Interlocking Narratives: Reconnoitering the Bond and Intersection of Africana women and Africa in Haile Gerima films.

Tigist Alemayehu Gion [1,*]

Aboneh Ashagrie Zeiyesus [2]

Samuel Tefera Alemu [3]

[1] PhD Candidate at Center for African and Asian Studies. Assistant professor at Addis Ababa University, School of Theater Arts.
[2] Associate professor at Addis Ababa University, School of Theater Arts.
[3] Associate professor at Addis Ababa University, Center for African and Asian Studies.
* Corresponding author. E-mail: tigistalem79@gmail.com

Tigist Alemayehu Gion   Aboneh Ashagrie Zeiyesus   Samuel Tefera Alemu
Volume 31, No. (2), 2025

Interlocking Narratives: Reconnoitring the Bond and Intersection of Africana women and Africa in Haile Gerima films.

Abstract:

This article examines the bond and intersection between Africana women residing outside of the continent and Africa, as portrayed in the films of Haile Gerima. Employing qualitative analysis, it scrutinizes the narrative and thematic elements from his works Child of Resistance (1972), Bush Mama (1976), Ashes and Embers (1982), and Sankofa (1993). The focus of the analysis rests on the shared history and memory between Africana women and their African roots, using insights from the Africana womanist theoretical viewpoint. Africana Womanism emphasizes the special experiences and challenges faced by women of African descent. It also stresses the importance of male alliance with women to fight gender inequality and create a fair society. Identifying Gerima as a male filmmaker who is concerned with Africana women's cinematic representation, the study of his films reveals links between African heritage and the complex issues of race, class, and gender related to their historical reality. Historical and social themes of slavery, anti-colonial struggles, and African culture connect these realities. He also uses the films to create stories that connect the burdens of past injustices with the strength and activism of Africana women today. Through this lens, Gerima's works emerge as a vital male contribution to the discourse surrounding Africana women.

Keywords: *Africana women, Africana womanism, Male alliance, Haile Gerima, films*

الروايات المتشابكة: استكشاف الرابطة والتقاطع بين النساء الأفريقيات وأفريقيا في أفلام هايلي جيريما

تيقيست أليمايهو جيون [1,*]

أبونه أشغري زيسوس [2]

صامويل تيفيرا أليمو [3]

الملخص:

يتناول هذا المقال العلاقة والتقاطع بين النساء الأفريقيات المقيمات خارج القارة وأفريقيا، كما تم تصويره في أفلام هايلي غيريما باستخدام التحليل النوعي، فإنه يدقق في العناصر السردية والموضوعية من أعماله طفل المقاومة (1972) بوش ماما (1976)، الرماد والجمر (1982)، وسانكوفا (1993) يركز التحليل على التاريخ المشترك والذاكرة بين النساء الأفريقيات وجذورهن الأفريقية، باستخدام رؤى من وجهة نظر نظرية المرأة الأفريقية تؤكد المرأة الأفريقية على التجارب والتحديات الخاصة التي تواجهها النساء من أصل أفريقي كما تؤكد على أهمية التحالف الذكوري مع النساء لمحاربة عدم المساواة بين الجنسين وخلق مجتمع عادل. من خلال تحديد جيريما كصانع أفلام ذكر مهتم بالتمثيل السينمائي للمرأة الأفريقية، تكشف دراسة أفلامه عن الروابط بين التراث الأفريقي والقضايا المعقدة المتعلقة بالعرق والطبقة والجنس المتعلقة بواقعهن التاريخي تربط الموضوعات التاريخية والاجتماعية للعبودية والنضالات ضد الاستعمار والثقافة الأفريقية هذه الحقائق كما يستخدم الأفلام لإنشاء قصص تربط بين أعباء الظلم الماضي وقوة ونشاط المرأة الأفريقية اليوم من خلال هذه العدسة، تظهر أعمال جيريما كمساهمة ذكورية حيوية في الخطاب المحيط بالنساء الأفريقيات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: *النساء الأفريقيات، المرأة الأفريقية، التحالف الذكوري، هايلي جيريما،*

---

[1] مرشح دكتوراه بمركز الدراسات الأفريقية والآسيوية أستاذة مساعدة بجامعة أديس أبابا، كلية الفنون المسرحية

[2] مساعد بروفيسر بجامعة أديس أبابا كلية الفنون المسرحية

[3] مساعد بروفيسر بجامعة أديس أبابا مركز الدراسات الأفريقية والآسيوية

[*] عنوان المراسلة: tigistalem79@gmail.com

Background

The term "Africana" has been used by intellectuals for more than a century to represent the life worlds and experiences of continental and diaspora Africans as well as the "convergence of most Africans with the racial term 'Black' and its many connotations" (Gordon, 2008, p. 1). According to Outlaw (1997), the racial identification of this population as African or of African descent is not based on shared genetic uniformity but rather on distinct combinations of specific traits that arise from local bio-cultural evolutions of groups originating in a particular geographical area—Africa. He has asserted that, over extended periods and across vast continental areas, these groups have shared increasingly varied biological and cultural heritages that have been perpetuated, to different extents, through origin, movements, and migrations. He has elaborated that groups within a race often have unique genetic characteristics and cultural practices, influenced by their "ancestors," which can lead to varying prevalence of physical traits and traditions across people of African origin. Therefore, the identification based on race, which comprises a blend of biological traits and cultural attributes that create common ancestral similarities among diverse groups of people, is denoted by the term "Africana," which specifically refers to individuals of African and those of African descent.

W.E.B. Du Bois is acknowledged for hypothesizing the notion while initially proposing the creation of the "Encyclopedia Africana" in 1909 to chronicle the history and condition with the contributions of Black intellectuals. According to Contee (1971), Du Bois has planned a special kind of encyclopedia by the name that only focuses on Africans and African descendants rather than all types of knowledge of every society. He proposed a comprehensive scientific work on people of African origin that would disprove the Enlightenment notion of the Black race that they do not have any significance in world civilization (Gates, 2000). Du Bois's unique interest in Africa and its daughters and sons in America, Europe, and other parts of the world led to a set sequence of Pan-African congresses held in different places (Gomez, 2004). Since then, with influences from different intellectuals, the concept and application of Africana thought have developed meaningfully.

Africana thought encompasses the range of inquiries arising from the concepts centering on African cultures and their hybrid and mixed forms found in Europe, North America, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. It also pertains to the questions posed by the historical endeavors of conquest and colonization that began in 1492, along with the ongoing struggles for liberation that persist today (Gordon, 2000b). Thus, the conception of Africana can be used as an umbrella notion to situate the collective experiences of African descent people living in different parts of the world.

