filmmaker and the issues he presents, as well as their relevance to society.

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter one introduces the research and gives the background to the study. It also states the objectives, research questions, significance, scope and the expected outcome of the study. Chapter two reviews all available literature on the study. Chapter three discusses the methodology. Chapter four provides the analysis and interpretation of the selected films based on their themes as well as the style of the filmmaker. Chapter five concludes all the discussions for the entire study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 OVERVIEW

Chapter one discussed the background to the study. The focus of this chapter is to situate the study within the existing works around and about the filmmaker in question; thus, reviewing available literature. This enabled the research to appreciate and negotiate appropriately the research questions posed in Chapter One.

This chapter is a discussion of relevant literature on filmmaking in Africa. In order to put the review into perspective, the chapter is discussed along the following sections; style and theme, thematic approach to African cinema, the development of filmmaking in Anglophone Africa and the development of filmmaking in Ghana. The concluding section focuses on post colonialism and filmmaking in Africa. It also locates Kwaw Ansah as a filmmaker in the history of Ghanaian filmmaking.

2.2 STYLE AND THEME

As we shall see in subsequent sections in this chapter, scholars who have researched on Ansah have looked at him and his work not from the following angles; that is style and in depth analysis of his themes. That is why the design of this study to focus on his technique and subject matter becomes relevant amidst the works already done by the likes of Meyer, Ukadike and Diawara.

Filmmaking is a collaborative art form which requires a great deal of expertise. The art of filmmaking in Africa can be described as a direct and inevitable result of colonialism. In as much as African filmmaking is a direct result of colonial encounter, it can be argued that, African films have been Africanised to communicate African reality.

Bordwell and Thompson in *Film Art: An Introduction*, define style as “the repeated and salient uses of film techniques characteristic of a single film or a group of films” (481). From the above definition, style may be understood as the use of certain techniques in making films. The style of a filmmaker can, therefore, be determined by a number of elements that he or she employs. Such elements include but are not limited to, the use of lights, shots, music, camera movements and patterns of colour in the frame.

Mise-en-scène is extended to all aspects of what is put in or left out of a shot, in other words, what is located in a shot. The scale of shot or closeness of shot is a technique used in film construction that determines style. The closeness of shot is measured by how much of the height of the actor is in the foreground of the shot visible within the frame.

The type of take, be it a long take or a short take, and the type of cut (fast or slow) can determine the style of a film as well. Lighting is an aspect of style that creates atmosphere or mood and signifies meaning on the screen as well. If it is dark and shadowy there might be a feeling of uneasiness or fear, as in a thriller or horror. If the lighting is bright it connotes happiness. The filmmaker can use lighting to draw attention to a person or object and in the same manner, hide them (*Film Education 2*).

Barry Salt also states other basic units of film construction which refer to the relation of shots to each other within scenes. These are reverse angles, which describe shots taken in the opposite direction to the preceding shot in the scene. Point of View shots, which are shots taken exactly in the direction a character is looking in the preceding or succeeding shot of the screen. For camera movement, there can be panning, tilting, tracking and zoom (126).

The narrative pattern of film is another aspect of determining the style of a story. It is important to consider how stories are presented to relay meaning. The stories can be told in the basic straightforward way or narrated in voice over by someone. They can also be presented as a series of flashbacks told to an audience. Again, they can be presented as documentaries, with personal narration, or a mixture of flashback and narration.

Another aspect on style has to do with sound. Different elements of sound can be identified in film. Sound (diegetic) which is part of an action like noise from wind, screeching cars, music from a stereo or footsteps etc, can be identified. Dialogue, another aspect of sound can be used to give clues as to the thought of characters and their actions. Sounds (non-diegetic) like music and sound effects are also added to create mood or atmosphere after filming. All these forms of sound are effective in creating ambience.

In determining the style of a film other areas are taken into consideration. These are the use of language, costume, time and space, rhythm and the environment- whether a film is shot in a studio or on location. These factors when combined tend to give shots the kind of appeal they have.

Film is a very powerful and persuasive medium which can easily be used to indoctrinate, educate as well as entertain and as such, issues presented are of great relevance. The theme of a film implies, “a subject of a film or its basic idea” (Katz 1382). A filmmaker’s choice of theme(s) goes a long way to make audiences appreciate or denounce this work of art. How the narratives are presented and why or how certain issues are presented is such an important task. What themes are presented in the films and how are they effectively presented? Many first and second generation African

filmmakers conceive, through their themes, a means of reacting against western imperialism. Souleymane Cissé notes this succinctly:

African filmmakers' first task is to show that people here are human beings and to help people discover the African values that can be of service to others. The following generation will branch out into other aspects of film. Our duty is to make people understand that white people have lied through their images. (qtd. in Hamblin 8)

2.3 THEMATIC APPROACH TO AFRICAN CINEMA

Due to the complex nature of African culture as well as colonial influences and economic might, there are many approaches to the study of African cinema. For the purpose of this study, I would be considering the thematic approach to African cinema.

Diawara in his book, *African Cinema: Politics and Culture* (1992) offers three broad thematic areas for African film appreciation. These three categories are the social realist narratives, the historical colonial confrontation, and the return to the source (159). The three groupings offer broader thematic areas of discussing African cinema. He argues that the thematic diversity of African filmmaking “produces a typology of narratives that compete for the spectator’s attention” (140).

The first thematic grouping Diawara argues is from films that draw their themes from current socio-cultural issues. “The films in this category draw on contemporary experiences, and they oppose tradition to modernity, oral to written, agrarian and customary communities to urban and industrialized systems, and subsistence economies to highly productive economies” (141).

Films in this category include Ousmane Sembene’s, *Le Mandat*, (1968) and *Xala*, (1974) Cheick Oumar Sissoko’s *Nyamanton* (1986), Souleymane Cissé’s, *Baara* (1978) and

Finye (1982). Other films in this category include *La vie est belle* (1986) by Mweze Ngangura and Benoit Lamy. Diawara argues that films of the social realist tendency communicate with their African spectators through melodrama, satire and comedy in their narratives. They also draw from existing popular forms of art like dance, song, oral tradition or popular theatre. He again asserts that, films from the social realist tendency form a break from the intellectualist tradition of African cinema but rather rely on populist themes that everyone can relate to.

The second movement, the “colonial confrontation” is marked by themes that erupt from confrontation that lead to conflict between Africa and the colonialist. These kinds of films he argues are controversial but African audiences glorify them. It positions them to view African resistance against colonialism and imperialism. These films according to Diawara

... are conditioned by the desire to show African heroism where European history only mentioned the actions of the conquerors, resistance where the colonial version of history silenced oppositional voices, and the role of women in the armed struggle. (152).

For Diawara, films in this category deal with the redefinition of Africa’s history from an African point of view, of liberation from colonial cultural influences and the reassertion of the place of Africans in global history. They also take up the themes of the role of women in pre-colonial Africa and the existence of a dynamic African culture. This colonial confrontation movement is represented by films like *Heritage Africa* (1988) by Kwaw Ansah, *Sarraounia* (1987) by Med Hondo and *Camp de Thiaroye* (1988) by Sembene Ousmane and Thierno Sow.

The third tendency proposed by Diawara, involves films that “return to the source” which in Akan is known as “Sankofa” literally meaning go back and take. Souleymane

Cissé's *Yeelen* (1987) is considered the best example of this category. *Wend Kuuni* (1988) by Gaston Kabore is also considered in this category. Dani Kouyaté is another filmmaker whose two films, *Keita...The Heritage of the Griot* (1996), and *Sia...The Myth of the Python* (2001) fall under this umbrella. Diawara believes that there are three reasons why filmmakers turn to this trend. Firstly to avoid censorship with political messages, secondly, the search for African traditions that solve contemporary issues and thirdly, to discover a new film language. Diawara again argues that the “underlying desire behind the making of these types of films is to prove the existence of a dynamic African history and culture before the European colonization” (160).

In summary, Diawara presents three broad thematic areas of African films, firstly films that draw their themes from current socio-cultural issues. Secondly, films that confront colonialism and lastly, films that depict Africans with history and culture before colonisation. In as much as I agree with Diawara's handling of themes, it is slightly different from how I proceeded with my work as I tried to understand how through his technique, Ansah explored his themes. The themes I discussed in Chapter four may well be viewed as falling under Diawara's groupings above. However, my approach in discussing the themes in Ansah's works is moving away from the strict adherence to the three-way grouping Diawara offers.

2.4 THE DEVELOPMENT OF FILMMAKING IN ANGLOPHONE AFRICA

The art of filmmaking has been popularised as a result of Colonialism in Africa. This is due to the fact that film was used as a potent medium by the colonial administration to spread their propaganda. The legacy of colonialism and independence are important

subjects to Africans. This can be attributed to the fact that, most post-colonial discourses revolve around them. Different countries experienced colonialism differently and as such, have different perceptions about it.

One of the consequences of colonialism is the presence of different linguistic zones – Anglophone, Francophone, Lusophone, and Arabophone - on the continent. For instance, the policy of assimilation offered the French colonies the opportunity to benefit financially from their colonisers even after colonialism. This aided the francophone countries to flourish in film productions unlike their Anglophone counterparts who did not have the support of the British government. Anglophone filmmakers had to secure their own source of funding for their films.

Diawara writes that, in 1935 the Bantu Education Cinema Experiment (BEKE) was established by the British, with the aim of educating Africans through films. Another reason for its establishment was for Africans to adapt to new conditions and to conserve the best of African tradition. The British set up Colonial Film Units in parts of Africa in 1939. A West African branch for Ghana and Nigeria was set up in Ghana, an East African branch for Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and a central African branch for Zimbabwe and Nyasaland was also established (*African Cinema: Politics and Culture* 1-3).

Diawara cites Rouch who writes that, the film units were set up by the British government in order to get Africans to participate in World War II. The film unit initially distributed propaganda films in Africa; films were made in Europe and America and were edited and commented on in order to fit their agenda (1-3). Ukadike states that, the Bantu Education Cinema Experiment (BEKE) was established “to make and show instructional films, especially health films, to Africans” (*Black African Cinema* 33).

After World War II in 1945, there was a shift from distributing films made in Britain to a system of local production, where films were made in the colonies to demonstrate British etiquette. By 1955, the Colonial Film Unit pronounced that it had fulfilled its purpose of introducing an educational cinema to Africans. The Overseas Film and Television Centre came to replace the film unit and they were no longer in charge of developing cinema in the colony. This centre now served as a point for training film and television crews as well as coordinating the autonomous production units in the colonies. At this point Britain was no longer burdened with the cost of film production in their colonies but the colonies will be dependent on them for developing their film production (Diawara, *African Cinema: Politics and Culture* 3-4).

After independence, most Anglophone countries with the exception of Ghana and Nigeria, stopped film production with the closing down of the British colonial film unit. However, Ghana attempted several times to keep the unit alive. After independence, President Nkrumah restructured the film unit into, the Ghana Film Industry Corporation (GFIC) where he invested in the training of personnel to run the corporation. During this time, the corporation produced a lot of documentaries as well as newsreels. Subsequently, other governments did not develop the corporation, therefore in 1996; the corporation was sold to a Malaysian company, owners of TV3 network.

2.5 ORALITY AND AFRICAN CINEMA

Unlike theatre that subsumed rituals and festivals before the advent of colonisation, cinema did not exist. However, there existed traditional media in the form of oral tradition which allowed for communication and education. Africans have a long history of oral tradition which is recognized through the use of storytellers and griots. A study of the Soninke people gives insight about griots. A griot is a person who “serve(s) as that

society's historian, lawgiver, teacher, entertainer, and repository for community's knowledge" (Wetmore 26). A griot is an embodiment of oral tradition and Amadou Hampâté Bâ puts this tendency in context when he notes that, "in Africa when an elder dies, it is a library that has burned down." (qtd. in Ellerson 45)

Influenced by works on oral tradition and film production, Ellerson cites Tapsoba who asserts that, "evolving from a culture of orality, African filmmakers have always reflected the close links between their film narratives and traditional stories" (40). Some African films have their roots in the oral traditions of the society, thus, highlighting the importance of oral tradition in the African culture. Just like theatre, cinema is an art form which mirrors society. Whatever is presented visually is imprinted in our memories and filmmakers have captured this opportunity to create enchanting scenes to engage viewers.

Cinema in Africa cannot be divorced from oral literature as they are inextricable. The African society is one of an oral storytelling tradition and as such, this is evident in the way some African films are presented. In analysing African films, as Diawara puts it, "one sees that all directors resort in different ways to oral storytelling forms" (*Popular culture and Oral Traditions in African film* 210). Diawara cites Kane who notes that, just like a novelist, "the filmmaker too is influenced consciously or unconsciously, by the storyteller's techniques of narrating" (210).

The griot, an embodiment of oral tradition in African societies has been represented in some African films. Examples of such films are Ousmane Sembene's *Xala*, (1974) and *Keita...The Heritage of the Griot* (1996). In the words of Diawara, "whereas oral literature speaks of life, cinema reproduces an impression of life" (*Popular culture and Oral Traditions in African film* 210).

2.6 THE DEVELOPMENT OF FILMMAKING IN GHANA

The development of filmmaking in Ghana can be traced to the colonial period when the British established the Gold Coast Film Unit to produce films to support colonial governance. Chris Hesse, one of Ghana's foremost cinematographers, reports that, cinema was introduced in Ghana and Nigeria around 1903. And in 1948, filmmaking started in Ghana. Films produced during this period were mainly documentaries which served as educational tools to help enforce some government policies (Hesse).

These films were made to educate the citizens on issues like, the payment of taxes; *Progress in Kojokrom* (1953) and the promotion of agriculture, *Towards new farming* (1953), *Kofi, the good farmer* (1953) and *Fuseini's cash crop* (1953). Some of the other films are *Dangerous waters* (1951); made to ensure clean water, *Cattle on the plains* (1955) for teaching of better livestock production and a film on housing, *Mr. Mensah builds a house* (1955). *Amenu's child* (1950) which is a film on better ways of feeding won an award at the Venice Film Festival that year. A film on adult education, *Challenge of progress* (1954) was also produced. Other films like *Wealth in wood* (1954) were made for the development of the timber industry. *The Gold Coast votes* (1954), is a film educating citizens on voting. Another film to demonstrate how to teach English to illiterate adult audiences; *I will speak English* (1954) was also produced (GFIC).

Before the colonial film unit ceased its operations in the colonies, Ghana's film unit became an independent body in 1950 and Sean Graham, a student of John Grierson, helped organise the unit and made films as co-production with some British interest groups. The film unit welcomed new narrative styles of fiction and documentaries and rejected the aesthetics of the Colonial Film Unit. The film unit then saw its purpose of making educational and entertainment films being realised. Graham and his team made films like, *Jaguar High Life*, *Freedom for Ghana* and *The boy Kumasenu* which was

widely distributed both in Ghana and Britain (Diawara, *African Cinema: Politics and Culture* 5). After independence, Graham left Ghana and President Nkrumah nationalised both film production and distribution in the country. He promoted film production in the country by building editing studios and processing laboratories (Diawara, *African Cinema: Politics and Culture* 6).

President Kwame Nkrumah restructured the film unit by turning it into, the Ghana Film Industry Corporation (GFIC). The government invested in the training of personnel abroad to run the corporation upon their return. A lot of documentaries on the developmental efforts of the government were produced in addition to news reportage of key events both within the country and the continent at large. The GFIC also produced newsreels as well as documentaries. It is worth indicating that Nkrumah ensured he was covered everywhere he went and even on the plane to Hanoi when the coup occurred, he was with his camera crew. Even with Nkrumah's overthrow in 1966, the film corporation continued to operate but without the enthusiasm and support of government as was the case with Nkrumah (Hesse).

