

## About

The Department of African Studies has launched an initiative called "Scholars on Africa" with the primary objective of promoting the research ideas of scholars and faculty members on current happenings and contemporary issues related to the African continent. This initiative serves a dual purpose, as it not only facilitates academic exploration but also provides valuable insights to the policymakers of India on matters concerning Africa. By actively engaging with scholars and faculty members, the initiative aims to foster a better understanding and relationship between India and Africa, bridging the gap between the two worlds.

Under the "Scholars on Africa" initiative, Scholars of the Department of African Studies are encouraged to contribute write-ups on various African issues, not exceeding 1000 words in length. It is noteworthy that these write-ups will be forwarded by any faculty members of the Department. These write-ups serve as a platform for scholars to express their personal views and insights on a diverse range of topics, including History, Politics, economics, culture, and social issues prevalent in Africa.

## The Philosophy of Cinema

*"Any nation that wants to educate and aware its citizens and want to transform the nation's future should spend the same amount of its revenue on opening a movie theatre as it does on opening a university"-Abhash K. Saurav*

Cinema is just not a word, as per my understanding of cinema, I used to express cinema as the new science, and a philosophical discipline because cinema is related to human life and also capable of impacting human lives and nature and provoking them to think or to live in a different setup, or provide them with a dream to live. which is exactly the objective of philosophy. Just for example, we often used to see people crying while watching a movie, why because they relate themselves to the scenario which is flashing on the screen. Secondly why I used to express cinema as the new science, because the work of cinematic art is not a natural product, but it is the product of human activity and science is also not a natural product it is a product of human activity.

Cinema is the science of sensation, of feeling that is somehow related to everyone's life. And the reason is very democratic in nature. Everyone's reason is different, for someone it is a medium to understand society or for someone it is a document to understand any particular period, and for someone who doesn't have all these above-mentioned reasons then they have the most general and important reasons which is entertainment. Undoubtedly entertainment is one of the central objectives of cinema. In my understanding, cinema is a great method to teach anything through entertainment. And as some research says humans understand things more compactly when things have been taught with entertainment. This is one of the reasons in my understanding why cinema is making a larger presence in everyone's life.

The journey behind the origin of cinema is a philosophical journey that originated from our conscience. Today we know that cinema is the largest medium of visual representation. Representation according to Hegel, is literally to be understood as representation, that is, we present to ourselves something that we had previously experienced via our senses. I see a tree and then hold an image or picture of this in my memory. this process of internalization is done by my faculty of memory which

then re-presents this image to my mind when I think of it. This is the most basic form of representation or picture-thinking. After the advent of the camera, we used the camera as a tool to represent our thinking on a screen.

Further, cinema is a different voice for different- different people similar to picture thinking of different people. For Hegel, before humans had language, we had picture-thoughts. Language allowed us to fix these thoughts to exterior objects, which stabilized them. This also allowed us to share representations of these representations, words that represent our picture thoughts. Of course, if everyone has different words this won't work, so society negotiates language. And language and pictures nicely capture the thing. The only thing that could reproduce "moving images" is the mind.

In brief, my emphasis here is to argue why we humans find any particular attachment to cinema. Cinema is a moving image and it is a creation of a particular mind. Why did it become absolute?

This question is compulsory to ask ourselves whenever we find any attachment to any film. As we all know cinema is a one person i.e. director's vision. It is a story and representation of one person's imagination. To answer this question, I argue that Cinema is an Art. Art is the depiction of the dialectical ontology of reality. Thus, art is the engagement of the spirit of the Absolute. The spirits comprise our sensory reality as well as normative values that animate human behaviour. The spirits operate dialectically and are manifest in endless, numerous, combinations. Humans seek out these endless combinations that are the basis of art including popular culture and cinema. Immanuel Kant wrote of the dialectical image - the idea that the classification of objects, and values are in dialogues with art. Classification shapes art, and art also impacts classification.

Further, art has an absolute dimension and the spirit of beauty. Therefore, artistic talent is the ability to invoke and channel the spirit of beauty. Here the word beauty has a wide philosophical meaning and it gives a special attraction to humankind. it is an absolute phenomenon that humans cannot stop themselves from being attracted towards beauty.

### **The Philosophy of African Cinema**

As I discussed in this article, the journey behind the origin of cinema is a philosophical journey that originated from our conscience. Philosophy in this context is a way of thinking and a way of life, an activity that is done, not just what is written or read. African philosophy concerns itself with how African peoples of the past and the present make sense of their existence, of their destiny and of the world in which they live.

African cinema, in my opinion, is a cultural encyclopedia. It is the spokesperson of the African community who tells his audience the problems of society. It is the medicine for the worst disease of the mind, the corruption of the consciousness. So African people should not ignore this medium because this type of ignorance means in my opinion a social death. Why I argued that this ignorance means a

social death because the philosophy of African cinema originated from the lives of African people and in my understanding African cinema is not only a diagnosis but a therapy. African cineastes are in the circle of the initiates and are among the ancestors and the living. This is a society where the dead are not only born out of the dreams of the living but the living are the reincarnations of the dead. They listen to the voices of their ancestors which come to as a source of their culture. African cinema is not based on principles invented by anybody but the cinema expresses the historical movements. This cinema is conditioned by motivations, environments and experiences, it is rooted in Africa and is geared towards the preservation and improvement of the African personality and culture. African cinema is an instrumental force, a positive progressive force in the society of its time. The cinema is a social phenomenon, a communal art, a collaborative art and a public activity.

Further, in conclusion, I would say that culture is the ideological background and organizational core of African cinema. Culture is the basis of all human creations. Scientific thoughts are conditioned and stimulated by cultural activities. So to recapitulate all this in my opinion African culture should be the theoretical basis for critical investigations and assessment of African cinema. There is a burning need to recognize the values of African cinema, to see it in a new light, and to situate it in a complex movement of thought of the cultural milieu that produced it.

**\*Views are personal**



**Author:** Abhash Kumar Saurav  
Designation: PhD research scholar  
Department: Department of African Studies  
Institution: University of Delhi.  
Email: [abhashkumarsaurav@gmail.com](mailto:abhashkumarsaurav@gmail.com)



**Forwarded by:**  
Name of Faculty: Dr. Manish Karmwar  
Designation: Assistant Professor  
Department: Department of African Studies  
Institution: University of Delhi  
Email: [mkarmwar@as.du.ac.in](mailto:mkarmwar@as.du.ac.in)

**Follow:  
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN STUDIES**

Scholars on Africa @<https://as.du.ac.in/?Scholars-On-Africa/Insights>

**X:**



**Link:**  
[https://twitter.com/Deptt\\_AFS\\_DU23](https://twitter.com/Deptt_AFS_DU23)

**LinkedIn:**



**Link:**  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/departmen-t-of-african-studies-1a11222a4/>

**YouTube:**



**Link:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCu4nxRSCNoKAXIGddkIqtiA>