Clenora Hudson-Weems has used this conception and developed a theory called "Africana womanism" to denote a paradigm that focused on the shared experiences and struggles of women of African descent. According to Nitiri (1993), the term was coined in the late 1980s by Hudson-Weems, representing an ideology that focuses on the experiences, realities, and needs of all women of African origin. Hudson-Weems (2001), the initial segment of the term "Africana" signifies the ethnic background of the woman in question, and this allusion to her ethnicity, which delineates her cultural identity, is connected to her ancestry and geographical origin—Africa. The latter segment of the expression "womanism" pertains exclusively to an individual belonging to the female gender within the

human species. In her interview with Pamela D. Reed, which was made in 2000 and published in her book in 2024, Hudson-Weems states, "Africana Womanism, which means that we deal with the Continental African, as well as the Diasporic African: African Caribbean, African Americans, African Europeans, and African Canadians—wherever we are, that's Africana.". Therefore, the term 'Africana woman´ serves as an inclusive term that recognizes women of African descent who live in different parts of the world. They share a common heritage and are connected through their African ancestry.

According to Iliffe (2007), African past has a unique population history that links the earliest human beings to their descendants. One is the transatlantic slave trade that forcibly transported millions of Africans to different parts of the world, where African women were subjected to the dehumanizing institution of slavery. In line with this argument, Hudson-Weems (1989) explained that people of African descent, forced from their continent due to slavery, have faced immense brutality; however, the identity of women has subjected them to a greater degree of vulnerability. They withstood profound adversities, encompassing both physical and sexual maltreatment, coerced labor, and familial disintegration. Philip Morgan, in his 2015 work, also affirmed Hudson-Weems's perspective and elaborated that, in African societies, giving birth was a significant milestone that earned women respect. However, under slavery in the American plantation economy, pregnancy was exploited to increase the enslaved labor force, benefitting the enslavers. He has justified that, on average, enslaved women had their first child at nineteen and continued to have kids every two and a half years, thereby providing their masters with additional labor, lower expenses, and greater value. Despite this, having children posed a significant burden for enslaved women, who had to prioritize the needs of their master and his family. Thus women's reproductive capacity was an economic boon for slave owners, but their identity as mothers was compromised by labor-intensive tasks like sugar cultivation.

Though enslaved women of African origin faced similar oppressive conditions, certain African-descendant women have shown remarkable resilience and defiance, as noted by Darboe (2006). They have taken on crucial roles in the struggle against slavery and, more recently, colonialism, not just as participants but also in leadership positions. The ramifications of these movements continue to resonate in contemporary Africana womanist issues; according to Dewey (2012), historians have traced the transatlantic ties among women abolitionists and enslaved women who advocate anti-slavery struggles.

In the context of colonialism, a significant and impactful chapter in the historical narrative of 19th and 20th century Africa, Makana (2019) asserts that Africana women during this era played a crucial role in both grassroots and broader organizational efforts, demonstrating remarkable courage by taking up arms and fighting alongside their male counterparts during the anti-colonial struggle. According to Shaldon (2017), these women find ways to claim the authority that they have been using as spiritual leaders, queen mothers, and women organization leaders until colonizers came to Africa. Since colonizers arrived in Africa, formal political engagement of women was predominantly overlooked by colonial administrations; however, they discovered innovative methods of participation and familial structures as the influence of Christianity expanded and urbanization progressed. Makana (2019) elaborates on how African women undertook a multitude of responsibilities for struggling colonialists, which encompassed organizing anti-tax protests, effectively disseminating messages that opposed colonial rule, and providing essential care for wounded

guerrilla fighters, all of which was accomplished in an environment where they often had to contend with severe and violent repercussions for their actions. It is noteworthy that numerous individuals who participated in these protests faced brutal consequences, including severe whipping, unlawful detention, and prolonged incarceration, all of which highlight the extreme risks associated with their courageous activism. In a similar vein, Hiralal (2017) emphasizes that across various regions in Africa, such as Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Uganda, and Kenya, despite their diverse ethnic backgrounds and cultural identities, women were actively involved in numerous movements that sought to liberate their nations from colonial domination that could be a source of inspiration for African-descendent women today.

In addition to the historical backdrop of slavery and colonialism, Falola (2003) highlights that African culture greatly impacts women's experiences. For him, cultural beliefs can serve as a gender justification. Age-old customs often dictate traditional gender roles and the distribution of rewards. Darboe (2006) also added that the rich and diverse African cultural traditions as well as practices have played a significant role in shaping the experiences of African descent women and added that. Falola (2003) discussed the conflict between this rich traditional culture and modern ways of living and how African culture, including gender conceptions, has fallen in the crossfire. He has identified that following the introduction of Islam and Christianity, rapid transformations have occurred, leading to shifts in ideas and beliefs, as well as considerable changes in material culture due to the use of imported goods. Western-oriented educational institutions have become pivotal in shaping the youth, and new professions have given rise to new gender roles. While traditional cultures tend to value the wisdom of elders, contemporary cultures place a higher value on the abilities of Western-educated elites. Traditional economies encouraged larger families, whereas modern economies are equipped to sustain smaller ones. The encounter with the West has ushered in new ways of thinking and lifestyles. The best way to handle these changes and what to keep and drop have been hotly debated. Despite all, Darboe (2006) has argued that African traditions can be preserved and passed down through generations, providing a sense of identity among the African men and women in the diaspora.

Research Method

The data to be analyzed in this article is in the form of reality that is portrayed in film content, cinematic techniques, expressions, and symbols. With that, qualitative analysis is chosen as the most appropriate research method. According to Flick (2002), a qualitative approach helps researchers who use films as a source that accounts for the social construction of reality and interprets different facts at diverse stages of meanings of any kind represented by the films. It is an action that stresses a method people analyze and understand social or individual realities. In order to make such understanding, as Zohrabi (2013) has explained, it uses interviews, diaries, journals, observations, and immersions, and open-ended questionnaires to obtain, analyze, and interpret the data content analysis of visual and textual materials and oral history.

This article seeks to examine how the relationship and intersection of Africana women with Africa are portrayed in films. As such, observation has been chosen as a suitable method for gathering data within qualitative research. This method provides a framework for understanding the reality being explored while also considering the contexts

and meanings presented in the films. Consequently, after reviewing all eleven films created by Haile Gerima, *Bush Mama, Child of Resistance, Sakofa,* and *Ashes and Embers* have been selected, as their stories largely focus on the experiences of Africana women living outside the continent.

