

CULTURAL VALUES AND WOMAN POWER IN PRINCE-BYTHEWOOD'S *THE WOMAN KING* and BANDELE'S *ELESIN OBA*.

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Abstract

This paper examines the importance of cultural values and women power in two films made in Africa's diaspora. The paper studies the uniqueness and beauty of culture, cultural values, woman power and the relationship that exists among the concepts. This study is important because it helps us to appreciate women power and African cultural values in films while informing us about their importance in our lives as Africans. The paper adopts a qualitative descriptive research design with the use of content analysis. Two films- Prince-Bythewood's *The Woman King* and Bandele's *Elesin Oba* were selected and analysed. The theory of cultural relativism and radical feminism serve as the theoretical framework for this paper. The study found out that women power is important in the two films and that there were many cultural values the films depicted and transferred to the viewers. The paper recommends that women power should be harnessed and our cultural values should be enhanced and upheld in present times.

Keywords: Cultural values, woman power, *The woman King*, *Elesin Oba*

Introduction

Culture is simply the way of life of a particular group of people who are bound by language, values, food, traditions, customs, dressing or beliefs. It is the totality of the life of a people who may or may not

be in the same geographical location but are bound by origin. Spencer-Oatey (2012) reveals that culture is a difficult term to define and that it has not been easy for anthropologists to define it because of its broad nature. In essence, there is no particular or special definition of culture as it can be defined according to several contexts as the case may be. Culture covers a wide range of perspectives. Consequently, its description is sometimes reduced to its manifestations like food, clothes, language, music, region, religion, ethnicity, etc. Culture actually represents and consists of the things we see and things we cannot see. That is why we sometimes talk of material and non-material culture. Material culture refers to the physical things that we can see, feel and touch (food, clothing, ornaments, dance, festivals, etc.) while the latter is abstract in nature; it can neither be seen, felt nor touched (language, folklore, customs, superstitions, etc.). Schein (2006) further defines culture as the shared beliefs, values and assumptions of a group of people who learn from one another and teach to others that their behaviour, attitudes, opinions and perspectives are the correct ways to think, act and feel. What all this means is that culture is a complex concept that encompasses the shared beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and practices of a particular group of people. It is learned and transmitted from one generation to the next and it shapes the way people live, think and interact with the world around them.

Culture and values are intertwined in nature as the latter is embedded in the former. Values can be found in every culture. Values refer to the shared beliefs that members of a community or society use to guide their behaviours and daily interactions (Idang, 2015). Values are synonymous with moral principles, ideas or beliefs. Values are held in high esteem; they are cherished because they are a portrayal of who a person is. Idang (2015) explains that values are beliefs that are held which tell us about what is right, wrong and important in life generally. Value could be positive or negative. Positive values are good and much

desired. They make one stand out among his or her peers. Examples are sincerity, honesty, respect, obedience, diligence, and consistency amongst others. Negative values are undesired and unattractive. These include practices such as cultism, dishonesty, embezzlement of funds, indecent dressing, oppression of others and so on (Osbourne, 1931). Values determine how the people living in a society or a particular geographical region relate with one another.

Cultural Values

Each culture is special and unique in its way with its own beliefs, customs and value systems. Every culture has values and laid down principles that are peculiar to its ways of life. Idang (2015) opines that “A culture is an embodiment of different values with all of them closely related to each other” (p.103). Different cultures may share similar norms and values. This does not in any way erase their peculiarities. Values could be considered to be among the building blocks of culture. Through the concept of values, we understand culture (Vauclair, 2009). Vauclair further purports that “cultural values refer to what is judged as right or wrong, hence, they refer to issues of morality p. 64”. Cultural values draw the boundaries and limit the freedom of individuals by creating various constraints on what is appropriate or not. It is important to note that every culture has its existing value system that serves as the backbone of the society and that keeps in check the behaviours and attitudes of every individual as belonging to that culture and way of life. Cultural values have effects on its recipients. They determine the people’s daily interactions and how they live their lives. Values even influence a people’s decision -making processes. Cultural values could include; hospitality, respect for elders, truthfulness, diligence, chastity before marriage, good character, the God factor (spirituality), etc. Cultural values, like culture, are passed from generation to generation in order to ensure their continuity and to

make the society a better and safer place to dwell in. In African culture, there are core values that are held in high esteem according to Awoniyi (2015);

- The dignity and integrity of the human being as God's creature.
- The recognition of all humans as brothers.
- Communalism and individualism.
- Morality
- The family/marriage
- Human rights
- Knowledge and wisdom
- Economic ethics (wealth and wealth creation)
- Aesthetics (beauty in humanity)