The end of Nkrumah's regime saw the confiscation of all films produced under him from 1957 to 1966 (*African Cinema: Politics and Culture* 6). In 1969, Sam Aryetey a graduate from the Accra Film School who was also a director and editor was appointed as the head of Ghana Film Corporation. He shifted to a policy of coproduction. Aryetey collaborated with an Italian director, Giorgio Bontempi to produce the film *Impact* (1975). This move on his part is said to have set back the progress of film production in Ghana. Diawara criticises this attempt by African government production units who turn to foreign directors and entrepreneurs to make films (*African Cinema: Politics and Culture* 6).

In his view, co-productions are to be desired if it is between African nations and not with Non-Africans. His reasons are that, he sees this as a process of less risk of misinterpreting the traditions and culture of Africans. Other reasons for his point are for producers to spend less when producing and the chance for films to recoup their costs among African audience due to its triple or double nationality. He believes that, the only hope for African cinema is for production to remain in the hands of independent African filmmakers. I hold a counter view to that of Diawara on this point in the sense that, in this age, the world is a global village where all countries interact with each other. Hence, I do not feel there would be misinterpretation of African culture if a foreign national directs an African film. Secondly, co-productions also allow support for films when there are economic pressures that hinder one party from producing.

Even though the Nkrumah government had been accused of misusing the GFIC, the military government that took over after him did same (Hesse). Subsequently, other governments did not see the need for the development of the corporation and in 1996; the corporation was sold to a Malaysian company. After Nkrumah, there has not been any clearly defined national policy on film in Ghana and as such no conscious effort at encouraging film production. The industry has been under the control of private individuals who have funds to invest in the business of filmmaking.

In the late 1980's came the proliferation of video technology in the country. Video is relatively an inexpensive technology compared to celluloid; it is widely available and easy to use. This phenomenon has allowed filmmakers in Ghana to create videos for their audiences. Esi Sutherland Addy posits that, William Akuffo is the first filmmaker to usher in the era of commercial video filmmaking in Ghana with the production of *Zinabu* (1987) his first full-length video feature shot with a VHS video camera. Meyer in

her publication, “Popular Ghanaian Cinema and *“Heritage Africa”*”, explains that Ghanaian popular video “was born out of people’s desire to see their own culture mediated through a television or cinema screen” (98). With the proliferation of video, the country has produced quite a number of films both of high and low quality. The country has also seen the emergence of new filmmakers like Shirley Frimpong Manso, Leila Djansi, Veronica Quarshie, Frank Rajah Arase, Socrates Sarfo and Harry Laud.

It is significant to note that, in Ghana at the moment, there are mainly two types of movies being produced. They are termed, English speaking and local language movies; of which the Twi language is dominant. Ghana has in a way, adapted the “wood” associated with *Hollywood* or *Bollywood*. *Gollywood* or *Ghallywood* has been used by movie producers as well as sections of the public to refer to the English speaking movies whereas the term “Kumawood” has been associated with the Twi speaking movies produced in Kumasi.

2.7 POSTCOLONIALISM AND AFRICAN FILMMAKING

Post colonialism is a term that has been used in a number of disciplines including theatre and film studies. It deals with the effects of colonisation on cultures as well as societies and it is designated to the period after independence, in other words, the post-independence period. The expression postcolonial, however, has been used from the 1970s by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonisation. Post colonialism according to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin is used in varied ways,

...to include the study and analysis of European territorial conquests, the various institutions of European colonialisms, the discursive operations of empire, the subtleties of subject construction in colonial discourse and the resistance of those subjects, and, most importantly perhaps, the differing responses to such incursions and their contemporary colonial legacies in both pre and post-independence nations and communities. While its use has

tended to focus on the cultural production of such communities, it is becoming widely used in historical, political, sociological and economic analyses, as these disciplines continue to engage with the impact of European imperialism upon world societies (187).

According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, major exponents of colonial discourse theory like Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak guided many critics, to focus on the material effects of the historical condition of colonialism, as well as its discursive power. This was to insist on the use of a hyphen to distinguish Post-colonial studies from colonial discourse theory which formed only one aspect of the many approaches that the term 'post-colonial' sought to discuss (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 187). While there is an ongoing distinction in spelling the term, the prefix 'post' continues to be a source of vigorous debate amongst critics:

The simpler sense of the 'post' as meaning 'after' colonialism has been contested by a more elaborate understanding of the working of post-colonial cultures which stresses the articulations between and across the politically defined historical periods, of pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence cultures. (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 187).

It then implies that, post colonialism should not be limited to the period after independence but should include works and actions of Africans that react to colonialism be it in the pre colonial, colonial or post independence period.

Gilbert and Tompkins define post colonialism as "an engagement with and contestation of colonialism's discourses, power structures, and social hierarchies" (2). Post colonialism then is seen as the rebuttal of colonial notions about Africans after colonialism; it is also an attempt to reclaim what is African that has been lost or tarnished due to colonialism. Post colonialism must respond to more than "merely chronological construction of post independence and to more than just the discursive experience of imperialism". Lawson argues that post colonialism is a, "politically

motivated historical-analytical movement (which) engages with, resists, and seeks to dismantle the effects of colonialism in the material, historical, cultural, political, pedagogical, discursive and textual domains” (qtd. in Gilbert and Tompkins 2).

Post colonialisms agenda as Gilbert and Tompkins posit, “is more specifically political: to dismantle the hegemonic boundaries and the determinants that create unequal relations of power based on binary oppositions such as ‘us’ and ‘them’, ‘first world and third world’, ‘white and black’, ‘coloniser and colonised’ ” (3).

Colonialism is an important part of the history of many nations as it has played a distinguishing role in their development. It was a means of claiming and exploiting foreign lands, their people and resources. During the period of colonialism, the indigenous cultures of the colonised were often sidelined in favour of the cultural preferences of the colonisers. Post colonialism seeks to assert the importance of such indigenous cultures and to restore pride in the traditions that were degraded under colonialism. It is also concerned with revising African history from the perspective of the colonised. First and second generation Ghanaian filmmakers used their films to counteract the stereotypes the colonisers employed in their films.

Western representations of Africans as a people with no history, no culture and inferior to them are views that reigned supreme during colonialism. These stereotypical attributes of Africans are captured in some of the works of the philosopher David Hume (Garrett 171). Again, a movie like *The Gods Must Be Crazy* (1984) by Jamie Uys (Ukadike, *Black African Cinema* 56) is a creation of the West to portray African way of life as primitive, uncivilised, barbaric and savage. Many African writers, as well as filmmakers through their works are constantly reacting against these false perceptions.

These false perceptions about Africans are constantly being reacted against by works of many African writers, as well as filmmakers. This discourse between the Western view of Africa and its associated reactions by Africans is aptly summarised by Fanon in the following words:

There is a fact: White men consider themselves superior to black men.
There is another fact: Black men want to prove to white men, at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect. How do we extricate ourselves? (3)

There is a justification, therefore, for African filmmakers to change these notions after colonialism. This is exactly the concern of African filmmakers like Kwaw Ansah, Ousmane Sembene, Souleymane Cissé and Gaston Kabore.

To a large extent, discussions of postcolonialism stems from the need to prove that Africans are not inferior but are equal to whites. Frantz Fanon as cited by Barry in *Beginning Theory: An introduction to literacy and cultural theory* discusses postcolonial criticism as what can be termed as “cultural resistance” (192). He argues that, the first step a colonised people must obtain in order for them to find their voice and identity would be to reclaim their past. Second, “is to begin to erode the colonialists ideology by which that past had been devalued” (Barry 192).

Postcolonial criticism has a number of aims and fundamentally, it is “to reexamine the history of colonialism from the perspective of the colonized” (Khan& Khan 1-2).

Postcolonial criticism is to undermine the Universalist claims once made on behalf of literature by liberal humanist critics.

Characteristically, postcolonial writers evoke or create a precolonial version of their own nation, rejecting the modern and the contemporary, which is tainted with the colonial status of their countries. Here, then, is the first characteristic of postcolonial criticism-an awareness of representations of the non-European as exotic or immoral ‘Other’. (Barry 193).

Filmmaking in Africa is a direct result of colonialism and it has offered African filmmakers the opportunity to define themselves by contrasting earlier European perceptions and representations. They wanted to represent Africa from an African perspective by incorporating into their films the structure and themes of indigenous culture. In the newly independent states, African filmmakers saw themselves as social commentators who were empowered to reflect the concerns of the society. Roy Armes confirms that,

...our cultural identities reflect ‘the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as “one people”, with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history’. Hence they have assumed that their task is to ‘discover, excavate, bring to light and express through cinematic representation’ a national identity conceived as having been buried during the long years of colonial rule (Armes 68).

Cham also argues that,

African film-making is in a way a child of African political independence. It was born in the era of heady nationalism and nationalist anticolonial and anti neo-colonial struggle, and it has been undergoing a process of painful growth and development in a post-colonial context of general socioeconomic decay and decline, devaluation (that is ‘devaluation’) and political repression and instability on the continent (1).

Films produced after colonialism by African filmmakers dealt with historical facts as well liberation struggles. They also dealt with economic struggles of the ordinary African, the concept of identity in postcolonial Africa and issues relating to the patriarchal nature of society and the role of women. Following the demise of colonialism, African filmmakers criticised the colonial administrations as well as focused on internal politics and culture within their newly independent nations. They did not only project the harm caused by colonialism in their works but they tried as much as possible to present their audience with other societal issues affecting them. For instance, the effect

of how leaders embezzle and misappropriate funds for themselves and their families at the expense of the citizenry was an area that was also explored. Sembene Ousmane's *Xala* (1974) is an example of a film that projects this idea.

Xala is a film that addresses polygamy as well as corruption of Senegal's business class after independence. The film opens with the appointment of a black man as the president of the chamber of commerce in Senegal and the overthrow of the whites. The film's protagonist, El Hadji Abdou Kader Beye, a successful business man marries a third wife when he becomes a member of the chamber of commerce after a black man was appointed as its head. He suffers misfortune after his third marriage as he does not believe in superstitions until the curse of "Xala" was placed on him. He is unable to consummate his third marriage as this curse renders him impotent and he declined from affluence to total humiliation. This dilemma causes him to see a number of marabouts (healers) for a cure but to no avail. In search of a cure for the curse, he neglects his business which starts dwindling as he is made to pay exorbitant fees by these marabouts. Finally, his colleagues from the chamber of commerce dismisses him from their midst when he becomes bankrupt. What is of uttermost interest to Sembene as he claims is, "exposing the problems confronting my people. I consider the cinema a means of political action" (Armes 69). At this point also, some themes of these African filmmakers, revolved around the complication caused by the convergence of European and African cultures.

Love Brewed in the African Pot (1981) by Kwaw Ansah projects the effect of clash of cultures within the newly independent states in Africa. The film demonstrates the difficulty in choices people are faced with in determining the balance between European and African ways of doing things. With the encouragement of African filmmakers to promote African tradition and culture in their films, FESPACO (Pan African Film

Festival of Ouagadougou) was set up. FESPACO is one of the biggest film festivals in the world established to develop and protect the African film industry. It was created as a means of expression, education and raising awareness of African culture.

2.8 AUTEUR THEORY

The word “auteur” can be used to refer to an artist’s unique style and it is derived from the French word for “author”. An auteur, then, can be understood to be the distinctive vision or style of a filmmaker that is recognisable in all of his or her films. The Auteur theory has influenced film criticism since 1954, when it was advocated by François Truffaut. The theory was later developed in the United States through the writings of Andrew Sarris, an American film critic as he used the theory to further the analysis of the study of respected directors and their films (Chaudhuri 80).

Sarris expanded on Truffaut's ideas, by saying that, for a director to be an auteur, he has to possess a certain degree of personal style. Sarris opines that, to be identified as an auteur, a director must accomplish competence in their technique, personal style in terms of how the movie looks and feels (Chaudhuri 81).

Aneek Chaudhuri also posits that, an auteur should be able to display certain recurrent features as his signature in order to be identified as such. Therefore, the aesthetics and visual presentation of a film should be the representations of a director’s mind, what the director feels and thinks (83). Although Kwaw Ansah can well be identified as an auteur, however, the theoretical base for this study is not the auteur theory.

2.9 ANSAH: IN THE MILIEU OF AFRICAN FILMMAKING

His first motion picture, *Love Brewed in the African Pot*, was released in 1980. The film won a number of international awards, including the Oumarou Ganda Prize at the 1981

FESPACO (*Pan African Film Festival of Ouagadougou*) held in Burkina Faso. *Heritage Africa*, his second fiction film, was made in 1988 and the following year, it received the "Etalon de Yennenga" (First Prize) at FESPACO (Pfaff 186).

African filmmakers in time past worked with the celluloid format, a notion Ansah himself held for a considerable length of time. Economic situations on the continent (Ghana not excluded) occasioned a paradigmatic shift in the industry to video in its varied forms. Ansah believes video production alters the overall quality of the work of art, he prefers the celluloid format (Pfaff 190). Due to economic reasons, he has to rely on video for his production. His statement below summarizes this point.

Film or celluloid is expensive, and ideally that's the format by which I would prefer telling my story, but realistically no African filmmaker on his own can afford celluloid as things stand now. And neither can we wait for our mismanaged economies to be revamped before telling our stories (Ukadike, *Questioning African Cinema: Conversation with Filmmakers* 17).

He is a filmmaker who has used both celluloid and video to produce films in the country. As a prodigal son of video technology, this study will also try to understand how engaging in and fighting the format war impacts on Ansah's themes and style.

In comparison with other countries, not much has been written concerning cinema in Ghana, there is not much literature on the subject. Pfaff highlighted the fact that, Ghanaian cinema is not as well-known as other African cinemas. This can be attributed to the fact that, not much has been written on the subject and my work when completed would be an addition to literature in the field.

However, Diawara in his, *African Cinema: Politics and Culture* devotes a lot of space for discussing Anglophone cinema with details on the Ghanaian situation. Two filmmakers Kwaw Ansah and King Ampaw receive a substantial amount of attention on

their films when he discusses filmmaking in Ghana. Both *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980) and *Heritage Africa* (1988), by Kwaw Ansah are discussed at length. *Kukurantumi, Road to Accra* (1983) by King Ampaw is also discussed. Diawara presents a brief history of the Ghana Film Industry Corporation (GFIC) and also examines the structures of film production and exhibition in the country.

A number of studies, though few, have been done on African cinema and specifically looking at the filmmaker Kwaw Ansah. The anthropologist, Birgit Meyer, in her article *Popular Ghanaian Cinema and "African Heritage"* discusses the emergence of popular cinema industry in Ghana. She also highlights the way in which the films mirror the struggles of urban life and how people dream about a modern way of life. Meyer compares these films, *The Beast Within* by Nana King and Hackman's *Not Without*, with Kwaw Ansah's *Heritage Africa*. Meyer cites Pfaff as saying that, Ansah complains of Ghanaians looking down on their culture and that in his view, "pride in our cultures has to be restored" (103).

Another scholarly appraisal of his work is by Kofi Anyidoho in, *The Struggle for Liberation Is Not Yet Won: Kwaw Ansah's Heritage Africa*. Anyidoho comments on the life and death of Quincy as well as the performance of actors and asserts that, the film is "in the final analysis, Africa's continuing fight for liberation and selfhood" (315-318).

Francoise Pfaff's interview, *Conversation with Ghanaian Filmmaker Kwaw Ansah* looks at his biography and his experience as a filmmaker. Other aspects of the interview include financing of his movies and how his experience in Hollywood impacts upon his filmmaking. She discusses briefly in her work, both *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980) and *Heritage Africa* (1988). In the interview, Ansah states that, he is engaged in making films from the perspective of "cultural revitalization" (Pfaff 186). He indicates

that, the movies he watched as a child depicted whites as heroes, overshadowing the blacks in the films, this he said, goes a long way to prove the power a film possesses.

The extract below, aptly summarises this view.

I remember, for example, the films from Hollywood we were given to watch when I was a kid. These films showed some Whites and Blacks in the jungle and, you know, Whites always stood out as the heroes. Whites would gun down Blacks, and we African children would all clap. When a White man was gunned down, everybody would be sad. This in itself shows you how powerful the medium of film is (Pfaff 187).