As Leite et al. (2021) requested, while analyzing a film, one should break the film down into its constituent elements; scene-by-scene descriptions are made accordingly. Before scene-by-scene analysis, observing the films, each film in its entirety is considered. Major dialogues, scenes, motifs, and expressions that create patterns of meanings that show the bond and intersection with Africana women to Africa are identified. Then the most key extracts and scenes are identified. Structured analyses of individual scenes, which will lead to detailed meanings, are conducted. This is done by giving sequences of the scenes of each film, writing descriptions of each scene by identifying directly observable data shown in and indirectly observable data in inline cinematic languages and techniques presented in each scene.

The examination provided here uses Africana womanism as its theoretical lens, interpreting each scene distinctly. The application of Africana womanist theory has been explained by Hudson-Weems in her 1997 work titled Africana *Womanism and the Critical Need for Africana Theory and Thought*. She has justified that Africana womanism serves as a framework that integrates thought with action. It calls for an understanding of Africana women to be centered on African identity, deeply rooted in African traditions, and focused on the overall needs of Africana communities. She also emphasized the importance of acknowledging historical, social, and cultural contexts while analyzing texts related to Africana women. According to Ahmed (2017), scholars are urged to move away from prevailing Western theories and prioritize an Afrocentric viewpoint when examining the particular issues and experiences of Africana communities in Africana texts. In this regard, Asante (1983) posits that the Afrocentric perspective is an academic approach that prioritizes African history and consciousness in any analytical endeavor. Afrocentricity is also characterized as a mindset and practice that stem from the cultural representations and human interests of African individuals and their descendants (Maulana, 1982). In other words, it is essential to recognize African individuals as people who possess and have contributed to their own distinct culture. This theory is also seen as more evolved due to its focus on the united struggle of both Africana men and women (Copeland, 2021). Hudson-Weems (1997) advocated for Africana theories to analyze Africana texts to ensure they remain both authentic and precise, preserving their original meaning and significance. Because it is rooted in African experiences, history, and culture, as well as its clear request of alliance between African women and men, Africana womanism is particularly apt for interpreting a male filmmaker and Haile Gerima's representation of Africana women's ties to Africa.

Africana Womanism: A Theory that Summons Male Alliance

Africana womanism is a concept introduced by Clenora Hudson-Weems, an African American theorist, activist, critic, and writer, during the late 1980s (Dahy, 2021). Emerging from the rich heritage of African womanhood, Africana womanism represents a genuine Afrocentric paradigm (Ahmed 2017). As Hudson-Weems (2001) explains, Africana womanism is an ideology designed explicitly for all women of African descent. Rooted in African culture,

it prioritizes the specific experiences, challenges, needs, and aspirations of Africana women. It notably distinguishes itself from various forms of feminism by rejecting them as both racist and classist. Instead, it asserts itself as an independent theory meant for all women of African descent, grounded in the diverse cultures, experiences, aspirations, and needs found in African heritage (Makgato et al., 2018). Emphasizing African culture, it is established for women of African descent in response to the shortcomings of previous theories.

According to Hudson-Weems (1993), unlike white feminists who advocate for subjugation, Africana people do not view men as their enemy. For her, compared to white men, African descent men have never held the same institutionalized power to oppress African descent women. Africana women's struggle for independence and existence is a fight against the system that requires the participation of both men and women, regardless of their gender. She has added that the privilege enjoyed by white men is viewed as a political issue arising from persistent gender discrimination, rather than a personal concern for Africana women or men. Dahy (2021) argued that Africana womanism is an African-centered framework that focuses on the nuances of the African family, highlighting adaptable and harmonious relationships between men and women. In contrast to feminism and womanism, it also considers the intersections of race, class, and gender, stressing the significance of male alliances in tackling racial and class injustices to uplift women. It is a family-focused, race-empowerment concept that underscores the interplay of race, class, and gender (Hubbard, 2010).

Africana womanism highlights that Africana women inherit a set of eighteen characteristics, including self-naming, self-definition, family-centeredness, wholeness, authenticity, role flexibility, adaptability, genuine sisterhood, male compatibility, strength, and respect, recognition of elders, ambition, mothering, nurturing, and spirituality (Alexander-Floyd and Simien, 2006). These eighteen characteristics come from the rich legacy of African womanhood and culture (Ahmed, 2017). The traits are cultivated within respectful relationships with African descent people which is a tradition passed down from their African heritage that challenges traditional gender norms by promoting a more inclusive and rightful society where both men and women can succeed. They are required for the solidity as well as the security of a family-centered community where African men and women are attributed with their fight against racial oppression (Dahy, 2021). Through emphasizing the interconnectedness of male and female roles, it seeks to create a harmonious balance that benefits the entire community.

To collaboratively address critical social issues affecting Africana individuals and society at large, Africana womanist thought holds the promise of bridging the gender divide and fostering healing for both men and women. Hudson-Weems (1993) also elaborated that a lot of the time the term "feminist" breeds intolerance towards men, which in turn fuels sexism and female bullying. While Africana womanists do not require it, white feminists believe that their completeness depends on separation from the male. It takes the active involvement of both genders to fight for freedom and dignity, and women's relationships with men are "not adversarial or competitive" because it is a complicated and interwoven struggle. She further asserted that White women view sexism as the enemy and Black women are more concerned with the effect of racism on their lives, and the women's movement has been attacked for taking a harsh stance against men. And "womanist" for her is defined as an "African woman (diaspora or continental) who is committed to her people

and culture, the reclamation of her historical past, and Africana liberation movements worldwide" (pp. 61-68). Because of this reason, she sees a man not as an enemy to Africana women; rather, he is "the flip side of the coin" who collaborates with his female counterpart, the "original side of the coin," to confront their shared oppression to establish family stability and maintain indigenous cultural autonomy (Hudson-Weems, 2001). According to Hubbard (2010), "being in 'concert with males' and being 'male-compatible' can be treated under the African-centered principle in female/male relations, complementarity, which is a major theme in Africana womanist thought" (p. 38).