Woman Power

Gender is a social construct (Zevallos, 2014). Sex can be defined by physical characteristics, and the definition of who a woman can be reviewed from this perspective. A woman is a female human being; a person assigned a female sex at birth, or a person who defines herself as a woman. "While there used to be a very specific model for exactly how to be a woman— how to look, talk, act that part, and sit down and shut up like a woman; while there are certainly battles raging over how women use their bodies and conduct their lives, the ways they show up in their world are more varied and nuanced than ever, making the definition of womanhood not universal, but rather specific to each woman herself (Belle, 2019). Each woman's experience is uniquely hers. Womanhood is an identity that comes with a lot of responsibility. There is power in being a woman. Women face a double hurdle to power, with formidable obstacles not only to obtaining access to decision-making positions and processes but also to having influence within them (Domingo and O'Neil, 2016). A woman's power is linked most times to how much she can withstand or has withstood. Women

in power is different from the power of women. The literature of power constitutes a lot of disagreements. Power is defined according to contexts. Woman power in this study is defined from the perspective of a patriarchal society. Patriarchy is a gender-based hierarchy in which men hold primary power (Biermann and Farias, 2021). It is an example of a hierarchical social system in which power is held by men based on male dominance in social, legal, religious, economic, and political organisations (Sultana, 2010). The literature of power highlights a lot of disagreements. Power is defined according to contexts. Woman power in this study is defined from the perspective of a patriarchal society.

Theoretical Framework: Radical Feminism

The feminist theory is a theory which examines and describes women's oppression, gender inequality and strategies for women's freedom. It examines gender inequality, women's social roles, experience and interests in various fields. In this part of the world, male dominance is prevalent. Feminists agree and disagree on many things, but they jointly agree on working to increase equality, eliminating gender stratification, expanding human choices, ending sexual violence and promoting sexual freedom (Zembar, 2017). The feminist theory proves to males that women are significant and are needed in every sphere of life. Also, that there is no difference between a man and a woman except for the physical attributes; hence, the theory is after the equality of both sexes.

Radical feminism is a type of the feminist theory, it was founded on the basis of the society being a patriarchal one. It seeks to address the causes and sources of patriarchal oppression. It is radical because the problem is addressed; not the manifestations. To radical feminists, patriarchy is the main challenge and they are looking to uproot it (Ward, 1995). Radical feminists view the society as where men

dominate and oppress women. They then seek the elimination of patriarchy in order to liberate women and girls from unjust and unfair societal norms (Gunew, 1990).

Cultural Relativism

Cultural relativism is simply about moral judgements (Tilley, 2001). It implies and means that morality is a function of culture. Wong (n.d) explains it as not judging a culture according to our own views or standards on what is right or wrong. Wong further declares that “cultural relativism is the assertion that important cultural differences exist, p.91”. It recognises differences but does not judge them or place them side-by-side with some measure outside the culture in question. Brown (2008) also explains that cultural relativism is a theory that asserts that there is no absolute truth and no meaningful way to judge different cultures because all judgements are ethnocentric. Different cultures possess different moral codes. What is viewed right with a group may be abhorred in the other. Cultural relativism promotes tolerance, morality and uprightness. Values should not be measured through our cultural views, values and experiences as every culture has its own uniqueness. No cultural value is totally wrong or right; peculiarities should be respected.

***The Woman King*: Synopsis**

General Nanisca, leader of a group of female warriors, the Agojie, liberates Dahomean women who were abducted by slavers from the Oyo Empire. This instigates King Ghezo of Dahomey to prepare for a war against the Oyo. Nanisca begins to train new set of girls to join the Agojie to further protect the kingdom. Among these warriors is Nawi, a strong-willed girl who was offered by her father to the king after refusing to marry men who would beat her. Nawi befriends Izogie who guides her daily. She also reveals to Nanisca that she is adopted and