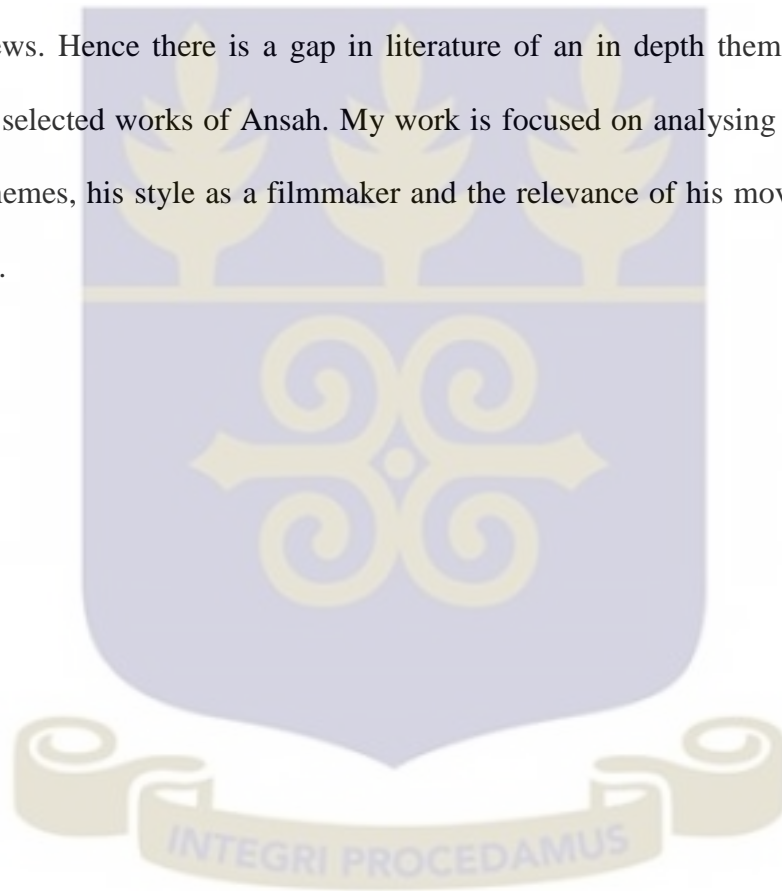
He gives an insight on *Harvest at 17* (1994), in the interview, he stated that, the story was written during a workshop sponsored by the National Commission on Culture. Since Ansah's aim is cultural revitalisation, it is only logical that, the National Commission on Culture would commission him to write a script. It is also relevant to state that, themes in his films reflect cultural reclamation and preservation.

Ukadike has discussed the life and works of Kwaw Ansah in his two books, *Black African Cinema* and *Questioning African Cinema: Conversation with Filmmakers*. In, *Questioning African Cinema: Conversation with Filmmakers*, an entire section is devoted to Ansah where he is interviewed on *Love Brewed in the African Pot*, *Heritage Africa* and *Crossroads of People, Crossroads of Trade* (1994). This interview discusses how Ansah's filmmaking career commenced.

In this interview also, Ansah indicates the influence of Hollywood and British movies on him as a child. He was inspired as a child, to start thinking of a cinematic image of African history and culture. Ukadike in the interview focuses attention on the situation of financing and support for cinema in Ghana as well as problems of distribution (3-17). *Black African Cinema* also discusses at length the development of Ghanaian filmmaking as well as *Love Brewed in the African Pot* and *Heritage Africa*.

All the above works have tackled different issues on the filmmaker and his works. Again, all these studies outlined above discuss some aspects of *Love Brewed in the African Pot* and *Heritage Africa* which I will be analysing in my study. However, not much has been written on his latter films, *The Love of AA* and *Suffering to Lose* which I have considered for this study.

It is evident from the above that, most of the materials on the filmmaker and his works are interviews. Hence there is a gap in literature of an in depth thematic and stylistic analysis of selected works of Ansah. My work is focused on analysing four of his films based on themes, his style as a filmmaker and the relevance of his movies to society to fill this gap.



CHAPTER THREE

3.1. METHODOLOGY

Having identified the gap in the literature as mentioned in the previous chapter, the research was designed taking into account a method that would enable the work to plug that gap. This chapter focuses on the research methodology employed and gives details of the various processes that I employed to carry out this research. Four of Kwaw Ansah's films are selected for an in-depth analysis, presented in chapter four. The films are *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980), *Heritage Africa* (1988), *The Love of AA* (2010) and *Suffering to Lose* (2011).

Creswell in his book, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, stipulate three types of research designs. These are quantitative methods, qualitative methods and mixed method approaches (3). To a large extent, the choice of approach a researcher uses depends on the aims and objectives of the research. Based on the objectives of this research, a qualitative research was employed; and it is based, to a large extent, on textual analysis of the four chosen films.

As Creswell further attest, "qualitative research is framed in terms of using words rather than numbers" (4). Data gathering for this research were mainly by focus group discussion, library research and analysis of audiovisual information.

The data collected for the research included both primary and secondary data. The use of both primary and secondary data collection methods was to ensure that relevant information would be gathered so as to be able to respond to the research questions. The primary sources of data included information gathered through watching the four films. It is worthy to note that the data collected was on the themes and style present in the

films. Furthermore, another primary source of data gathering was the organisation of a focus group discussion on the films.

Sue Wilkinson describes Focus group discussion as “a way of collecting qualitative data, which essentially involves engaging a small number of people in an informal group discussion (or discussions), ‘focused’ around a particular topic or set of issues” (177). It is a way of gathering people of similar backgrounds to discuss specific topics of interest.

The focus group discussion allowed participants to agree or disagree on issues raised and this gave insight into their ideas and opinion on matters. It also allowed members of the group to react and also build upon the responses given by other participants. This approach was used because it allowed participants to express themselves freely and also it was an effective way of gathering information quickly within a short time. This process allowed me to get different perspectives on the same topics we discussed. The free flow of discussions and sometimes disagreement between participants provided useful and insightful data for the research. The information I gathered from the focus group discussion informs the analysis in Chapter Four.

To recruit participants for the focus group discussion, the researcher posted notices at the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ghana for interested students to sign up. The notice was up for seven days but the feedback was not impressive. Therefore, I employed a purposive sampling technique to select film students as well as film enthusiasts for the discussion. When recruiting participants for the discussions, I informed them about the purpose of the discussions. Participants were also told the procedure for the focus group discussions. Participants were informed that, there will be a screening of a film after which the film would be discussed to determine the themes and style used by the filmmaker. Before the sessions commenced, I sent out text messages to participants and

regular telephone calls were made as a reminder for the discussions. However, some potential participants I contacted were not able to make it and they informed me before the start of the sessions, others too did not. The first two sessions were delayed due to the late arrival of some participants. Nonetheless, the next two were all started on time.

There were some challenges encountered in using the focus group discussion approach; signed-up participants did not show up for the discussions. This caused some delays. The impact this had on the whole process was that, participants who came early had to wait for the others to arrive and this created discomfort for them. Secondly, some participants had to leave since they had other engagements elsewhere and this also caused delays with the discussions.

We had four sessions of the focus group discussions and they were carried out on the 18th, 19th, 20th and 25th of November 2013. Members of the focus group discussion were made up of six to ten participants on all the days we had the discussions. On the first day of the discussions, there were six participants and the second day, eight participants. The third and fourth days recorded ten participants each. Of the total number of participants, four made it on all the four days for the discussions. Three participants were present for three sessions, one was present for two sessions and seven were present for only one session. All the four films were successfully screened on four days at the Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ghana, Seminar Room Two. On the whole, we had successful focus group discussions at the end of the four days.

At the beginning of each session, participants were made to watch the films and after the screenings, discussions were held. Participants discussed their general impression of the films focusing on identifying the themes and as well as the style. The focus group discussions lasted for three hours per session. The sessions were all recorded with a

digital voice recorder for transcription and I also took notes during the discussions. Prior to organising the focus group discussion, I had watched all the four films several times.

At certain times during the discussions, participants became divided among themselves which at times prompted heated arguments amongst them. This was due to the fact that, at certain times they had opposing views and everyone wanted his or her point to override that of the others. This phenomenon led participants to occasionally veer off the course of discussions and they had to be called to order. At other times, the responses of the participants prompted other issues for discussions.

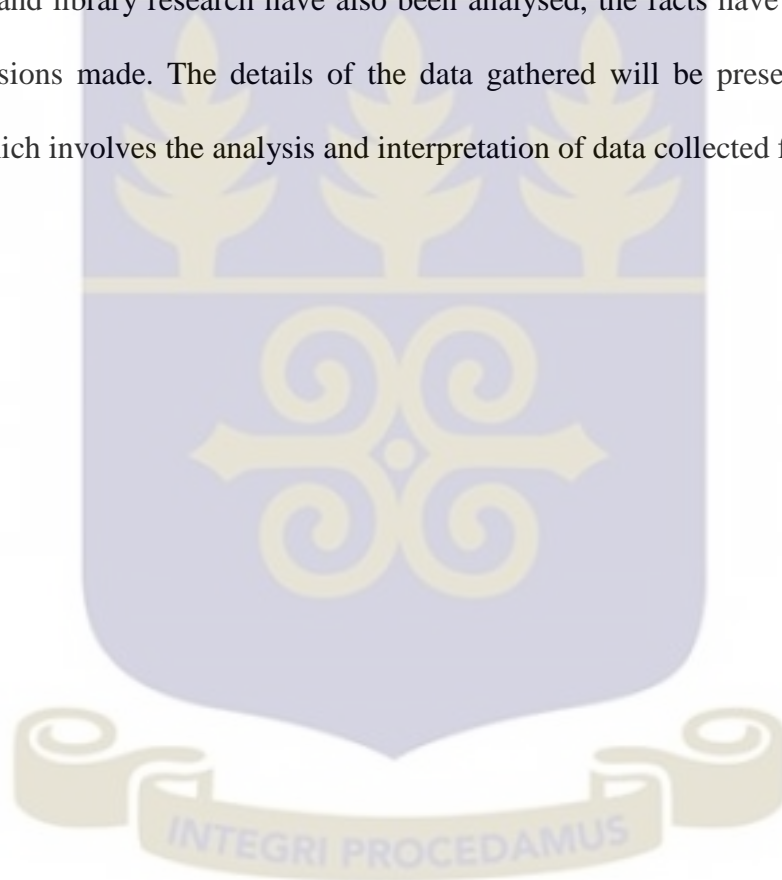
The secondary sources of data for the study included books, articles from both online and print journals, as well as published interviews conducted on the filmmaker and his works. The views of the filmmaker on his films and that of others are also employed in the analysis for a better understanding of the films being studied.

For the purpose of this research, I did library research as part of the secondary data collection process. I visited the Balme Library as well as the School of Performing Arts Library both in the University of Ghana. However, to my dismay there was minimal literature available on filmmaking in Ghana. I was unable to access the African Studies Library also in the University of Ghana due to some renovations they were undertaking at the time of the research.

In spite of the limited filmmaking materials available at the library, the library research also produced data on filmmaking in Africa, the filmmaker (Kwaw Ansah), and his works. Although all efforts were made, it was impossible to personally interview the filmmaker him, hence the reliance on published interviews which also provided a great deal of help for the study.

Thus, using the library research helped me to identify existing gaps in my research area and that helped in fine tuning my work. It also enabled me to explore and gather information on what has been written about my research area and make certain inferences based on the information available to me.

The information gathered from the various sources have been used to answer the problem statement and the research questions. The data collected from the focus group discussion and library research have also been analysed, the facts have been interpreted and conclusions made. The details of the data gathered will be presented in the next chapter, which involves the analysis and interpretation of data collected for the research.



CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF SELECTED FILMS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Following from the discussion of the methodological approach employed in chapter three, this chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the films. An in-depth analysis is carried out on the four films as indicated in chapter one. These films are; *Love brewed in the African Pot* (1980), *Heritage Africa* (1988), The Good Old Days series: *The Love of AA* (2010) and *Suffering to Lose* (2011). The film analysis and discussions were guided by the research questions, as stated in chapter one. These research questions are; how can we understand Ansah's works? What are the main issues he focuses on in his films and how are the issues in the films presented?

This chapter focuses largely on presenting, analysing, and discussing the data gathered through the application of the processes outlined in the previous chapter. The analyses and discussions of the four films are based on themes and styles that emerged during the data treatment stage.

4.2. HERITAGE AFRICA

4.2.1. Introduction

Heritage Africa is Ansah's second feature film which was produced in 1988. Set during the colonial era, the film present sthe life of the protagonist, Quincy Arthur Bosomfield (Kwesi Atta Bosomefi); an African who rejects his culture and tradition. Bosomfield through hard work and dedication rises to be the first black District Commissioner of the Gold Coast. The film begins with a church service during which a shabbily dressed woman, perceived to be mad, walks in and interrupts the service. She is rudely thrown out of the service even though she screams several times that, she has come to pray.

In that same church service scene, Bosomfield, together with his family and some “members of the elite” are present. His son Archiebold goes out for fresh air and ends up watching a fetish dance and is caught by his father. Bosomfield whips his son and reports him to his headmaster who also whips him together with other children in front of the school. This leads to a tetanus infection which causes the death of the boy. After this incident, Bosomfield’s wife together with his daughter leave him.

In another section of the narrative, Bosomfield is socialising with colleagues in his house when his mother arrives from the village to visit him. Embarrassed by the appearance of his mother, he hides her from his friends. He only invites her in after all his guests leave, by which time his mother is fast asleep. The purpose for her visit is to ascertain the veracity of him occupying a British colonial officer’s quarters and to appoint him as the custodian of their family’s ancestral heirloom; which she hands over to him for safekeeping. Immediately after this encounter with his mother, Bosomfield gives the heirloom to the governor with pride. In the end he realises his mistake but it is too late and he pays the price for denying his heritage, with his life.

It can be said that, Bosomfield willingly sold his birthright to the colonisers when he presents his family’s heirloom to the governor. He betrays his entire country when he refuses to address their concerns and grievances after becoming the district commissioner. In this regard, he represents the elites who attain high positions in society and forget where they come from. After becoming the district commissioner, his main interest is not that of his people but rather to advance the interest of the colonial powers.

Ansah’s Heritage Africa can be linked to the thematic concerns of Kobina Sekyi’s *The Blinkards* which called upon Ghanaians to return to their traditions and not copy blindly everything European. When Bosomfield is appointed district commissioner, it is

expected that he would be more concerned about the socio-economic wellbeing of the citizenry rather than the colonisers. Ansah criticises Bosomfield who ignores the numerous petitions of his people. Ansah makes it a point to indicate that, the kind of people entrusted with positions like Bosomfield and present day politicians do not take the welfare of the citizens into consideration.

Hence, the aspirations of the masses for viable development are shattered by their leaders. On the whole, the film is a critique of the social and cultural consequences of colonialism. The thematic concerns present in Ansah's narrative would be elucidated in the subsequent sections.

4.2.2 Cultural Alienation and Its Repercussions

Culture is defined as the set of attitudes, values, beliefs and behaviours shared by a group of people, communicated from one generation to the next via language or some other means of communication (Cultural Affect Life, www.studymode.com). It is a way of life of a group of people and this encompasses their traditional values as well. It includes but not limited to a people's food, dance, music and language. People without a culture do not have an identity as there is nothing that defines them. The film explores the conflict between the African culture and European values. It also questions why Africans should desert their culture for that of Europeans.

Additionally, it interrogates the superiority of the European culture over African culture, thereby advocating for the reclamation of the African culture for the future. Hence, it reemphasises the importance of knowing and accepting one's identity.