Therefore, Africana Womanism advocates for an African-centered comprehension of Africana women's experiences and their historical and contemporary relationships with men within their communities. Despite its significance, Africana womanism has faced criticism from scholars like Alexander-Floyd and Simien (2006), who contend that the theory assumes a composite African culture without adequately considering its historical context and interactions with other cultures. In contrast, Africana womanists argue that the theory acknowledges the distinct experiences of women of African descent, which are shaped by their historical and cultural backgrounds, influencing Africana women's identities and cultures. According to Nitri (1993), after discussing the essence of Africana women and their situation in the introduction of the book Africana *Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves, it* pointed out that any action about Africana women must consider the historical facts of control and cultural bias from Western societies, as well as the lasting effects of slavery, colonialism, and oppression. Women of African origin, whether in forced exile in Europe, Latin America, the United States, or even Africa, face distinctive challenges and adversities, often depicted as impoverished, struggling, and burdened with labor-intensive endeavors. She highlights that while the dismantling of slavery, colonialism, and apartheid is a documented historical process, the burden of oppression persists today. Women worldwide, irrespective of their continent or race, continue to endure sexist subjugation and exploitation. Because of this, Dahy's (2021) analysis identified the Africana womanist hypothesis as an Afro-centric ideology. She also assumes men as allies who can combat racial oppression, classism, and sexism while upholding cultural independence in collaboration with Africana women. This makes the theory that prioritizes the experiences of Africana women, including their historical and contemporary roles within their communities alongside men, imagining Africa as central to its discourse.

Consequently, Africana womanism is utilized for the analysis of Haile Gerima's films because of its roots in Africana culture and its depiction of a balanced relationship between African men and women, making it especially pertinent for films produced by a male director. Its concentration on African-centered narratives and its focus on the bond between Africana women and Africa, alongside the participation of men, make it a fitting framework for assessing the representation of Africana women. The women under consideration include the main characters in the films, embodying roles such as fighters, mothers, grandmothers, and nationalists. All women are confronting the system rather than competing against their male counterparts. The depictions of women in these films do not compete with those of men. They are illustrated as political activists, nationalists, historians (as observed in *Child of Resistance*, *Ashes and Embers,* and *Sankofa*), or dependable family leaders (as demonstrated in *Bush Mama*). These women display strong and commendable traits. These positive characteristics align with the eighteen unique futures of Africana women suggested

by Africana womanists, which adhere to positive traditional African values. Haile Gerima, a distinguished male filmmaker known for his portrayals of African subjects and people of African descent, particularly resilient Africana women, makes a persuasive case for exploring how male directors portray women from the same cultural context. The way his narratives challenge existing systems regarding Africana individuals underscores the need to analyze his films through an Africana womanist lens. Therefore, Africana womanism acts as an appropriate theoretical framework for the present analysis, aiming to evaluate a male filmmaker's work from an Africana womanist viewpoint.

Ethiopian-born Haile Gerima is a filmmaker living in the United States and making African-centered films for more than half a century. He is an "independent filmmaker, storyteller, screenwriter, philosopher, director, and editor that can be considered as an archive of past memories and present interpretations as well as casting vision for the future and produced eleven poetic films (Belachew, 2021). His films are Hour *Glass* (1972), *Child of Resistance* (1972), *Bush Mama* (1976), *Ashes and Embers* (1982), *Mirt Sost Shi Amit*, also referred to as *Harvest: 3,000 Years* (1976), *Wilmington 10—U.S.A. 10,000* (1978), *After Winter: Sterling Brown* (1985), *Sankofa (1993*), *Imperfect Journey* (1994), *Adwa—An African Victory (1999*), and *Teza* (2008). There are many scholars, critics, and filmgoers who valued him for unique cinematic works that brought African issues to the center.

At the heart of most of his films are Africana women whose heritage traces back to Africa, prompting a critical reassessment of his body of work through an Africana womanist theoretical perspective. Gerima stands out as a key figure deeply committed to depicting the lives and experiences of Africana women. In his 2023 writing, *Where Are the African Women Filmmakers?,* Gerima fervently calls for greater representation of African filmmakers who are capable of authentically exploring the intricate identities of women of African descent, thereby effectively confronting the neocolonial ideologies promoted by dominant cinematic narratives. He expresses his dedication to telling stories that highlight the lived experiences of women of African descent in his films, drawing significant inspiration from the female figures of his early life, especially his mother and grandmother. This viewpoint reflects an African understanding of gender relations that resonates with the goals of Africana womanists, who strive to promote genuine transformative change in the identities and realities of individuals of African descent. As a result, this article seeks to explore the connections between Africana women living outside the continent and Africa within the films of this male director. Ultimately, it aims to improve the representation of African women in cinema and highlight the importance of diverse and inclusive narratives.

Results and Discussion

Women residing outside of Africa and their bond to Africa can be seen in relation to different historical and social facts that will go with diverse experiences and different filmic narrative techniques. The themes of Haile Gerima's Sankofa (1993), *Child of Resistance* (1972*), Bush Mama* (1976*), and Ashes and Embers (1982)* are connected to the legacy of slavery and systemic racism; anti-colonial struggle significantly contributes to the narratives surrounding Africana women. According to Belachew (2021), the filmmaker Gerima is a Pan-Africanist visionary who is known for creating cinematic narratives connecting African stories to the diaspora and uses cinema as a weapon to voice stories from the owner's perspective and to reclaim identity and dignity. His cinematic narratives are

rooted in the African historical reality of the past and the social reality of the present. These films, directly and indirectly, relate the forced displacement of Africans throughout the transatlantic slave trade and the lasting effects of colonialism coupled with the ongoing battles against racial and gender oppression. Engaging in a comprehensive analysis of the narratives presented in these films within the Africana womanist framework, Ahemed (2017) claims that those who are "first supporters of the functionality" (p. 61) of art will further facilitate understandings of the intricate relationships among race, class, and gender, thereby offering a profound investigation into these intersecting social dynamics.

Among Gerima's films, *Sankofa* is the one that is grounded in the Transatlantic slave trade, which forcibly transported millions of Africans from various regions of Africa to the Americas. This slave trade "embarked about 12.5 million slaves from Africa, changing the demographics, economics, society, and politics of the eastern coast of the New World" (Black, 2015). The film mainly digs into the brutal experiences of Africana women characters, such as contemporary model Mona, who is taken back in time by an ancestral spirit to embody the identity of Shola, an enslaved woman of this time. Through Shola's perspective, Mona witnesses the shocks of slavery, including sexual abuse and torture, while exploring themes of African identity and resistance.

The cinematic narrative begins with an aged divine drummer, also named Sankofa, performing the traditional music using drums as a medium to establish communication with the ancestral spirits of Ghana. In Ghana, an Akan word, "Sankofa," denotes the relevance of the past and the need to return to investigate the past (Adu-Boahen and Akansor, 2019). Sankofa is the mythical bird whose head is faced in the opposite direction to its body, collecting eggs or seeds of wisdom, and implies a need to delve into African history and culture (Belachew, 2021). Mona, the protagonist The character of the film is a modern individual of African descent and an American fashion model who makes an encounter with Sankofa during a photographic session along the Ghanaian coastline. Back to the fifteenth century, this cost was used by the Portuguese, Swedes, Dutch, English, Danish, French, and Brandenburg-Prussians along the Gold Coast; these fortifications were used to incarcerate captive Africans prior to their transport across the Atlantic (Engmann, 2023). After this occurrence, Mona, dubbed as Shola, returns through a contracted corridor as if she came from another world into the light naked as a newborn. She is then hugged by an African woman who covers her in a cloth. After this occurrence, Mona, now referred to as Shola, traverses a narrow corridor as if she has emerged from another realm into the light, as innocent as a newborn. She is then embraced by an African woman who wraps her in a cloth. Kande and Karaganis (1998) describe this filmic portrayal of her as a "reborn African," distancing her from the West and the locations of the diaspora where she is redeemed and finds her rightful place among those who, fully aware of their African history, are now at peace with themselves and with Africa. Africa here is represented as "the past and Ghana.". She experiences slavery, sexual abuse, and torture. At Lafayette plantation in the Southern United States, she faces maltreatment and sexual violence. Though she is perceived as racially and sexually inferior by the white slaveholders, she endures physical violence, sexual assault, and economic marginalization. Martin (2009) analyzes this film reenactent as it underscores the sorrow of a common racial legacy tied to slavery. This is especially apparent in Mona. Gerima juxtaposes the pre-colonial African identity with its traces in the postcolonial era by showcasing her transformation from a Black model, Mona, to an African slave, Shola.

Mona's transformation and experience of slavery as Shola show the psychological impact on the identity of their African descendants and show how the history of slavery relates to race. Gerima initially sought to connect contemporary Africana women in the United States with their ancestral roots in Ghana, Africa. He then informed her about the history of slavery that brought her forebears to her current home. Lastly, he placed the character in scenarios that encourage her to reevaluate and redefine her identity. Kande and Karaganis (1998) claim this way of the filmmaker's representation as a three-step plan that will help the Black community to identify their historical past. Mona's (also Shola) dual sole intersecting in a single body not only shows the historical bond of Africana women with Africa but also portrays the intergenerational history and trauma experienced by descendants of enslaved Africans and its legacy. The non-linear narrative framework and panning cinematographic techniques highlight the transformative journey of Africana women, transitioning from modernity to slavery, underscoring the interconnectedness of individual and collective experiences. The story investigates the complexities of slavery and its relation to race, class, and gender dynamics.

On the Lafayette plantation, Mona/Shola meets Nunu, Noble Ali, and Shango, who each resist the daily realities of slavery in unique manners. Despite the ongoing oppression, Nunu, Shango, and Ali significantly motivate Mona to restore her African identity and stand up against her oppressors while finding ways to uphold their cultural heritage and safeguard their identities. According to Martin (2009), Nunu is the personification of African motherhood who participates with Shango in an underground society. In secret, at night, the enslaved individuals from the plantation and other nearby estates convene; the community decides to devise a strategy aimed at liberating themselves. Ultimately, Mona returns to the present, being enlightened and reconnecting with her African roots. This symbolizes the importance of understanding one's past to understand the future. The film ends with a message of liberation and empowerment for those African men and women who have embraced the meaning of Sankofa and reconnecting with their heritage through Mona. According to Martin (2009), Gerima makes oblique references to a transatlantic African diaspora at the start and end of the film. Through Mona, the filmmaker shows Mona navigating the intersection of her African lineage and confronting the root of racial discrimination and gender-based injustices against Africana people, thus encumbering them with a dual layer of inequity. Mona's bond with her African roots facilitates a deeper understanding of her ancestors and their endurance against the atrocities of slavery, including sexual and economic abuse. While the film intentionally stresses the unsympathetic treatment of white slave owners, it simultaneously portrays the humanity, respect, strong bond, and self-respect that existed among the enslaved African men and women between each other.

Bush Mama is another film by Haile Gerima made in the beginning of his filmmaking career. This film also centrally presents the experiences of characters of African descent. The central character is unemployed Dorothy, who is a pregnant Africana woman living in Los Angeles, mainly giving care for daughter Luann and her boyfriend, T. C., who is a Vietnam War veteran that was wrongfully imprisoned. The film captures Dorothy's journey as she deals with tough decisions to care for her daughter, support her incarcerated boyfriend, give birth, and lose the support that she gets from the government, or abort the baby and have the money to support the remaining family. She could not decide, though she refused to

abort as her caseworker pressured her to consider an abortion, threatening to cut off her benefits from the system. By following this Dorothy's internal conflict with her surroundings and self, the film depicts Dorothy's struggle with poverty, racism, and the legal system, symbolizing the resilience of Africana women. The film shows the emotions and dialogues/voiceover dialogues of Dorothy while she goes to different spots: the street, the care worker's office, home, or with her neighbors, or interacting with her boyfriend T.C. in prison through letters he wrote to her.

Her initial appearance occurs on the street, where a boy forcibly snatches her pocketbook after a brief struggle and flees around a corner. This moment follows a scene depicting the police's harassment and interrogation of two Black men, presented in slow motion. The accompanying soundtrack features a complex blend of helicopter sounds, police walkie-talkies, and the pressing inquiries of welfare caseworkers, illustrating not only the overt and visual nature of the film's action but also the intense stress of the environment she is departing from. Subsequently, she finds herself in a welfare office, awaiting her turn while listening to other women grapple with their paperwork. Suddenly, a man known for harassing the staff appears outside wielding an axe; the police are summoned, and to the shock of everyone in the office, officers fatally shoot the man. Her days are consumed by visits to the welfare office and half-hearted battles with bureaucrats, leaving her completely drained. Everyone in Dorothy's life appears to possess more strength and conviction than she does early in the film. The palpable sense of imprisonment and frustration among these characters transformed Dorothy into a conscious and decisive Africana woman. From that on she undergoes a transformation from a sleepwalking state to embody the spirit of the African militant heroine depicted on her wall poster, a picture of an Angolan woman carrying a child and a gun during the anti-colonial struggle.