Kwaw Ansah discusses the life of Quincy Arthur Bosomfield, the first black District Commissioner of the Gold Coast. As the first black to occupy that position, the citizens are very happy that one of their own would help them and make life much better for

them; but he is only a puppet of the colonisers. He goes to the extent of acquiring a new identity for himself; his names Quincy is actually supposed to be Kwesi (a male born on Sunday); Arthur is Atta, (a name given to a twin); and Bosomfield, which really stands for Bosomefi, (an illustrious ancestor born again). All these names are Akan names which he prefers to anglicise. This is the first point of rejecting his culture; who he truly is. At this point, he convinces himself that he is a native intellectual who is assimilating the coloniser's culture to be a "black Englishman". This perhaps may be because he is the first black District Commissioner, who has been assigned a bungalow at the European quarters.

It seems as though Bosomfield leads his life to please the colonisers in order to obtain their favour and trust. This is made apparent by the fact that, he presents the 500 years ancestral heirloom which stands for the soul and pride of his family to his majesty, the governor. He does this to gain the governor's favour since the governor is a collector of African art.

Subsequently, Meyer refers to Bosomfield as "a true representative of Fanon's colonized intellectual" (101). Frantz Fanon in *On National Culture* outlines the relationship between the black intellectual with the colonisers. This relationship is on three different levels. In almost all aspects of the film, Bosomfield desires to become one of the colonisers. He does not respect his tradition and culture to the extent of abandoning his son's funeral for work. He tries his best to adapt to western "civilisation" and lives in a European bungalow in the white quarters. He only entertains people of his calibre and class; this is evident in how he fails to introduce his mother to his colleagues.

He pays particular attention to his dressing; he always wears suits and appears in European manner. He rejects his mother tongue; he prefers to speak in English hence he

looks down on people who speak Akan. He goes to the extent of ridiculing one of his colleagues he claims did well only in the Akan language when they were in school at Achimota. Even when the trade union workers petition Bosomfield in order to have better working conditions, he does not grant them audience. Subsequently, the trade union workers go on a strike which turned bloody and cost the lives of many. Akroma, the leader of the trade union, ends up in jail as a result of the demonstration.

From the above, Bosomfield's behaviour can be equated to the first level of the relationship between the black intellectual and the colonisers that Fanon outlines. The first level he describes is where the native intellectual assimilates the coloniser's culture and abandons his own (Fanon 420). He looks down on his own culture and aspires to be like the colonisers. This assertion is evident in Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks*. Fanon in his book examines how inferiority complex is inculcated by the colonised and how black people end up emulating the colonisers.

When the black man comes into contact with the white world he goes through an experience of sensitization. His ego collapses. His self-esteem evaporates. He ceases to be a self-motivated person. The entire purpose of his behavior is to emulate the white man, to become like him, and thus hope to be accepted as a man (x).

Fanon's main concern was the problem of inferiority associated with the colonised.

When Bosomfield gives away the heirloom to the governor, his mother pronounces a curse on him. She warns him to return the heirloom or he would never know peace; and that, his ancestors would perpetually haunt him until he returns it. His mother, a custodian of tradition, gets very angry with him for parting with the family's heritage and she wonders if it is education that has made him senseless. It is then that reality dawns on him and he awakens from his sleep. He now begins to reject the foreign

influences on his life. He starts calling his daughter (Penelope) Maame Abokuma. This can be linked to the second level of relationship Fanon describes.

The second level (of relationship Fanon outlines) is where the native intellectual becomes disturbed when he recognises his identity. Here, the colonised comes to the realisation that, he cannot be one of the colonisers. Fanon puts this aptly when he says;

In the second phase we find the native is disturbed; he decides to remember what he is. ...But since the native is not a part of his people, since he only has exterior relations with his people, he is content to recall their life only. Past happenings of the bygone days of his childhood would be brought up out of the depths of his memory; old legends will be reinterpreted in the light of borrowed aestheticism and of the conception of the world which was discovered under the skies (420).

Bosomfield threatens the governor with a gun when he realises the heirloom has been sent to Britain. He mistakenly shoots Snyder (his white colleague in the office) and is also shot. Before Bosomfield dies, but his action in the end is very symbolic; in a form of a trance, he struggles with the governor, who has the heirloom at the beach. He is given a befitting burial and the mother believes that if her son went mad in order to retrieve his soul, he died for a good cause.

Bosomfield suffers an identity crisis towards the end of the film; this incident makes him send a petition to the governor asking for what rightfully belongs to the citizens. The governor reads the letter Bosomfield gives him and the following is what ensued between them:

GOVERNOR: “a man’s struggle for what is his right cannot be denied him”,
how exactly do you mean Quincy?

BOSOMFIELD: Sir for instance, I think that while an African in school is taught the meaning of the scripture, the bible and the Quran, while he is taught

to take pride in other people's values, he should for example know the meaning of the pouring of libation Sir. I think a man must know where he comes from to help him find his bearings, your Excellency. Your Excellency, when I was born, I was named Kwesi Atta Bosomefi and my name had meaning. Kwesi means a Sunday born, Atta means a twin, Bosomefi means an illustrious ancestor born again. And I started school and I was christened, I began to learn the English language along with all the values that come with it. Then I began to feel that, well my name was well, perhaps, the very sound of it was primitive and inferior. So I anglicised it, Kwesi became Quincy, Atta became Arthur and Bosomefi became Bosomfield. What's in the name, your Excellency, I feel like an alien in an ancestral home, like a man without heritage, I can't even relate to my own mother anymore. I suppose I know more about other people's values than what I can really call my own. Karl Marx, Napoleon Bonaparte, George Washington, oh, yes, you name it, anything foreign to me and I will readily claim knowledge of and pride in it. Perhaps, that is what makes me an intellectual and enlightened your Excellency. Your Excellency, **who am I?**

Bosomfield wanted recognition from his masters but he did not achieve it. As Crow and Banfield put it,

We all... experience our being through others. What has happened, in the historical relations between whites and blacks, is that because of its belief in its racial superiority, associated with the economic and military dominance of colonialism, the white race has disrupted the reciprocity of this fundamental process of recognition. The black person looks for the human recognition accorded him by the other; but when the other is white, that acknowledgement is withheld, and the black is deprived of his certainty of self (3).

This is the third level, the fighting stage; this is where the native intellectual begins to awaken and reject foreign influences (Fanon 420).

Clearly, we see Bosomfield in this state of affairs trying to be recognised. In the end, he comes to the realisation that, he cannot be one of them (the colonisers); no matter how he tries. The colonisers will always regard him as a subordinate, never an equal, irrespective of his position.

When it finally dawns on him, he recognises his true identity, and realises that his westernised name and nature are meaningless. Similarly, the struggles for cultural identity in Africa, particularly Ghana, have restored pride in our own cultural heritage in spite of the influx of various foreign cultures in this globalised world. The filmmaker is concerned with preserving African cultural values, hence, in Ansah's own words,

There is an evolution that is taking place in Africa—if we do not address the issue of culture which is derived from one's faith, we will never be able to build a meaningful society. You cannot rely solely on foreign premise to build a solid foundation, nor make any progress if the platform upon which national agenda is constructed is not indigenous. If the people understand the meaning of this national agenda, they will have no fears in participating in its implementation. But if the agenda is based on abstract alien ideology, it is likely to be questioned. But if we draw upon our own values and try to make a progressive leap into the future, knowing that the path is ours, I think we can really be very prosperous. In this sense the evolution taking place will benefit our generations to come. (Ukadike, *Questioning African Cinema: Conversations with Filmmakers* 9)

Heritage Africa depicts an educated African (Quincy Arthur Bosomfield) who denies his cultural heritage and clings to the English culture which he imitates with impunity. The film establishes many sequences that portray this notion.

When Bosomfield leaves his son's funeral, in a hurry to go back to the office, his boutonniere (the flower on his chest) falls down and he takes no notice of it, hence he steps on it. As Bosomfield steps on the flower, it speaks volumes as this action relays to

viewers how low Bosomfield has fallen and how he has relegated his culture and tradition to the background (Focus Group Discussion). Leaving his only son's funeral to go back to work, without taking a break indicates how Bosomfield values his work more than his son. He forgets that, the funeral ceremony is his last encounter with his son before he takes his journey towards the ancestral world.

In African traditional setting, the final funeral rites are very important. It is what separates the living from the dead and cuts any ties the living has with the dead and if not properly done can lead to certain consequences. This, he clearly ignores since he has become a "modern man" and disregards those traditions. Other traditional elements like the pouring of libation are insignificant to him. In the film, Bosomfield's mother had to sharply chastise him for not pouring libation and further educates him on its importance. He then pours the libation; this might sound trivial but it was an aspect of tradition that he has either forgotten or ignored as he chooses to renounce his identity. This is suggestive that Africans need to go back to claim, study and celebrate their identity, history and culture.

When Bosomfield becomes aware of himself, he can be equated to a blind man who has regained his sight for the first time. He starts parading through the townships to acquaint himself with issues and he sees at first hand the problems the citizens were going through. He realises how he had not been able to use his office to help his fellow citizens and the lack of social amenities and underdevelopment of the areas. It is at this point that he encounters a child who is very sick and in dire need of medical attention. Bosomfield helps both mother and child to the European hospital which is prohibited to blacks. The child eventually dies but the stress he encounters before the boy is taken in is very enormous. He notices the misery in the township and how his fellow citizens are

suffering. Further, he realises his mistakes and finally recognises the inequality of colonialism; this prompts him to help the child who is dying.

During Bosomfield's last days, he goes to the governor to reason with him in order to retrieve the heirloom. This is because he realises who he is, the harm that he has caused his ancestry hence the need to rectify his mistakes, but it is late. However, as one participant from the focused group asserted, "he did not die regretting his wrongs as he endeavoured to rectify them".

Before Bosomfield dies, a close up of his face shows satisfaction; a facial expression illustrating that he has achieved something of importance to him because he feels the need to correct his past and all that he had done.

Bosomfield discards something he should have embraced as an African, the heirloom, the symbol of his soul. He has sold his soul as well as the soul of his entire family and lineage to the white man. In a dream, he goes with his uncle to retrieve the heirloom amidst danger and it is handed to him for safekeeping. This scene goes a long way to indicate how our forefathers shed their blood and toiled for us to enjoy today so there is the need to guard and protect the heritage they entrusted with us.

Consequently, at the end of the film *Ansah* presents a scene connoting that what belongs to Africans must be returned to their rightful places. In the beach sequence, Bosomfield chases the governor on the beach and pushes him to the ground; amidst struggles, he retrieves the heirloom. After this scene, there is a long shot of Bosomfield running to meet his mother at the other side of the beach with the governor still pursuing him. Before Bosomfield gets to his mother, there are several close shots of Bosomfield with the heirloom and his mother's arms trying to reach the heirloom. In each of the several shots, the mother's arm is stretched forth to reach the heirloom. Her outstretched arm

gets closer with each preceding shot, till she finally touches the heirloom. The many close shots of Bosomfield's hand with the heirloom and his mother's emphasises the symbolic significance of the heirloom the filmmaker is putting across.

During the focus group discussion, a participant asserted that Bosomfield's encounter with the governor at the beach is quite symbolic in the sense that, the white man was chasing Bosomfield for the heirloom and wants to retrieve it at all cost. This can mean that, the white man is trying all he can to possess and control the heritage of Africans. Although in the "dream-like" sequence when Bosomfield had the heirloom, the governor is still after him to take it. This might suggest how the colonisers do not want to part with the African heritage when they know they are losing the battle, although they are still fighting very hard.

Bosomfield chases the white man up to the beach and collects the heirloom and runs away with it. But retrieving and running away with the heirloom is not enough although he accomplishes one aspect of his mission. Bosomfield's last scene can be interpreted as the price of forgiveness; he had to pay for his behaviour towards his people and culture. Kofi Appiah¹ in *Love brewed in the African Pot* can be equated to Bosomfield, they both prefer western values but in the end, they return to their roots.

All the above cultural effects that characters in the film, especially Bosomfield, exhibit clearly demonstrate the repercussions of colonialism on indigenous cultures as many post-colonial discourses aver. Therefore, the above issues discussed in *Heritage Africa* are prototypes of a postcolonial society where there are various cultural effects as a result

¹Kofi Appiah is the father of Aba Appiah in *Love brewed in the African Pot*.

of colonialism; a society where there is a constant contestation between the coloniser's culture and the traditional culture of the people.

Thus, Ansah through his characters in *Heritage Africa* joins a league of creative writers and filmmakers who are using their work of art to promote indigenous cultures and restore the pride in the traditions that were degraded under colonialism.

4.2.3. The Dilemma: Christianity and African Traditional Religion

The film establishes how Christian missionary intervention in the Gold Coast saw to the disintegration and deterioration of African traditions and cultural systems. Some missionaries had the belief that, the African culture is antithetical to their mission as they considered African traditional performances like dancing, drumming and other rituals, heathen and primitive. In *Heritage Africa*, Ansah portrays the religious themes by juxtaposing the Christian faith with the traditional faith.

At the beginning of the film, we are presented with a church service with Bosomfield and his family. His son Archiebold with some other children go out for fresh air since they are dozing off in the service. The children find themselves watching and enjoying a "fetish dance". After the service, Bosomfield finds his son at the fetish dance and whips him. As if this punishment is not enough, he reports the boy to his headmaster who whips the boy and uses him as an example and advises the other pupils not to follow his footsteps. This action leads to the death of the boy from tetanus infection. Archiebold's wounds get infected with tetanus but his father refuses to take him to the hospital and the boy eventually dies. Bosomfield sees a traditional ritual dance as heathen, an abomination; hence he subjects his only son to torture. The boy dying from tetanus, I believe, is rather harsh but Ansah states this was an example of what happened during

his early years in school (*Questioning African Cinema: Conversations with Filmmakers* 12).

Another religious motif is highlighted with the indoctrination of school pupils by their headmaster into believing traditional cultural performances are pagan, hence not good. The recitation from the pupils below aptly summarises this view.

HEADMASTER: A Christian child must not watch any fetish dance, or anything of the earthly gods, that is for pagans, and pagans are not children of God. They belong to Satan and they will go to hell when they die” (*Heritage Africa*).

From the above statement, we notice the extent to which traditional cultural performances are rejected based on the fact that they are evil. It can also be noticed from the same statement that, traditional cultural performances are rejected. Bosomfield does not see anything wrong with Archiebold being whipped for watching a traditional dance and even claims the need for his son to be whipped. This excerpt summarises his view, “If a child should be caned for speaking his own mother tongue why should a child from a Christian home be spared from watching pagan festivities” (*Heritage Africa*). These are Bosomfield’s words when his wife blames him for their son’s death.

An additional religious theme in the film is with the incidence of a mad woman in relation to the same church service. Ansah highlights the hypocrisy among the Christian church when a shabbily dressed woman who is perceived as a mad woman walks in, in the middle of the church service. She is thrown out even though she exclaims that she has come to worship God. They preach different things and practice the exact opposite;

if they teach a God of love who does not reject anyone, why then do they reject the poor “mad” woman?

This scene is quite ironic because the priest is in the middle of a sermon, preaching about the less fortunate in society and instead of extending the love and affection he is preaching towards her, he rather does the opposite. These are his words when the woman walks in to interrupt the sermon,

PRIEST: The world is what it is today fellow Christians, because man has chosen the sinful path of greed and selfishness. Let us take the mentally ill or the destitute, who wander about the street and pick crumbs from the refuse bins and ask ourselves, how many were born that way? Or could it be that some of these people were the very teachers who taught you and I in a classroom yesterday to make us rich and prominent men of today. Just cast your minds back if that man you met this morning or last Tuesday afternoon collecting food from the streets, couldn't have been the same man who yesterday was good enough to be your... (*Heritage Africa*)

The priest momentarily stops his sermon and continues only after the perceived mad woman had been forcibly thrown out of the church, as if nothing has happened. This lady is a perfect example of the destitute and vulnerable in society that the priest is preaching about before he is interrupted. What occurs suggest that, the congregation and the preacher finds the lady repulsive and does not want to be associated with her. Does this mean that the only interest of the preacher is to read from the bible and not practice or apply what he reads? What, then, is the significance of preaching and not practicing? The lady claims her mission in church is to pray to God but she is denied; shortly after she is sent out, the priest calls for a prayer. The question the film seems to be asking us

is, what prevents the priest from extending a hand of support to the woman? At this point, let us move to an analysis of the second film in the study.