Angi is a character that Dorothy did not give attention to and played a major role in giving meaning to her fragmented imagination and transformation. She is a teenage girl involved in protests, one day returning with two posters for Dorothy's wall. She likes to put up angry posters in Dorothy's apartment because her mother disapproves of such things. One poster depicts a Black man who was shot twenty-five times by law enforcement, while the other features a woman holding a child and a machine gun, symbolizing the struggle for Angola's liberation. In the booklet titled *Liberation in Southern Africa: the Organization of Angolan Women (1976)*, it is emphasized that Angolan women took on vital responsibilities, from directly engaging in the anti-colonial guerrilla fight to challenging colonial oppression and gender norms. Though the headline is bold, Gerima deliberately refrains from showing the photograph until Dorothy herself is prepared to gaze at it in indignation and almost disbelief.

Empowered by the resilience of these Angolan women, Dorothy finds herself mirrored in their struggle, igniting within her a newfound determination to combat the racial injustices plaguing her Africana family, neighbors, and community. She takes a stand against the oppressive racial system that perpetrates abuse within her community and the heinous act of raping black girls. As Asante (2003) stated, "to be Black is to be against all forms of oppression, racism, patriarchy, and child and white racial domination" (p. 2). Her transition and resistance are marked by her actions of killing a white policeman who raped a teenage Black girl and discarding her wig.

Thus, Bush *Mama* stands out as a remarkable piece of cinema, showcasing the development of Dorothy's political consciousness come to understand her African roots through a single image and it as a result brings a profound impact has on her identity. Gerima specifically reconnects Africana women with Africa visually through a single picture hanging on Dorothy's wall. In this film the viewer can comprehend that self-consciousness is not something to be raised by others but something to be found within oneself. It shows this through Dorothy's journey of self-discovery, highlighted by the movie's ending, which is both subtle and significantly transformative. Thus, the film portrays the development of Dorothy's racial awareness and the transformative effect it has on her African-rooted identity and gender injustice.

The third film that relates to Africana women and her African roots is *Child of Resistance.* It is a film that centers on an unnamed woman's imprisonment resulting from her advocacy for social justice. The film is a parabolic representation of Angela Davis, who is a US author, poet, and activist and is living proof that it is possible to survive, withstand, and overcome the full force of group power and the state fixed on her destruction because she inspires collective solidarity (Barat, 2016). Devis's scholarship on women, workers, and Black people helped keep alive a radical vision, analysis, and praxis (West, 2016). Based on its story on the imprisonment of Davis, the narrative is primarily set in a prison cell following a story of this unnamed Black woman who expresses her refusal of subjugation. It depicts the Africana woman who is revealed as a fighter against the system that identified it as "the white man's system.". This cinematic piece goes between her current circumstances in a prison room and energetic dreams, voiceover dialogues against extravagant depictions of African descent people against harsh realities that she thinks are hidden from them.

In her voiceover dialogue, she stresses the need for African descent women and men to understand their origin by identifying her Black community as descendants of Africa. Since the time they left their "motherland"/Africa, their ancestors have been confronting oppressive systems. Within her self-examination, she draws strength from her ancestry and acknowledges the necessity of solidarity between Black men and women. She also conveys her frustration at being reduced to labels like "thief" and "criminal," which misrepresent the distinctive identity of Africana people who come out of such struggle and resilience. The character examines her identity and the challenges faced by Africana men, reflecting on their historical and social roles. She expresses frustration with the objectification and manipulation of Africana identities by white society, portraying it as a systemic war against people of African descent. The film contrasts her confinement with montages of oppression, including images of young Black children in chains and a white performer entertaining a segregated audience, highlighting the harsh realities of racial inequality. To Africana womanists, it is also important to stress the importance of social context to comprehend the reality of the Africana communities' experiences and struggles as oppressed people (Ahmed, 2017).

Her voice-over highlights her strength and commitment to avoid being victimized, stressing her unwillingness to yield to racial and sexual oppression. She urges Africana men to acknowledge their common fight, appealing for them to respect women and come together for freedom. In her voice-over message, she invites Africana men to stand by her side as:

> BLACK MAN… JUST START TREATING HER (WOMAN) RIGHT SHE
> IS YOU MEN SHE IS YOU. NO! NO! … DON'T GIVE ME THAT SAME

STORY. GOT REVENGE YOUR MASTER. CHANGE YOUR MASTER. IT IS YOUR LIFE I KNOW! I KNOW! YOU ARE THE WAY YOU ARE. IT IS ABOUT TO CHANGE THAT ONE HOW LONG YOU ARE PLAYING A GAME? STOP ACTING LIKE YOUR MASTER ... YOU CAN GET IT TOGETHER. YOU AND ME!   YA! JUST GOT YOUR SHAPE UP! AND CLEAN YOUR … LET US MOVE AM YOUR QUEEN AND YOU ARE MY KING. WE WALK TALL AND PROUD WITHOUT ANY (GERIMA, 1972,)

Her speech emphasizes a deep relationship between her racial and gender identities, highlighting the significance of collective support in addressing systemic injustices. Ultimately, the film advocates for empowerment, self-awareness, and the significance of community in the pursuit of true freedom. The subversive visual storytelling is amplified by a raw monologue that offers a window into the protagonist's innermost thoughts and fears. Through voice-over narration, her emotions, thoughts, and raw feelings are conveyed to the external world, embodying the archetype of the Freedom Fighter or Liberator. Referencing her ancestors, she learns resilience from African slaves, claiming them as her lineage from Africa. This film portrays the strength of the Africana women character, who, despite facing racial and sexual oppression, demonstrates resilience similar to her forebears, who she claims as Africans.

She identifies herself as a Black woman of African descent, living under the oppressive system of Whiteness and battling against both mental and institutional slavery, just as her ancestors during the transatlantic slave trade. She embraces her African heritage and refers to her community as "my people." In her narration, she expresses a desire for unity with Black men, asserting her identity as a Black woman of African heritage and emphasizing their shared struggles. She firmly connects her identity to Africa and identifies those African individuals who arrived in the Americas for sugar plantations as her forebears. She acknowledges that her challenges are intertwined with those of her brothers and sisters, highlighting that many are still trapped in a colonial mindset. However, she is determined not to succumb to this mentality, viewing her mind as a refuge against manipulation.

The other film of Gerima, *Ashes and Embers,* depicts the story of Ney Charles, who is a veteran lost with an unfamiliar system that rewards him with nothing but racism. His girlfriend, rather, is an activist in the civil rights movement, and his grandmother, forced to sell her hard-won land to schemers, was around him. Within this context, the film presents his inner fight challenged by his African-descent grandmother and girlfriend, Liza Jane. The film presents Ned, with hunting memories of the Vietnam War; he is forced to change his perception of his and the life of his surroundings by juxtaposing the ideology of his grandmother, who is a spiritual and resilient Africana woman, and his girlfriend, who is an advocate of Black Nationalism. According to Stephenson (2018), the film is a kind of cinematic resistance that might help to revisit the multiplicity of trauma and identity by building complex characters and a narrative of psychological trauma and dislocation by presenting Ned's difficulty to connect with his grandmother, girlfriend, and close friends. Following his return from the Vietnam War, the protagonist grapples with a sense of alienation from both middle-class Africana people who have assimilated into the system and radicals striving for societal change. Supporting this interpretation, Kai (2016) also understands, emphasizing personal and historic memory using nonconventional and semiotic

techniques; it reconnoiters Ned's psychological dislocation and trauma as he wanders from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., to the countryside trying to understand his tormented past.

Through Ney's grandmother and girlfriend, we come to the realization that his alienation is rooted in the deeply ingrained racism against Black people, a potent yet often invisible force. He has witnessed his girlfriend expressing emotionally how African descent people face racial and economic segregation for being Black and African descendent and calling upon all Africana men and women to unite in challenging the domineering structures. She, who is a member of a discussion group with a Black Nationalist ideology, plays a key role in shaking his beliefs. As specified by Gerima (1991), Liza Jane is portrayed as an informed and articulate activist involved in a study group focused on systemic transformation. She has a complex emotional and physical relationship with Ned, which highlights their contrasting approaches to struggle. While Liza Jane engages in intellectual debates about class and racial exploitation, Nay remains detached, symbolizing his emotional turmoil. Their conflict is essential for their personal growth, with Jane embodying intellectualism and him representing emotional struggle. The film emphasizes the effects of racism and the fight for liberation through the group's discussions, of which this Africana woman is a member, presented in a cinematic montage.

Although the film's protagonist is Ney, the profound impact of his girlfriend on his ideological evolution is undeniable. His girlfriend has given a major place in the film's story to illuminate the persuasive impact of racism and the struggles for liberation, portrayed through this group's discussions. As Dahy (2021) states, race and class biases are prioritized over gender issues for African descent women, and she was more concerned about her race than her gender. But dynamic underscores the active participation of Africana women in combating racism alongside Africana men, despite facing strains in their relationships. It underscores how the burden of racism goes beyond gender issues, stressing the united fight against systemic oppression.

Ney's grandmother embodies the strength of a generation, reminding her grandson of the challenges and beliefs of their forebears. She represents the "amber, the fire, and the struggle—personifying history, time, and space." Gerima (1991) highlighting the ongoing fight for conviction and survival in rural Africa. During Nay's visit, she urges him to maintain belief, drawing inspiration from their ancestors who once possessed vast resources and land in their origin. Ney, however, does not fit with her life in rural Virginia. He is on an ongoing journey, and Gerima explained him as "a ticking time bomb that will either be self-destructive or be detonated toward self-preservation" (Gerima, 1991). But Liza Jane also understands the significance of the grandmother and takes her as her own, ensuring the past is reassured and guaranteed. Gerima aims to make the viewer meet the grandmother as a caretaker and bearer of culture. Through both Ney's girlfriend and his grandmother, Gerima, emblematic racial issues often pose greater challenges than questions of gender for Africana women in the United States.

Conclusion

Sankofa, Bush Mama, Child of Resistance, and *Ashes and Embers* found to be films that emblem the bond between Africana women and their African root focusing on shared histories of slavery, anti-colonial struggles, and African ancestry. Haile Gerima creates

cinematic narratives that show the complexities of Africana women's identities and the challenges Africana women have been facing. He places his fictional characters and narratives within wider historical and cultural frameworks that range from 19th-century slavery to contemporary racial, economic, and gender issues, underscoring the importance of Africana women's experiences in relation to Africa. His unique narrative techniques and portrayal of Africana women as agents of change not only advocate for social and political justice but also demonstrate how Africana men can be involved in addressing the representation of Africana women.

Through the Wight of historical injustice related to Africa are fallen Africana women characters, Gerima's cinematic narratives crafted not to overshadow Africana women's roles as fighters, activists, and thinkers, care givers and decision making skill. By centering Africana women's stories, Gerima not only acknowledges their historical challenges but also calls for a deeper exploration of their triumphs and resilience by connecting it with African History and Heritage. The essentiality of the dual focus for understanding the deep spectrum of their experiences and their historical and cultural realities directly related to their African Origin. The cinematic works portray the connections between Africana women and their African heritage, emphasizing the complex interactions of race, class, and gender. Situated within broader historical and cultural paradigms, these films highlight the significance of Africana women's experiences in relation to the African continent.

Acknowledgment

References:

Adu-Boahen, A. O., & Akansor, J. (2019). Embracing the past: Transatlantic slave trade in Ghana and the Holocaust in Germany. *The Councilor, 80*(2), 3.

Ahmed, N. M. (2017). An Africana womanist reading of the unity of thought and action. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 22*(3), 58–64. https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2203055864

Alexander-Floyd, N. G., & Simien, E. M. (2006). Revisiting "What's in a name?": Exploring the contours of Africana womanist thought. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies, 27*(1), 67–89. https://doi.org/10.1353/fro.2006.0011

Asante, M. K. (1983). *The Afrocentric idea.* University of Pennsylvania Press.

Asante, M. K. (2003). *Afrocentricity: The theory of social change.* African American Images.

Barat, F. (2016). Introduction. In *Freedom is a constant struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the foundations of a movement.* Haymarket Books.

Belachew, T. (2021). *Stories from the fireplace: Theological meditations on Haile Gerima's cinema.* Langaa RPCID.

Black, J. (2015). *The Atlantic slave trade in world history.* Routledge.

Contee, C. G. (1971). The Encyclopedia Africana project of W. E. B. Du Bois. *African Historical Studies, 4*(1), 77–91.