4.3. LOVE BREWED IN THE AFRICAN POT

4.3.1. Introduction

Following from the discussion of *Heritage Africa*, my focus in the following sections would be the discussion of Ansa's first feature, *Love Brewed in the African Pot*. The film is a love story between two people, Joe Quansah and Aba Appiah from different social backgrounds; whose relationship was affected by social pressures. This film is a "portrayal of class prejudices and distinctions that have emerged in African societies following the inundation with western values" (Ukadike, *Black African Cinema* 131).

Aba Appiah, an educated seamstress, the daughter of a retired civil servant, Kofi Appiah, wants to marry Joe Quansah, an auto mechanic apprentice, the son of a fisherman. However, her father, a retired civil servant, is not in favour of her decision since he wants her to marry a professional from the upper middle class, preferably, lawyer Bensah. She goes against her family's wish to marry Joe Quansah, an auto mechanic apprentice, when she chooses to value love rather than social status or wealth. She is not perturbed by pressures from her family and her father finally gives in to her wishes although he prefers otherwise.

Although her father, Kofi Appiah gives in to his daughter, he does not attend the traditional marriage. He rather decides to dress up in his suit and stay at home, day dreaming about the kind of wedding he prefers for his daughter: a church wedding between Aba and lawyer Bensah. An elite wedding with members of his social class

present to grace the occasion. She finally marries the love of her life and for some time their marriage was blissful as they were supportive of each other.

Joe Appiah becomes insecure due to inequality in their social status and their difficulties in the marriage commences from this point. Joe one day receives an anonymous letter that makes him doubt Aba's love for him. Although Aba is still married to Joe, Lawyer Bensah keeps harassing her but unfortunately for Joe, he meets them talking one day and unaware of what is going on, concludes with the help of the letter that he received some time ago that, indeed Aba is cheating on him. All these incidents heighten his insecurity the more and this leads him to assault his wife. Unable to come to terms with his behaviour towards his wife, he eventually runs away from home.

At the market one day, Aba encounters Lawyer Bensah who continues with his usual harassment but luckily for her, she is saved by a Good Samaritan. Unfortunately, this stranger takes Aba to his house and rapes with no one to coming to her aid. This leads to mental breakdown as a series of images in a dream keeps appearing to her and haunting her and this gets her restless. . Aba was taken to herbalist and subsequently taken to the hospital for treatment but there was no improvement as Joe comes back to take her away.

In her dream, she is happy with her husband at a park as they meet a weird looking old lady shabbily dressed. She comes to sit by them and separates them. The old woman pulls Joe away from Aba and another lady who looks like a petty trader comes to call Joe away. Both of them (Joe and the unknown lady) obviously look happy when they leave; however, Aba is left alone with the old lady amidst screams. Afterwards, the old begins chasing Aba with a club and whilst Aba takes to her heels amidst screams, the lady pursues her amidst laughter and she finally grabs Aba. Eventually, the old lady hits Aba with a club and she gets badly wounded and the old lady then dumps her into a big pot and laughs even though Aba shouts for help. This old lady in her dream separates their

union and subsequently, brings another lady who according to her belongs to the same social class as Joe hence, a perfect match

Love Brewed in the African Pot is framed by basic African problems like class distinctions or social standing disparities. These issues have caused a lot of problems for many couples. Usually such problems arise if one of the partners is a member of a prominent, elite, or middle-class family who measure a person's worth by his or her family's material background. Since this issue is a usual issue, it is important to create a love story that would appeal to everybody. In the following sections, I discuss the themes of acculturation of western culture and consequences of our actions.

4.3.2. Acculturation of Western Culture

Kofi Appiah, in the film, is presented as a hybrid character; he draws inspiration from western values. He adopts the western life style and believes in modern medication. However, when Aba goes insane, he resorts to diviners out of desperation to save her. He wears European clothes, and eats western food with cutlery but when his daughter gets a mental breakdown he does not ignore traditional medicine like how he rejects traditional values.

Still in the narrative, Kofi Appiah is too busy to go to the outdooring of his niece's child. He does not want to associate himself with his extended family who he looks down upon because of his "education". This leads his uncle to reject the money he sends for the outdooring, and the lines below suggest why his uncle acts in that manner.

UNCLE: Kofi Appiah, I got your message and I felt like coming immediately. So you were too busy to come to the outdooring of your niece's child.

Are we common or too shameful that you do not want to be seen with us? It is not the money you sent which is important to us Kofi, it's your presence. And let me remind you that we are one big family belonging to the same roots, and you are a member of that family. You are small; your father was a fisherman, yes, a fisherman just like me. For the last time Kofi, I would have you to understand that, the roots of every scholar here are either fishermen or farmers. I hope you are not trying to cut your roots because you have been to school...

The family does not accept his money because he does not respect tradition to attend the naming ceremony. Although he feels embarrassed, his father is a fisherman like some members of his extended family that he has disassociated himself from. The encounter with his uncle changes his opinion about life and prompts him to give in to his daughter. It is believed that children need the blessing of their parents before marriage and Aba not receiving that blessing speaks volumes. She is not blessed in her marriage and this spells doom for her.

Kofi Appiah does not attend the traditional marriage of his daughter. Instead, he dresses up in his suit and sits at home dreaming of a church wedding of Aba and lawyer Bensah. This was obviously his preference, a wedding where he escorts his daughter to the altar with all the guests dressed formally and photographs taken after the ceremony. The elite, like Aba's father, inherits an ideology based on class differences.

In the film, Ansah creates situations where traditional values are pitted against western ones. Although these situations are harsh, they actually refer to what happens in the society due to the duopoly of cultural values. Traditional healing versus modern medicine- Kofi Appiah an emancipated African who sees everything African as

backward realises the importance of traditional healing. The film also emphasises the fact that, western education or adopting western values does not mean one needs to neglect his cultural values but there is the need for balance. Kofi Appiah who is depicted as rejecting his heritage and traditions throughout the film is, however, made to go back to his roots (Sankofa).

It can be argued that, the film also focuses on the African traditional medicine and rituals which can validate the process of going back to one's roots or tradition. In addition to the above, this film probes the conflict between the African culture and European values and questions, through the character of Kofi Appiah, why the African should abandon his culture for that of the European. It interrogates the supposed superiority of the European culture over the African culture. Consequently, the film advocates for the reclamation of the African culture and preserving it for the future.

4.3.3 Consequences of our Choices

As a young girl, Aba does not listen to her parents' choice of husband for her and goes ahead to make a disastrous choice (a choice that leads to her doom). In this regard, it could be argued that, perhaps, the father is right to have chosen a potential spouse for his daughter, Lawyer Bensah. Aba and Joe Appiah's marriage is doomed from the very beginning as Joe's father foresees it because of the inequality of their social status. In Canby's words, it is "one love match in which everything goes wrong" (Ukadike, *Black African Cinema* 133). Aba and Joe decide against all odds to get married although both families are not in favour but eventually, they have their way. Their love turns sour and the aftermath of their decision to get married is what causes Aba's destruction.

Sadly, Joe always had the feeling of insecurity although he is married to Aba as he fears that someone from Aba's social class might take her from him. The anonymous letter he receives coupled with the scene where he sees Aba together with lawyer Bensah chatting, heightened this fear and this causes him to assault his wife and eventually run away from home. Aba's dream also leads to her mental breakdown; the series of images in her dream kept appearing to her and haunting her. In her dream, she is separated by an elderly lady who was against their union and hence, brought another lady who according to the old lady belongs to the same social class as Joe and they would be a perfect match. Aba was hit with a club by the elderly lady and she gets hurt badly in the dream. The events in the dream foreshadows that her marriage would not work and that she would be badly hurt in the end. This also indicates the strong link between the natural/physical world and the supernatural/spiritual world in the African way of life.

4.4 SUFFERING TO LOSE

4.4.1 Introduction

The film examines interpersonal relationships, as well as aspects of Ghanaian life, culture and traditions during the "good old days". It interrogates the issue of family, friendships, love, death and inheritance in the 1950's. The story begins in the house of the Mensahs, who are later joined by Paa Joe, their family friend. Paa Joe comes to the house and after some few minutes, he becomes moody and emotional. This sequence in the film sets the tone for the entire film. At this point in the film, there is suspense and it ends after Sophia and his children visit him at the Mensah's. After telling the Mensah's about his family and his wife's abandonment (Paa Joe), he becomes so emotional that he starts behaving as though it was his last days on earth. He brings gifts to the Mensah's and thanks them for how they have lived with him all the past years. Mrs Mensah dreams

of Paa Joe's death and this dream actually foreshadows his actual death later on in the film.

Through the help of his wife (Sophia), Paa Joe is able to expand his business and he becomes wealthy and happy and all the tension in the first part of the film ceases. Paa Joe's sister, Ampomaa, and her husband, Paa Kofi Ansong, are assisted by Sophia to establish their own business because Paa Kofi Ansong has lost his job. On his way back from visiting the Mensahs one Saturday, Paa Joe is involved in a fatal accident which cost him his life.

After Paa Joe's death, his sister Ampomaa and some other family members come to eject Sophia and her children from her house and take possession of all their properties. In the film, it is established that, both Sophia and her husband, worked very hard to acquire all their properties. The family members accuse her of being a witch hence, responsible for her husband's death. It is worth noting that, this action is perpetuated by women as they even go to the extent of shaving off her hair; this action also forms part of the widowhood rites performed on her.

They mistreat her as a woman and this sequence of the film questions several cultural practices like widowhood rites and how widows are treated when their husbands die. After the death of Paa Joe, his family members accuse Sophia, his wife of killing her husband; hence, taking her to a shrine where the priest confirms that, indeed she is her husband's killer. Tradition must be upheld at all cost but not when it is unfair or unjust. The film is a captivating and convincing story of family and friendship and it also establishes the characteristics of a hardworking African woman.

The film also portrays an African woman who builds a family and gains wealth together with her husband, but sadly after his death, she stands to lose everything. In this analysis,

I will argue along the lines of “losing your rights through rites: the plight of widows” and “showing love and gratitude”.

4.4. 2 The Plight of Widows: losing rights through rites

This film provides a window to viewing the feminist side of the director, Ansah. He presents a hardworking African woman who stands by her husband through thick and thin. This fact, whether the man’s family is aware or otherwise, is not taken into consideration after the man’s death. The filmmaker condemns certain cultural practices inherent in our societies that need to be addressed such as widowhood rites. He also dedicates the film to all the witches in the witches’ camp. This brings into focus the nature of certain customs in our societies where widows are accused of being witches and subjected to all sorts of maltreatment.

Ansah links widowhood rites and how these widows are often accused as being witches in the film. As well as how the families of deceased husbands maltreat the widows and brand them as witches as well as subject them to all forms of inhuman acts or rituals. In worst scenarios, the widow and children are ejected from their home and the deceased husband’s family takes charge of all properties without considering the welfare of the widow and children.

The film also questions the tradition of nephews inheriting their uncles’ properties after their death leaving the widow and children without any support. This is indicated in the scene where Ampoma claims her brother’s properties belong to her son and not her brother’s wife (Sophia) or her children. Meanwhile it is the wife and children who normally help the father to set up family businesses and properties and they are the ones who get neglected when their father or husband dies. There are nice traditional practices

in African societies that must be upheld but not when it is harmful. Sankofa² does not mean you take everything in the name of culture without careful examination; you take what is good and beneficial and ignore what is not.

Widowhood rites are rites that a surviving spouse goes through when one partner dies, and this practice is common knowledge as it has gained roots in several communities. Members of the focus group discussion felt Ansah did not tackle the issue of widowhood rites in the film well. According to Yaw Twumasi Donkor, one of the participants of the focus group discussion;

Ansah did not tackle the problem well. He was fighting against such maltreatments and how people do not maltreat the widows basically because they have something against them. He presents how people treat these widows because of tradition that was handed over to them that they must follow no matter what happens.

From the film, it is evident he might be presenting that, family members do not maltreat these widows because they have something against them but that, the practice is something they inherited so they must practice it at all cost. According to Yaw Twumasi Donkor again, “this is why he should have had a better solution to the problem than just a mere apology from Ampoma. He should have tackled this menace from the root source since this is a very sensitive issue”. Ansah is tackling the issue of widowhood rites but in the end, it appears like Ampomaa has something against Sophia; he presents the story as if Ampomaa’s greed is what caused Sophia to be treated in that manner. He should have presented that, Ampoma’s motivation for treating Sophia badly after the death of Paa Joe is as a result of a cultural practice.

² Sankofa literally means go back and take. It means return to your roots.

According to another participant, “If she (Ampomaa) had done it because it was a cultural practice, she would not have apologised”. This also goes to suggest that, Ampomaa realises the fact that, such a practice is not to be encouraged. Again, she comes to realize that, her behaviour towards Sophia and her children is harsh hence the apology.

Is the woman indeed her own enemy? The violence inflicted on these women during the ritual process is perpetuated by women as was indicated in the film. It is surprising to know that, these atrocities are being committed by elderly women in the community, they are the masterminds, and they spearhead the entire procedure.

These widowhood rites have aspects that are inimical and infringe on the fundamental human rights of these women. Normally the relatives of the man would consult a soothsayer who would perform some rituals and claim that the woman indeed killed her deceased husband as was stipulated by the man’s family. This is exactly what happens to Sophia in the film. After the death of Paa Joe, she is sent to a shrine where the priest confirms she has a hand in her husband’s death.

Widowhood rites differ from society to society and it is usually the women who go through such rites and treatment when their husbands die. These women normally go through shaving of their hair, ritual bathing, drinking water that has been used to bath the deceased husband and confinement in a room for several days or weeks and sometimes, years.

There are also property rights violations and long term economic challenges for the widow and her children. These women are disallowed from inheriting properties and there is also the issue of wife inheritance, where widow are given to their husbands relatives to marry. When they refuse to comply with these rituals or cleansing, they are

tagged as witches and the murderers of their husbands. Because these women are automatically tagged as witches, then in this case, these widows are “guilty until proven innocent”.

There have been the establishments of witch camps which provide a safe haven for women accused as witches in Ghana. One of such camps is known as Gambaga Witches Camp. The women in this camp are unable to stay in their communities for fear of being killed and they escape from persecutions from their family members as well as the entire community. Ansah dedicates the film to all women in witches’ camps in Africa and this could be viewed as the filmmaker sympathising with the marginalised and deprived groups in society. The abuses that come with these practices are very serious as there can be physical assaults as well as widows suffering psychologically for the rest of their lives. There is substantial knowledge about the practice of widowhood rites and it is widely believed that, widowhood rites are observed in honour of the dead husbands. This practice goes against the dignity of women, but some think it is in fulfillment of culture.

Widowhood rites in Ghanaian traditional communities tend to include aspects of human rights violations. Widows do not only suffer emotional and psychological trauma, they also go through untold spiritual violence. Widows go through a lot of hardships that stem from the society, the husband’s family and from tradition. The controversies surrounding the practice of widowhood rites have been heightened as a result of religion, formal western education, urbanisation and the modernisation of the Ghanaian society. It is widely argued that, widowhood rites are cruel, outmoded and dehumanising; hence, the practice has come under harsh criticisms from religious leaders, women groups and human rights advocates.

The continued existence of these rites is a major social problem as it degrades women and infringe on their dignity and human rights. Many families suffer today because of the untimely deaths of their fathers because in most cases, when the man dies, his family members tend to seize all his assets. Some of the women in one way or the other might have ideas about bodies that fight for the rights of women while some might not know any institution advocating for women's rights. Since some of the widows who go through this practice are ignorant.

It is important to emphasise the need for more education for people to have deeper understanding of the human rights issues involved in the rites associated with the practice so that they can better appreciate them and modify them for the good of humanity. The inclusion of women's rights, as part of the fundamental human rights in Ghana's 1992 Constitution, and other international human rights instruments are to protect and promote the rights of women in general and create good relationship between the male and female. Article 26, clause 2 of the 1992 Ghana Constitution state that: "All customary practices which dehumanise or are injurious to the physical and mental wellbeing of a person are prohibited" (25).

It can also be argued that the practice of widowhood rites contravenes the provision made in Article 26 Clause 1 which states that: "Every person is entitled to enjoy, practice, profess, maintain and promote any culture, language, tradition or religion subject to the provisions of this Constitution" (25).

Members of the focus group discussion assert that, how some images are presented are not too clear towards the end of the film. Phaniel Parbey, a member of the focus group discussion says, "the main point where Sophia is maltreated is some kind of reflection or dream. She is seen on her bed and the next thing, her hair is shaved, her house is locked

and she is thrown out of her own house”. These events in the film indeed happen within a short time.

In the film, it is not established whether Sophia had family members or not. It is also not indicated that her family shows up to support her in her mourning or even offer her comfort through her ordeal. In my opinion, I believe Ansah with the Good old days series, *Suffering to lose*, is remembering how in the past, women have been maltreated after the death of their husbands and the need for society to relook these practices.

4.4.3 Love and Gratitude

Since the beginning of time the family has played an important role in society. The film presents the need to show love and helping those in need, “a friend in need is a friend indeed” (Focus Group Discussion). Mr. Mensah keeps advising his friend Paa Joe, and this is a very good objective. The film also brings out the need to show gratitude and how to be grateful, as Paa Joe always says, “you must be rewarded” to people who do something good (Focus Group Discussion).

Paa Joe says his wife had done well; therefore he needs to appreciate her, since she has been a strong backbone for him, so, he plans on building a house for her. Ampomaa (Paa Joe’s sister) and her husband Ansong also show appreciation initially to Paa Joe and Sophia when they were helped to start a business but Ampomaa turns against Sophia when Paa Joe dies. After Paa Joe’s death, claims that, her sons are the rightful heirs to his properties and not the Sophia or her children.

Lack of gratitude often mar relationships and this is clearly evident in the film when Ampomaa together with other family members mistreat Sophia. In the film, Sophia

comes to visit Ampomaa one day, only to find out that, a lady she owes has come to collect her money. Unable to pay her debt, she pleads with the woman who shows no mercy as the debt repayment time has been long overdue. Sophia, having pity on her, pays up the debt. Sophia then speaks to Paa Joe to help his sister since her husband's work has collapsed, and they set up a small cloth selling business for them. This is an act of kindness that should merit gratitude and appreciation. When someone who has been helped never shows appreciation, the embers of their love begin to extinguish and the other party becomes hurt. This film teaches how one must appreciate and not forget any act of kindness or be ungrateful like Ampomaa.

4.5 THE LOVE OF AA

4.5.1 Introduction

The film begins with a love story between two teenagers, Abudu Andani (AA) and Esaba Mensah. Their love affair leads to their loss of concentration in school. Furthermore, this becomes a source of worry for the parents of the two teenage lovers. This eventually leads AA's parents to confront Esaba's parents to enquire more about the matter. It is at this point that both families advise their children. A question by Mr. Mensah prompts a flashback by AA's father which leads us to his childhood. Mr. Mensah (Esaba's father) enquires why the boy is named AA, and wonders his real name.

This question and the subsequent answer leads us to the second phase of the story— the part I believe is the filmmaker's main concern in the film. AA's father reminisces about his past as a child and the feud between the Abudu and Andani families that leads to loss of lives and great destruction. He witnesses the death of a cousin, Abudu, who is allowed to drown and his own sister, Aishetu, who is also allowed to die from wounds she sustains as a result of stepping on a trap in the bush.

All these deaths could have been avoided had there been no feud between the families. In each case of the deaths, opposing family members are at the scenes but did nothing to prevent the deaths; they stand by unconcerned as they watch both children die. They do not feel pity for the young ones although they are all from the same ancestry. These experiences from his childhood force him to walk the path of peace and unity, hence naming his son, Abudu Andani. In this analysis, the theme for discussion is, love and dialogue for peace.

4.5.2 Love and Dialogue for Peace

The love of AA as a film is then seen as a metaphor for the feuding parties in the Dagbon crisis and the resolution of such conflicts. The film itself has a deeper and concealed meaning which, if care is not taken, might not be appreciated by viewers. The filmmaker did not work with new ideas but he had to craft the story in such a way that would be meaningful and significant to his audience. The love story between the two teenagers is a cover up for the intended meaning. The conflict between the Andani and the Abudu is an intra ethnic conflict which originated from a chieftaincy dispute (Tonah 2).

As with Ibrahim Andani, the filmmaker stresses on the need to use dialogue to resolve issues amicably. When conflicts arise, usually, both parties become antagonistic and they seem not to be concerned about the welfare of the opposite side. This phenomenon has dire consequence on both parties and this is amply depicted by what happens to both Aishetu and Abudu in the film. When people are wounded or are hurt, they tend to be hateful and in that sense, it is only love that can calm them and cause them to have peace within themselves. This is what the filmmaker is portraying by bringing two love birds together to overcome pain with love. Love heals all wounds and the filmmaker stresses the need to trade love in times of conflict.

Esaba and AA suffer from their school work and this becomes a source of worry for both parents. Both parents upon discovering what is happening to their wards decide to choose a wise approach to deal with the issue. This indicates that, the filmmaker is trying to propose dialogue in order to settle differences and not resort to violence as some parents might do. AA then is an embodiment of peace the filmmaker is trying to project; he is trying to call for peace between the feuding parties. The Abudu and Andani feud is a conflict that has spanned generations and has caused a great deal of loss and destruction to the Dagbon kingdom (Tonah 2).

How Ansah presents his main theme is quite unique in the sense that, he catches the audience's attention by presenting the love story between two adolescents. In presenting the story, he builds upon the love story by introducing elements that might make one remember his or her youthful days. Examples like writing of love letters and the use of certain adjectives like, "my dearest and brightest shine" by young boys to woo their love further draws the audience's attention more and more.

The primary role of filmmakers as social commentators is clearly indicated in this film as Ansah, in his own way, tries to comment on the Dagbon chieftaincy dispute by presenting it through a film which tries an amicable solution at the end. He has to try as much as possible not to blame one party for the conflict but his main concern is peace, no matter the cause, as this has caused damage to properties and lives. In as much as this happened in the northern part of Ghana, the conflict, in one way or the other, affects all Ghanaian societies.

4.6 STYLE

In the preceding sections, I looked at some of the themes in Ansah's films. This section examines the style of the films under discussion. Ansah's background as an Africanist

has an influence on his films; he tries to blend the supernatural and natural. This is evident in both *Heritage Africa* and *Love Brewed in the African Pot* where he presents sequence of events in dreams; dreams that eventually manifest in reality. For instance, in *Heritage Africa* Bosomfield has a dream where his ancestor hands him the family's heirloom for safekeeping and this is what transforms his life. In the same dream, he is wounded and when he wakes up, he finds the wound at the exact spot. After this incident, he wants to find out the significance of dreams; hence, Bosomfield enquires from his secretary and the information he receives give him an insight into his dream. Here, Ansah is trying to bring out how essential dreams are to the African and man in general.

Similarly, in *Love Brewed in the African Pot*, Ansah tries to combine the supernatural and natural in the scene where Aba has the dream, as well as the shrine she is taken to when she has a mental disturbance. The shrine scene depicts a traditional priestess with her attendants and gory images of idols and the materials. The priestess consults the gods and finally, Aba regains her memory. Thus, Ansah shows how the supernatural intervenes when mortals face problems. Equally, the dream Aba has in the film foreshadows the events that would happen to her in the future (Focus Group Discussion).

In the dream, an old and shabbily dressed lady comes to sit by Joe and her and eventually separates them. The old woman pulls Joe away from Aba with these words, "Let her go, let him go, that is your match up there, go to her, you damn son of a fisherman (*Love Brewed in the African Pot*)."

When she is talking and pulling Joe away from Aba, another lady who looked like a petty trader comes to call Joe away. Both of them (Joe and the unknown lady) obviously look happy when they leave, but Aba is left alone with

the old lady amidst screams. Afterwards, the shabbily dressed lady's face transforms into an ugly "demon" and begins to chase Aba with a club.

Whilst Aba takes to her heels amidst screams, the pursuing "demon-like" old woman laughs until she finally grabs Aba. The face of this old woman starts to alternate between the ugly "demon-like" face to her real face again, making Aba more scared. Finally, she hits Aba with the club and Aba deeply gets hurt; a close up shows her face covered with blood. The old lady then dumps her into a big pot and laughs even though Aba shouts for help. Joe goes with another woman and Aba goes with the old lady who scares and haunts them. This might suggest that Joe will go with another woman and Aba would be tormented thus leading to her mental breakdown.

Ansah has greatly been influenced by African oral tradition and this can be identified in his works. The use of songs, proverbs, idioms and interspersing with [local] African language confer on his works the same local flavour that can be identified in African storytelling; thus, making it a noticeable style in his films. Moreover, the films are very strong on dialogue as well as imagery. In *Love Brewed in the African Pot*, for instance, Joe's father warns his son with a proverb when he says that, "If a child wants to play with fire, give him the chance". One is tempted to believe that, Joe's father makes this assertion because he foresees that the relationship would not work out. In *Heritage Africa*, Bosomfield's burial scene is also replete with proverbs and idioms. The shrine scenes in both *Love Brewed in the African pot* and *Suffering to lose* also confers on the films a kind of an image associated with indigenous African setting.

Further, another style that is associated with Ansah's films under study is his particular use of theme music. Theme music plays an essential role in every film; the theme music may be equated to a dialogue since it sends out a message (usually the central message in

the film) to audience, just like a dialogue does. Again, the music heightens the mood of the character to viewers. Thus, when there is no dialogue, Ansah opts to use music to enhance the mood (Focus Group Discussion). The music in *Heritage Africa* gives an idea of the central theme, Sankofa—literally means “return to your roots” in the Akan language (a local language in Ghana).

Though the philosophy of Sankofa is suggestive of going to the past and reliving it, it does not necessarily mean that everything in the past should be taken hook, line and sinker. Thus, one has to be selective by taking only the good and appropriate past traditions and practices which are still of relevance today. This, it is suggested, is exactly what the theme in the film suggests; and from the sequence of events in the film, it is clear that the protagonist, Mr. Bosomfield, is the character who needs to return to his roots (Focus Group Discussion).

Also, in *Suffering to Lose*, the background music and sound, together with the closeness of the shots, give the scene the full suspense and tension that is felt and this really catches the attention of viewers (Focus Group Discussion). The Background music and sound is well structured as it is mostly composed by the filmmaker himself and this expresses the ambience in the film. He has knowledge and understanding of music scoring and this obviously adds to the appreciation of the background sound. Hence, he is very sensitive in his use of music and sound track. The moods of the films are mostly determined at the beginning with the aid of the background music.

Furthermore, another style associated with Ansah’s films, particularly those under study in this thesis, is the manner in which his narrative is presented through contrast. That is, he presents two opposite sides of an issue in order for his audience to make a right choice as to which way to go. Therefore, in the four films, it can be realised that Ansah

juxtaposes the elite versus the “commoners”, the colonised versus the coloniser and good versus evil. For instance, in *Heritage Africa*, Ansah places Bosomfield side by side with a character like Akroma, the Trade Union leader. Again, binary oppositions evident in African storytelling tales can also be identified in his films. For instance, Akroma’s revolutionary friends who betray him to the colonial government, have a price to pay, they are killed.

Another characteristic of Ansah’s style is that, his films are didactic as he uses his films to cause change in society. Ansah also employs open-ended plots which oftentimes result in debates. This is evident in all his four films under consideration. In *Heritage Africa*, he consciously leaves the film open ended, this is vivid in his interview with Ukadike when he stated that,

The film was left open-ended because we could not offer resolution. To do so would have suggested that the problems had been solved while they are not. The way it ended is a reminder of what is historically and culturally important to Africa. Simply put, Africa must retrieve its own. (Questioning African Cinema: Conversations with Filmmakers, 10)

Similarly in, *Love Brewed in the African Pot*, the filmmaker leaves the film open ended. In the film, Joe leaves the hospital with Aba and we do not know where they are going or whether Aba gets well. However, what is clear at the end of the film is that, the two of them are together and that is very important. The open-ended approach he employs in his films leave his films susceptible to various interpretations thus generating a lively discourse around his films.

Ansah films in English and intersperses it with local languages (Akan, Dagbani and Ga) to give it a local flare. This is also another style that characterises his films. For instance, the language used in *Heritage Africa* is predominantly English; however, the Akan and Ga languages are interspersed every now and then. The language creates a sharp

contrast; it becomes a barrier between the classes. Those who do not understand the English language are completely cut off, they are ignored, and they are not regarded (Focus Group Discussion). This notwithstanding, viewers who understand the local languages being used will most likely have an affinity with the actions in the film. In *Heritage Africa*, the local language was demeaning and without prestige and speaking it or having anything to do with it is an embarrassment for Bosomfield. His arrogance and derision is manifested in his argument with his wife:

THERESA: I was informed this morning that he died of tetanus.

BOSOMFIELD: And who informed you?

THERESA: Dr Acquah

BOSOMFIELD: Dr who? Acquah, what does Acquah know about medicine to tell me what killed my son. What has Acquah ever known, what did Acquah know in Achimota? Acquah, I beat him in Latin, French, Greek, Mathematics, English. The only thing the poor chap could do was Fante. And what do you do with mother tongue Fante, my dear? Acquah, he wandered into Foura Bay College in Sierra Leone and some all Negro institution in America called Howard. Please when we are talking about better qualified doctors like [...] not Acquah.

This is the encounter between Bosomfield and his wife when she tells him about Archiebold's cause of death. Bosomfield claims Acquah, in their school days, was not intelligent in other subjects taught in school but for Fante, a language Bosomfield obviously dislikes. Fante is one subject he looks down upon, and he claims it is of no importance. In Bosomfield's case, the English language confers on him a higher status

and alienates him from where he belongs by drawing a line of demarcation between him and the majority of the society who are uneducated.

Thus, there are two points of rejection by Bosomfield; first, his culture and then, his language. In *Love Brewed in the African Pot* as well, Ansah films in English and intersperses it with pidgin and Akan. The beach scene as well as the shrine scene has people speaking Akan. Again, in *The Love of AA*, formal English is employed as well as Akan and Dagbani. In *Suffering to Lose* as well, the language used is only English and Akan. The use of English language by the elite and local language or pidgin for the masses go a long way to accentuate the gap existing between these two groups in *Love Brewed in the African Pot* and *Heritage Africa*.

One other characteristic style of the filmmaker is his use of shots. The filmmaker employs a lot of close up and medium shots as well as interior shots in the films. Filmmakers use different kinds of shots to illustrate their stories. They use long shots to show a scene from a distance, to stress the environment and to indicate the setting of a scene. They can also use medium shots which normally focus on the interaction between two actors from the waist up. Close up shots are also used to focus attention on an actor's expression or to direct audiences as to important elements or objects the filmmaker wants them to see.

In *Heritage Africa*, the film is shot in an urban environment with wide establishing shots; you also find long shots as well as medium and close up shots. You can also identify long takes and the pace of the film is not too fast. The variations in shots make the film exciting and pleasing to the viewer.

In *The Love of AA*, there are restrictions in the sense of space: Abudu's house, Esaba's house and the path to school and this made the film looks like a stage play. The director

puts viewers in a box visually, in the sense that, he gives the viewers what he wants them to see and viewers cannot go outside that. He also made use of small space for the film. It is apparent that, the filmmaker did not use a studio set, and with the setting of the film in the 1950's, he had to restrict the space in the film in order not to expose much of the environment since this might defeat the setting of the film.