Copeland, T. T. (2021). "Did he freeze?": Afrofuturism, Africana womanism, and *Black Panther*'s portrayal of the women of Wakanda. *African Identities, 22*(2), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2021.2005534

Dahy, A. (2021). Africana womanism in Osonye Tess Onwueme's *Tell It to Women: An Epic Drama for Women. Harmes 37, 10*(3), 61–87. https://doi.org/10.21608/herms.2021.207288

Darboe, F. (2006). Africans and African Americans: Conflicts, stereotypes, and grudges. *PSU McNair Scholars Online Journal, 2*(1), 48–80. http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/mcnair/vol2/iss1/19

Dewey, S. P. (2012). Aspects of sisterhood and slavery: Transatlantic anti-slavery activism and women's rights. *Counterpoints, 406*, 130–150. https://www.jstor.org/stable/42981625

Engmann, R. A. A. (2023). Slaving and slave trading in Africa. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 52*, 491–510. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-052621-022531

Falola, T. (2003). *The power of African cultures.* Boydell & Brewer. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7722/j.ctt1bh2m2w

Flick, U. (2002). *An introduction to qualitative research.* SAGE Publications Limited.

Gerima, H. (1991). Thoughts and concepts: The making of *Ashes and Embers. Black American Literature Forum, 25*(2), 335–350. https://doi.org/10.2307/3041691

Gerima, H. (2023). Where are the African women filmmakers? In M. T. Martin & G. J.-M. Kabore (Eds.), *African cinema manifesto and practice for cultural decolonization volume 1: Colonial antecedents, constituents, theory, and articulations* (pp. 176–183). Indiana University Press.

Gates, H. L. (200 C.E.). W.E.B. Du Bois and the *Encyclopedia Africana,* 1909–63. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 568*(1), 203–219. https://doi.org/10.1177/000271620056800115

Gomez, M. A. (2004). Of Du Bois and diaspora: The challenge of African American studies. *Journal of Black Studies, 35*(2), 107–194. https://www.jstor.org/stable/4129300

Gordon, L. R. (2000a). Du Bois's humanistic philosophy of human sciences. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 568*, 265–280. JSTOR. https://doi.org/10.2307/1049485

Gordon, L. R. (2000b). *Existentia Africana: Understanding Africana existential thought* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Gordon, L. R. (2008). *An introduction to Africana philosophy.* Cambridge University Press.

Hiralal, K. (2017). Women in anti-colonial and nationalist movements: A comparative study of India and South Africa. *Alternation Interdisciplinary Journal for the Study of the Arts and Humanities in Southern Africa, 24*(1), 233–254. https://doi.org/10.29086/2519-5476/2017/v24n1a11

Hubbard, L. (2010). Anna Julia Cooper and Africana womanism: Some early conceptual contributions. *Black Women, Gender + Families, 4*(2), 31. https://doi.org/10.5406/blacwomegendfami.4.2.0031

Hudson-Weems, C. (1989). The tripartite plight of African-American women as reflected in the novels of Hurston and Walker. *Journal of Black Studies, 20*(2), 192–207. https://doi.org/10.1177/002193478902000206

Hudson-Weems, C. (1993). *Africana womanism: Reclaiming ourselves* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Hudson-Weems, C. (1997). Africana womanism and the critical need for Africana theory and thought. *The Western Journal of Black Studies, 21*(2), 79–84.

Hudson-Weems, C. (1998). Self-naming and self-definition: An agenda for survival. In O. Nnaemeka (Ed.), *Sisterhood, feminisms, and power: From Africa to the Diaspora* (pp. 449–452). Africa World Press.

Hudson-Weems, C. (2001). Africana womanism: The flip side of a coin. *Western Journal of Black Studies, 25*(3), 137–145. https://doi.org/info:doi/

Hudson-Weems, C. (2024). *Africana womanism: Reclaiming ourselves* (6th ed.). Routledge.

Iliffe, J. (2007). *Africans: The history of the continent*. Cambridge University Press.

Kai, N. (2016). Ashes and embers, the film: A critical review. *Journal of the African Literature Association, 10*(2), 222–236. https://doi.org/10.1080/21674736.2016.1257506

Kande, S., & Karaganis, J. (1998). Look homeward, angel: Maroons and mulattos in Haile Gerima's *Sankofa*. *Research in African Literatures, 29*(2), 128–146. https://doi.org/10.2307/3820726

Leite, N. R. P., Pitombo Leite, F., Takerissa Nishimura, A., Batista da Silva, M. A., & Gomes dos Santos, E. (2021). Film analysis in management research: Knowing why and how to use it. *Gestão & Regionalidade, 37*(112). https://doi.org/10.13037/gr.vol37n112.7666

Liberation in Southern Africa: The organization of Angolan women (1976). Salsedo Press.

Makana, S. (2019). Women in nationalist movement in Africa. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*. Retrieved November 9, 2024, from https://oxfordre.com/africanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277734-e-655

Makgato, M. M., Chaka, C., & Mandende, I. P. (2018). Theorizing an Africana womanist's resistance to patriarchy in Monyaise's *Bogosi Kupe*. *Journal of Black Studies, 49*, 330–348.

Martin, M. T. (2009). Podium for the truth?: Reading slavery and the neocolonial project in the historical film: *Queimada!* (Burn!) and *Sankofa* in counterpoint. *Third Text, 23*(6), 717–731. https://doi.org/10.1080/09528820903371131

Maulana, K. (1982). *Introduction to black studies*. Kawaida Publications.

Morgan, P. D. (2005). Origins of American slavery. *OAH Magazine of History, 19*(4), 51–59. https://doi.org/10.1093/maghis/19.4.51

Ntiri, D. W. (1993). Introduction. In *Africana womanism: Reclaiming ourselves* (pp. 1–14). Routledge.

Outlaw, L. (1997). Africana philosophy. *The Journal of Ethics, 1*(3), 265–290. https://doi.org/10.2307/25115551

Sheldon, K. (2017). *African women: Early history to the 21st century*. Indiana University Press.

Stephenson, A. E. (2018). The sounds of war in *Ashes and Embers*: Race, trauma, and dislocation. *Black Camera, 9*(2), 33. https://doi.org/10.2979/blackcamera.9.2.04

West, C. (2016). Forward. In F. Barat (Ed.), *Freedom is a constant struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the foundations of a movement*. Haymarket Books.

Zohrabi, M. (2013). Mixed method research: Instruments, validity, reliability, and reporting findings. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 3*(2), 254–262. https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.3.2.254-262

Filmography

Gerima, H. (Director). (1972). *Child of resistance* [Film]. Mypheduh Films.

Gerima, H. (Director). (1976). *Bush mama* [Film]. Mypheduh Films.

Gerima, H. (Director). (1982). *Ashes and embers* [Film]. Mypheduh Films.

Gerima, H. (Director). (1993). *Sankofa* [Film]. Mypheduh Films.