Members of the focus group discussion assert that the use of a lot of medium and close up shots might have been a deliberate act of the director in order not to give away the environment due to the setting of the film. In as much as this researcher agrees with the view expressed by the focus group, it must be noted that, that may not be the reason why the filmmaker chose those shots. The filmmaker may have chosen these shots because it is his own style.

Likewise, *Suffering to Lose* consists mostly of close up and medium shots and this really show the emotions of the actors. These shots allow viewers to feel the emotions of the actors and feel the suspense in the film; it brings the viewers closer to the actions on screen. An example is when Paa Joe comes to the house. Also, it makes the viewers feel, perhaps, more sympathetic towards the plight of the actors. *Love Brewed in the African Pot* is shot in an urban environment with wide establishing shots; you also find long shots as well as medium and close up shots.

One significant style of Ansah is that, he sets his films in the past and with all the four films under consideration they were all set in the 1950's. However, his old films are more detailed than the current ones.

Again, the linear progression of the plot of Ansah's films under consideration can also be associated with his style of unraveling his narrative. This makes his films very straightforward and thus easy to comprehend. However, this style of presentation is

sometimes interspersed with his use of flashbacks to bring out essential messages. For instance in *The Love of AA*, Ansah brings out the central message (that is conflict between the Abudus and Andanis) in the flashback scene, this scene is where the genesis of the conflict he addressed began. Further, Ansah also employs subplots as a point of digression from main issues being discussed. The story surrounding the trade union members in *Heritage Africa* is an example.

Ansah's use of symbolism and metaphoric mode of representation helps to draw the attention of viewers to an encoded message. This is his style because he engages it in all four films under study. In *The Love of AA* for instance, the filmmaker employs a metaphor of the love of two teenagers to actually represent a larger issue, the solution to the conflict between the Abudus and Andanis. In like manner, the use of the heirloom in *Heritage Africa* represented the soul of Bosomfield and his entire lineage. In a much larger context, it represents the soul and pride of all Africans which when parted with, has dire consequences as is seen in the film.

Similarly, Bosomfield's brooch that falls from his chest that he takes no notice of and moves away is another use of symbolism in the film. This action is quite significant because hitherto Bosomfield holds his brooch so dear but after realising his mistakes, he pays no attention to the brooch. Thus, the brooch can be equated to his love for perpetuity of the colonial power. Consequently, Bosomfield walking past the unnoticed fallen brooch signifies that he does not value the colonisers anymore.

Finally, an equally distinctive style of Ansah's is seen in the title of his films. By title alone, one is able to infer the message he is conveying. For instance, *Suffering to Lose* conveys to viewers a sense of loss; thus before watching the film, potential audiences get an idea about what to expect. With *Heritage Africa*, the filmmaker is trying to send the

message of how African culture and traditions can be preserved. *Liquor* is a substance that is brewed and to brew love in an African pot which is suggestive of the title, *Love Brewed in the African Pot*, pre-empt disaster. The film presents how love can turn sour; hence, moving from love to destruction. *The Love of AA* also suggests an issue of love; how love can lead to peace consequently, from destruction to love.

To conclude, Ansah's driving force behind his filmic approach is from the point of view of cultural revitalisation. His films also examine relations between social and cultural problems within society. Ansah's style of filmmaking is to facilitate the freedom of the oppressed from social injustice and inequality in every aspect of life. He also explores imagery and infused African oral narrative patterns in his works. Ansah, like first and second generation postcolonial African filmmakers, creates cinematic images that reflect African cultural values. Ukadike aptly summarises this view when he states that,

...black African cinema, like any other filmmaking practice or national cinema, does not have to reinvent the conventions of cinema in order to remove it from the dominant film practice. Rather, the filmmakers of a particular region, depending on cultural tastes and historical circumstances, might opt to create aesthetic strategies that build upon the already existing traditions of the dominant cinemas (Ukadike, *Black African Cinema* 101)

4.7 CONCLUSION

It is difficult to imagine Africa today without its westernised institutions, educational systems, clothing, food and language. All these have been a result, one way or the other, of the influences of Africa's colonial encounter. Subsequently, Africans tend to believe that, all things African are backward but westernisation is civilisation. In my candid opinion, Africans need not imitate western practices blindly without considering what their own cultural values can contribute in developing the continent. In imitating others, Africans tend to forget how to become themselves. In an interview, Kwaw Ansah

criticises that Ghanaians look down on their own culture, and that in his view “pride in our cultures has to be restored. Our cultures have indeed to be revitalized” (Meyer 103).

From this background, we can see how this view is reflected in all his films. Unlike other African filmmakers who choose to film in African languages to underscore the linguistic authenticity of their setting, Ansah decides to film in English but intersperses it with language of the indigenes to give it a local flavour. He does this because filming in local languages and then translating is more costly. This view summarises Ansah’s point.

I would have wished, for instance, to do a film in my own mother tongue, but then there are commercial constraints... it is very uneconomical for me to make a film in Fante or Twi because there is a limited audience that can understand the language. This is regrettable in the sense that in *Heritage . . . Africa*, the actress who played Mother Africa was at ease and very natural. After four months of rehearsal her performance became impeccable because of her familiarity with the language. I wish I could produce a film in my own language, but the economic restraints pose a big problem (Ukadike 16).

Apart from the issue about language, the above analysis shows how competent Kwaw Ansah is with regards to the themes addressed in his films and techniques employed to convey the messages. He presents his issues clear in his films hence, he does not shroud his themes in implications or inferences like some filmmakers might. Thus, Ansah’s messages are “simple and digestible” (Ukadike 6).

Being an advocate of cultural preservation and revitalisation, Ansah in *Heritage Africa* addresses the issue of cultural alienation and its repercussions through the life of Bosomfield. He again discusses the effects of acculturation of western culture on the African and the consequences of their actions in *Love Brewed in the African Pot*. *Suffering to Lose* discusses the marginalisation and maltreatment of widows in society.

The film also reemphasises the role of family and friendships. Ansah also deals with the need to resort to love and dialogue as a means for negotiating peace in this film. Ansah

condemns and challenges social and political injustice in his films. His films are, therefore, interesting because they deal with a variety of themes which reflect the Ghanaian way of life.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

From chapter four which presented the analysis and discussion of the four films, this chapter concludes the entire study. This study sets out to examine the aesthetic output of Kwaw Ansah as a filmmaker by focusing on themes and style in his films. This chapter provides the summary, findings and the conclusion for the entire study.

Filmmaking is an important art form that educates and entertains its viewers. Over the years, it has been used as a tool for documenting and preserving the activities of a people. Thus, the advent of filmmaking in Africa has helped Africans to present their issues on screen. A role of a filmmaker is to comment on societal issues and African filmmakers have used this medium to tell African stories from the African perspective.

5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one introduced the research and gave the historical background to the study. It also stated the objectives, research questions, significance, scope and the expected outcome of the study. The research questions outlined in chapter one of this study have been answered in chapters two, three and four.

Chapter two first discussed themes and style. It then examined the thematic approach of first and second generation African filmmakers which can be traced to three broad thematic areas for African film appreciation. These three categories are the social realist narratives, the historical colonial confrontation, and a return to history/source films. The discussion then moved to the development of filmmaking in Anglophone Africa as well as orality in African cinema. The discussion was further narrowed down to the

development of filmmaking in Ghana and the advent of the use of video filmmaking. It also discussed post colonialism and African filmmaking.

Having situated his position in the history of Ghanaian film industry, chapter three went on to discuss the methodology for the entire study. It first presented the research design selected for the study and why a qualitative research design was employed. It then went on to examine the methods of data collection employed for the study and why they were employed. The methods of data collection employed include focus group discussion, library research and audiovisual information.

Chapter four analysed the four films selected for this study; *Heritage Africa*, *Love Brewed in the African Pot*, *Suffering to lose* and *The love of AA*. The data collected through focus group discussion, library research and audiovisual information were analysed and interpreted with the objectives and the research questions in mind. These four films were analysed in terms of themes and style. *Heritage Africa* is discussed under the themes, “cultural alienation and its repercussion” and “The dilemma: Christianity and African traditional religion”. *Love Brewed in the African Pot* is examined under the themes, “acculturation of western culture” and “consequences of our actions”. *Suffering to lose* is analysed under the themes, “the plight of widows: losing rights through rites” and “showing love and gratitude”. And *The love of AA* is discussed under the theme, “love and dialogue for peace”.

A filmmaker’s role is to expose problems confronting society and he has been able to adapt film which is a western medium to African culture. In Ansah’s films, he denounces and challenges social and political injustice. Furthermore, from the films, it is apparent that, issues he addressed center on cultural reclamation and preservation.

5.3 FINDINGS

The study established Kwaw Ansah as a seasoned filmmaker in the history of Ghanaian film who has employed both celluloid and video. He is the first Ghanaian and Anglophone filmmaker to win the top prize at FESPACO (Pan African Film Festival of Ouagadougou). His films examined in this research points to his passion to preserve the traditions of Ghanaians.

Further, the research identified the primary concern of Ansah to address the issue of the African identity especially in the film *Heritage Africa*. In the film, the hero, Bosomfield, shuns his traditions and rather cherishes that of the colonisers. In the end, he realises his folly and attempts to re-engage his culture but he meets his untimely death. Perhaps, if Bosomfield had not blindly towed the line of the colonisers, he might have avoided his tragic end. Hence, through the life of the hero, Ansah brings out how important it is for Africans to hold fast to their culture.

In addition, the study discovered the style that Ansah employs in all four films. In each film, Ansah sets the story in the past and this can be acknowledged through the props as well as costumes used by actors. In *Suffering to Lose* for instance, actors are driving cars that had their steering wheels at the right; a situation that can be associated with pre-independent Ghana. Again, the study realises that Ansah's use of objects and characters as metaphors to convey his thematic concern in his films, is also a distinctive style.

In *Heritage Africa*, the heirloom that Bosomfield unwisely gives away to the governor symbolises African customs that should be safeguarded. Hence, in the dream sequence Bosomfield retrieves the heirloom and returns it to his mother, Ekuatta Abokuma. Regarding character as a symbol, Bosomfield represents Africans who have detached themselves from their roots; therefore striving to be like a black "white man".

The songs, proverbs and interspersions of African languages in Ansah's films confer on his works an affinity to the African storytelling. This is because in African storytelling traditions, particularly *Anansesem*, the storyteller makes use of songs, proverbs and the local language of his/her audience; just like Ansah does in his films. Furthermore, Ansah's films, like African storytelling, are didactic as he wants to cause change in society.

Thus, in *The Love of AA*, Ansah uses the film to advocate for lasting peace between the Andanis and Abudus. In the same vein, *Suffering to lose* seeks to educate its viewers about the excess practices of widowhood rites; hence the need to re-examine certain obnoxious traditions.

Most of Ansah's films have interior shots with medium and close up shots. He juxtaposes the weak and the strong; the poor and the rich, the old and the new, good and evil, poverty and wealth; these binary oppositions can be found in tales from African storytelling. Thus, his films derive from African storytelling's open-ended plots which are the outcome of debated issues at the end which the audiences decide. From the films, it can be realised that, the techniques Ansah employs and how they affect the overall presentation of his works. Although Ansah can well be viewed as an auteur, however, the theoretical basis of this work is not the auteur theory.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that, future researchers should study the filmmaker to better appreciate his works. The design of the study did not make me focus on the forms of the films. Again, during this study, I realised how the plot structure might advance the themes in his films. Furthermore, I did not examine whether

or not it is relevant to preserve African culture and tradition in present times. I think all these might be possible areas where future researchers might want to look at.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In studying Ansah's films, it became apparent that he employed varied themes and style to convey the message in each film. His contributions to the Ghanaian film industry are enormous when we consider the quality of his works. He has placed the name of Ghana on a high pedestal through his recognition as one of the best filmmakers as well as the awards he has received and the training workshops he has been invited to as a resource person. Above all, he was a very committed filmmaker as seen in the issues he addressed in his numerous films.

This study has made some contribution to the growing literature on Kwaw Ansah specifically and Ghanaian Cinema in general, as it identifies themes in his films and how his own personal traits affect his films. From the available literature I consulted for the study, it became apparent that, there has not been much discussion on either the style or themes of all four of Ansah's films. This study introduces most of his major works and, therefore, provides an insight into who he is, what he writes about and how he presents his issues.

I hope that this work provides a basis for further study of his other works which are not presented here. The data collected from the field which were analysed, discussed and conclusions reached indicate that, Ansah is very much interested in cultural revitalisation and in all his films, he presents his issues along such lines.

REFERENCES

- Anyidoho, Kofi. "Kwaw Ansah: On Ghanaian Theatre and Film", *Fontomfrom: Contemporary Ghanaian Literature, Theatre and Film*. Eds. Kofi Anyidoho and James Gibbs. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000. 301-314. Print.
- Anyidoho, Kofi. "The struggle for liberation is not yet won: Kwaw Ansah's *Heritage Africa*", *Fontomfrom: Contemporary Ghanaian Literature, Theatre and Film*. Eds. Kofi Anyidoho and James Gibbs. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000. 315-318. Print.
- Aveh, Africanus. "Ghanaian Video Films of the 1990s: An Annotated Filmography", *Fontomfrom: Contemporary Ghanaian Literature, Theatre and Film*. Eds. Kofi Anyidoho and James Gibbs. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000. 283-300. Print.
- Armes, Roy. *African Filmmaking North and South of the Sahara*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press Ltd, 2006. Accessed 16/08/2013. 08:24 am. PDF File.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*. New York: Routledge, 2001. Accessed 06/02/2014. 15:08pm. PDF File.
- Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An introduction to literary and cultural theory*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995. Print.
- Barlet, Olivier. Trans. Chris Turner. *African Cinemas: Decolonizing the Gaze*. London: Zed Books, 2000. Print.
- Bordwell, David and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. 8th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008. Accessed 09/05/2013. 11:43 am. PDF File.
- Cham, Mbye. "Introduction". *Africa Experiences of Cinema*. Eds. Imruh Bakari and Mbye Cham. London: British Film Institute, 1996. 1-14. Print.
- Chaudhuri, Aneek. "Auteur Theory and its implications" *International Journal of Advancements in Research & Technology*, Volume 2, Issue 11, November-2013 77 ISSN 2278-7763 Web. <http://www.ijoart.org/docs/Auteur-Theory-and-its-implications.pdf> Accessed 14/5/2016.9:27am. PDF File
- Creswell, John. W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. (4th Ed.) Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, Inc.2014. Print.
- Crow, B. and Chris Banfield. *An Introduction to Post-Colonial Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1996. Print.
- "Cultural Affect Life" [StudyMode.com](http://www.studymode.com). 05 2011. <<http://www.studymode.com/essays/Cultural-Affect-Life-693823.html>>.web. Accessed: 11/03/2014 06:50.
- Diawara, Manthia. *African Cinema: Politics and Culture*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992. Print.

- Diawara, Manthia. "Popular culture and Oral Traditions in African film". Imruh Bakari and Mbye Cham . Eds. *Africa Experiences of Cinema*. London: British Film Institute, 1996. 209-219. Print.
- Ellerson, Beti. "Reflections on Cinema Criticism and African Women" *Feminist Africa*, 16(2012):37-52. Web. [Agi.ac.za/sites/agi.ac.za/4_f...](http://agi.ac.za/sites/agi.ac.za/4_f...) Accessed 14/01/2014. 15:12pm.
- Fanon, Frantz. "On National Culture". *Modern African Drama*. Ed. Biodun Jeyifo. New York. W. W. Norton & Company. 2002. Print.
- Fanon, Frantz. Trans. Charles Lam Markmann. *Black Skin White Masks*. London: Pluto Press, 2008. Accessed 12/09/2013. 14:14pm.
- Film Education. www.filmeducation.org/teachingtrailers. 2013. Accessed 02/02/2014. PDF File.
- Garrett, Aaron. "Hume's Revised Racism Revisited". *Hume Studies* XXVI. 1 (2000) 171-178. Web. Accessed: 30/09/2013 15:02pm. PDF File.
- Ghana Film Industry Corporation. *Films we have produced*. Accra,1974. PDF File.
- Gilbert, H. and Tompkins, J. *Post Colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics*. London: Routledge, 1996. Print
- Government of Ghana. *The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana*. Accra: Assembly Press of Ghana Publishing Company Limited. 1992. Print.
- Hamblin, Sarah. "Towards a Transnational African Cinema: Image and Authenticity in La Vie sur terre" *Black Camera*, 3.2 (2012):8-20. Web. <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/blc/summary/v003/3.2.hamblin.html>. Accessed 11/10/2013.10:17pm.
- Hesse, Chris. "History and Development of cinema in Ghana." Legon International Film Event. University of Ghana, Accra. 11-14 March 2014. Presentation.
- Katz, Ephraim. Rev. Fred Klein and Ronald Dean Nolen. *The film Encyclopedia* (5th ed). New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2005. Print.
- Khan, Pathan and R. Khan. "The Oriental issues and Post Colonial theory" *Lapis Lazuli*, 1.1(2011):1-5. Web. <http://www.pintersociety.com>. Accessed 28/05/2013.
- Meyer, Birgit. "Popular Ghanaian Cinema and "Heritage Africa" ".*Africa Today* (1999): 93- 114. Web. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4187269>. Accessed: 11/03/2013 06:52.
- Pfaff, and Kwaw Ansah "Conversation with Ghanaian Filmmaker Kwaw Ansah" *Research in African Literatures*, (1995):186-193.web. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3820148> Accessed: 11/03/2013 06:04.

- Pfaff, and Kwaw Ansah. "The Uniqueness of Ousmane Sembene's Cinema". *Ousmane Sembene: Dialogues with Critics and Writers*. Eds. Samba Gadjigo, Ralph Faulkingham, Thomas Cassirer and Reinhard Sander. Amherst: University of Massachussets Press. 1993.
- Salt, Barry. "The shape of 1999: the stylistics of American movies at the end of the century". *Film Theory and Contemporary Hollywood Movies*. Ed. Warren Buckland. New York: Routledge, 2009. 124-149. Accessed 11/10/2013. 09.41pm. PDF File.
- Sutherland-Addy, Esi, "The Ghanaian Feature Video Phenomenon: Thematic Concerns and Aesthetics", *Fontomfrom: Contemporary Ghanaian Literature, Theatre and Film*. Eds. Kofi Anyidoho and James Gibbs. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000.265-277. Print.
- Tonah, Steven. The Politicisation of a Chieftaincy Conflict. The Case of Dagbon, Northern Ghana. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 21.1 (2012): 1-20. Accessed: 03/03/2014 13:29.
- Ukadike, F. Nwachukwu. *Black African Cinema*. Berkeley: university of California Press. (1994). Print.
- Ukadike, F. Nwachukwu. *Questioning African Cinema: Conversations with Filmmakers*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002. Accessed 16/08/2013. 08:22 am.
- Wetmore, Kevin Jnr. *The Athenian Sun in An African Sky: Modern African Adaptations of Classical Greek Tragedy*. Jefferson, NC: Mcfarland, 2002. Print.
- Wilkinson, Sue. "Focus group research." *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*. (2nd Ed.) Ed. David Silverman. London: SAGE Publications Ltd. 2004. 177-199. Print.

LIST OF SELECTED FILMS

Heritage Africa. Dir. Kwaw Ansah. Film Africa Productions. 1988. Film

Love Brewed in the African Pot Dir. Kwaw Ansah. Film Africa Productions. 1980. Film.

Suffering to Lose Dir. Kwaw Ansah. Film Africa Productions. 2011. Film.

The Love of AA Dir. Kwaw Ansah. Film Africa Productions. 2010. Film.

Xala Dir. Ousmane Sembene. 1975. Film



FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Focus Group Discussion, 18th of November 2013. Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ghana, Seminar Room Two.

---19th of November 2013. Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ghana, Seminar Room Two.

--- 20th of November 2013. Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ghana, Seminar Room Two.

--- 25th of November 2013. Department of Theatre Arts, University of Ghana, Seminar Room Two.



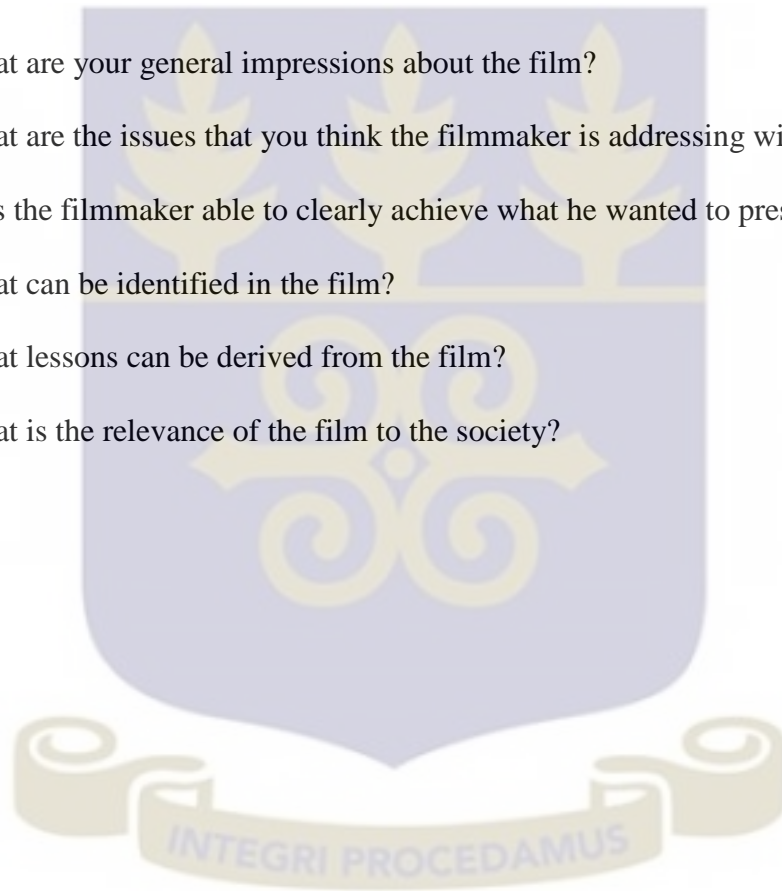
APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

TOPIC: EXAMINING THEMES AND STYLE IN KWAW ANSAH'S CREATIVE WORKS.

Introduction

This is an academic research aimed at examining themes and style in *Heritage Africa*. I am grateful if you could help with the discussions. Information provided during these discussions would be treated with the utmost respect.

1. What are your general impressions about the film?
2. What are the issues that you think the filmmaker is addressing with his film?
3. Was the filmmaker able to clearly achieve what he wanted to present?
4. What can be identified in the film?
5. What lessons can be derived from the film?
6. What is the relevance of the film to the society?



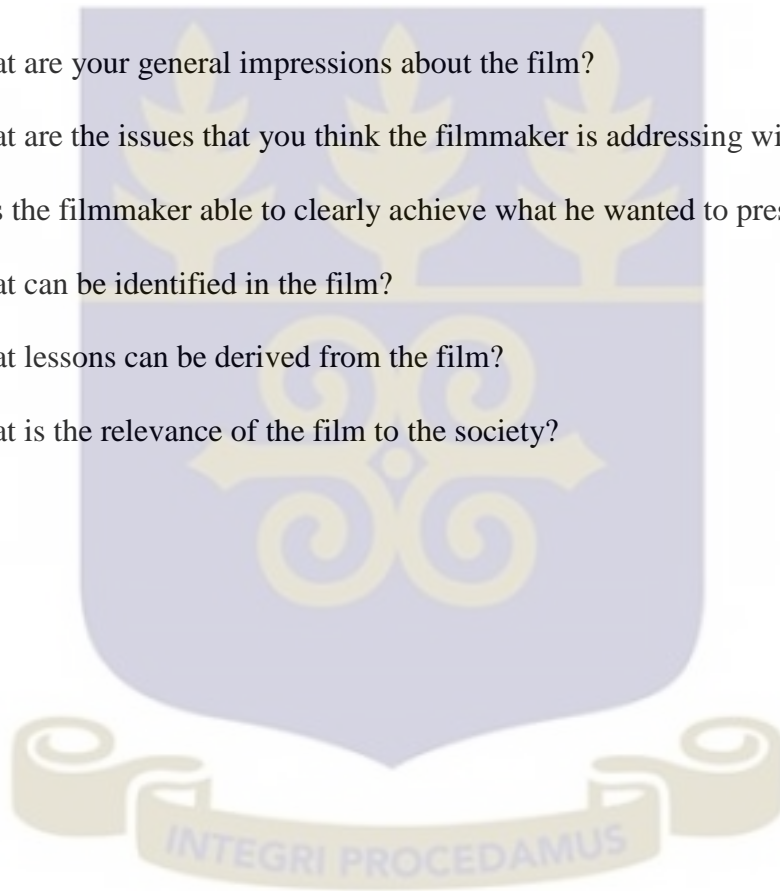
APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

TOPIC: EXAMINING THEMES AND STYLE IN KWAW ANSAH'S CREATIVE WORKS.

Introduction

This is an academic research aimed at examining themes and style in *Love Brewed in the African Pot*. I am grateful if you could help with the discussions. Information provided during these discussions would be treated with the utmost respect.

1. What are your general impressions about the film?
2. What are the issues that you think the filmmaker is addressing with his film?
3. Was the filmmaker able to clearly achieve what he wanted to present?
4. What can be identified in the film?
5. What lessons can be derived from the film?
6. What is the relevance of the film to the society?



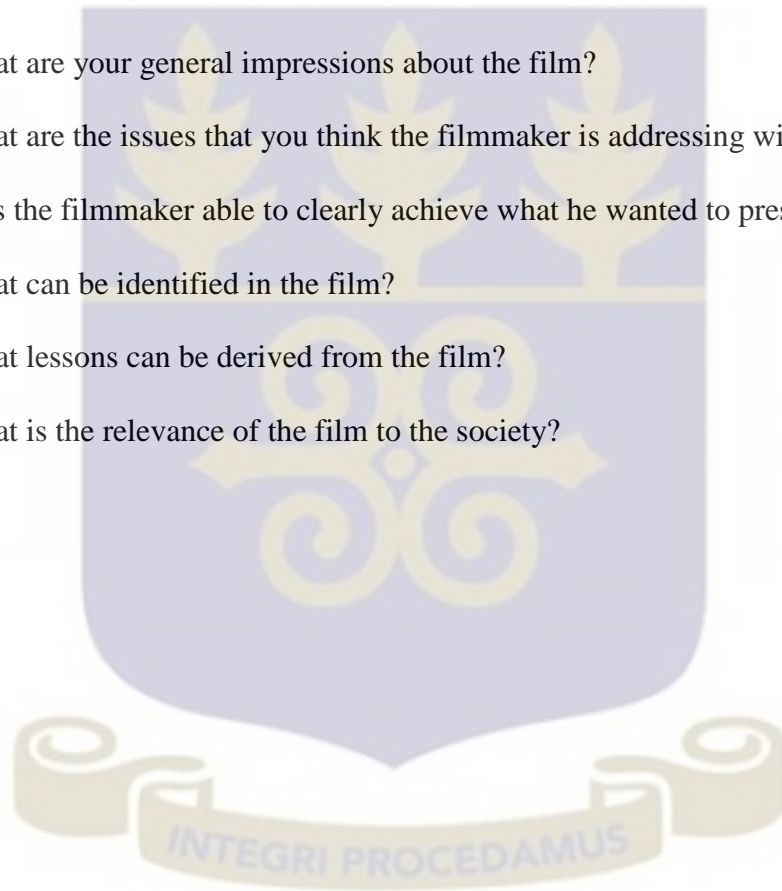
APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

TOPIC: EXAMINING THEMES AND STYLE IN KWAW ANSAH'S CREATIVE WORKS.

Introduction

This is an academic research aimed at examining themes and style in *Suffering to lose*. I am grateful if you could help with the discussions. Information provided during these discussions would be treated with the utmost respect.

1. What are your general impressions about the film?
2. What are the issues that you think the filmmaker is addressing with his film?
3. Was the filmmaker able to clearly achieve what he wanted to present?
4. What can be identified in the film?
5. What lessons can be derived from the film?
6. What is the relevance of the film to the society?



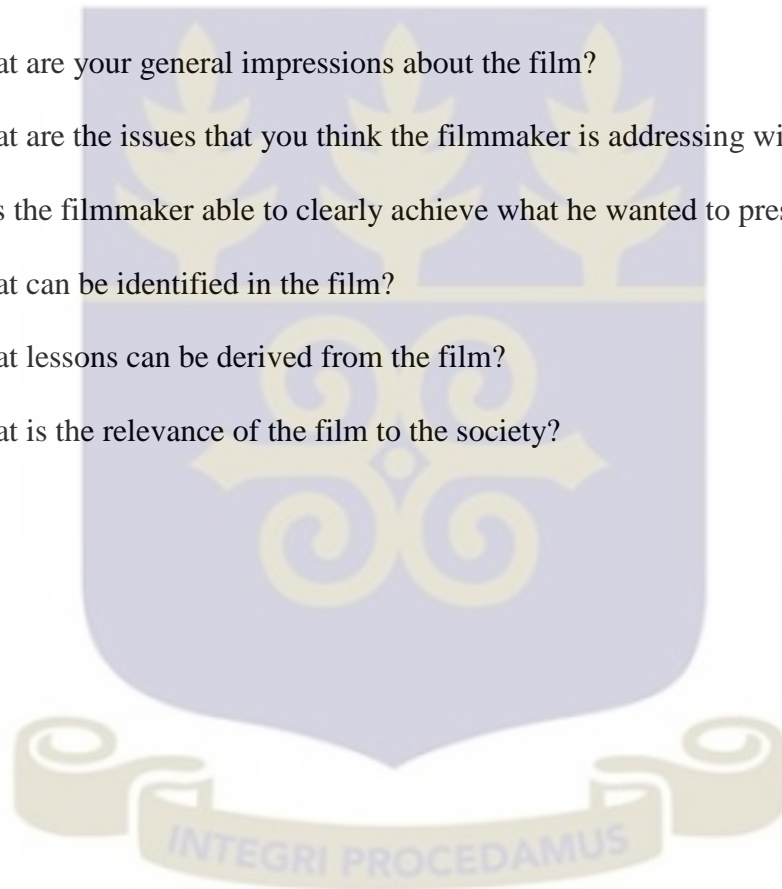
APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

TOPIC: EXAMINING THEMES AND STYLE IN KWAW ANSAH'S CREATIVE WORKS.

Introduction

This is an academic research aimed at examining themes and style in *The love of AA*. I am grateful if you could help with the discussions. Information provided during these discussions would be treated with the utmost respect.

1. What are your general impressions about the film?
2. What are the issues that you think the filmmaker is addressing with his film?
3. Was the filmmaker able to clearly achieve what he wanted to present?
4. What can be identified in the film?
5. What lessons can be derived from the film?
6. What is the relevance of the film to the society?



APPENDIX E: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION RECRUITMENT

ADVERTISEMENT

Attention all movie enthusiasts.

An MPhil part two candidate, Helen Tsotsoo Aryee from the University of Ghana is looking for interested film enthusiasts to participate in a research focus group discussion on films by Kwaw Ansah.

If you are interested in this discussion, please leave your contact details at the Theatre Arts General Office by Thursday, 14th November, 2013.

For further details concerning this project, please contact Helen Tsotsoo Aryee on 0244 951 346.

Thank You.