shows a scar on her left shoulder, Nanisca is shocked. Portuguese slave traders led by Santo Ferreira and accompanied by the half-Dahomean Malik arrive as part of an alliance with Oyo, led by General Oba Ade. Nawi encounters Malik at the riverside while he is bathing and they become friends. Shortly after graduating from training to become a full-fledged Agojie, Nawi goes to speak with Malik on the night of the final contest and learns that the Oyo are planning to attack. She reports this to Nanisca, who scolds her for her recklessness. Nanisca and Nawi have a heated argument and in the process, Nanisca reveals that in her youth, she was captured by Oba, raped and impregnated. After giving birth to a daughter, Nanisca put a shark tooth in her left shoulder before giving her away. Nanisca helps Nawi extract the tooth from her shoulder, she confirms that Nawi is her daughter. Nanisca leads the Agojie in an attack on the Oyo. The attack is successful, but Oba escapes and Nawi, Fumbe and Izogie are captured. With Nawi's advice, Fumbe escapes and reports the situation to Nanisca. Ghezo prepares to bestow the title of Woman King, his partner and equal in ruling Dahomey, upon Nanisca, but refuses to authorize a rescue mission for the captured Agojie. Meanwhile, Izogie is killed in an escape attempt and Malik buys Nawi to protect her. Nanisca defies orders and sets out with a group of warriors to rescue the captives. The chaos allows Nawi to escape and re-join Nanisca. Malik frees several other slaves and then drowns his friend, Ferreira, before Nanisca kills him. The victorious Agojie return to Dahomey, where Ghezo privately and briefly chastises Nanisca for disobeying him, before crowning her the Woman King. After the festivities, Nanisca and Nawi privately acknowledge their relationship.

Qualitative Content Analysis

The film is titled, *The Woman King*. It is a West African film. The tool for analysis is referred to as Content Analysis (C.A), hence, the content is *The Woman King*. Two categories have been extracted

from the content in relation to the context of this work, namely; *cultural values* and *woman power*. These categories are excellently portrayed in the film, as they are the main focus. Cultural values are referenced 12 times in the film. This explains the importance of values to every culture; they are significant parts of culture. The cultural values in this film are held in high esteem. The customs and traditions are highly regarded and treated with importance. Examples are the respect for elders and people in authority, respect for customs and traditions, remembrance of the gods and ancestors, hospitality, uprightness amongst others. The second category, woman power is also portrayed 52 times according to the context of the film. This category is portrayed by Nanisca and the rest of the female warriors, the Agojie. They prove their strength and courage by protecting their kingdom to the point that even men fear them. They are referred to as the most feared army in Africa at that time. Their king, Ghezo, boasts of their prowess and abilities each time and they have never disappointed him. They save their people from the wrath of the Oyo Empire and the evil trade of the Portuguese. They are warriors indeed.

Qualitative Content Analysis

S/n	Variables of Analysis	Time of portrayal	Scene Description	Duration of Portrayal	Significance of Variable
1.	Cultural Values	This variable occurs in 10 scenes of the film.	The Agojies after a war with the Mahi	This variable is portrayed for 74 minutes 23 seconds.	This variable portrays the way of life of the Dahomey people, their customs,

		<p>4.30-6.34</p> <p>6.34-9.35</p> <p>9.35-13.38</p> <p>29.04-37.45</p>	<p>people show respect to their fallen soldiers.</p> <p>Nawi meets a woman in the market who speaks about her wedding dress. Nawi is confused and waves her off.</p> <p>The Agojies are welcomed back from the war against the Mahi people. During their procession to the king's palace, no one is to look upon them according to the tradition. Nawi returns home to meet another man her father has prepared for her. An old man who speaks rudely of Nawi. Nawi responds immediately, the proposed suitor slaps her and she hits him in return.</p> <p>Ghezo honours tradition.</p>		<p>traditions and values. It explains how they stand for uprightness in every area of their lives.</p>
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	37.45-43.23	Traditions are held in high esteem in the Dahomey Kingdom.	
	50.59-1.05.51	Malik and his Portuguese friend visit king Ghezo to discuss business and other things. They take along some gifts.	
	1.05.51-1.20.02	King Ghezo asks the Portuguese, Malik's friend to speak his language, not Portuguese. This tells us that the Dahomey people have a high regard for their language.	
	1.20.02-1.30.46	Occasionally, the Dahomeians remember their ancestors and celebrate them. They value uprightness. The Dahomey Kingdom quits slave trade, an evil trade of selling their fellow Africans because it is a wrong act, they	

			decided to earn their living through other resources that they have. They conquered the Oyo Kingdom and celebrated their achievements.		
2.	Woman Power	<p>This variable occurs in 15 scenes of the film</p> <p>0.50-4.50</p> <p>6.34-9.35</p> <p>9.35-13.38</p>	<p>The Agojies ambush the Mahi people and attack them in the dead of the night.</p> <p>The Agojies are welcomed into the village after their victory against the Mahi people. They are treated with respect and honour.</p> <p>Nawi hits her supposed husband to be after he slaps her, she retaliates. This results in her joining the female warriors of</p>	This variable is portrayed for 127 minutes 5 seconds	This variable is well portrayed in the film. The women are revealed as powerful beings and are highly respected in the society. The Dahomey Kingdom rests in the hands of the Agojies.

			<p>the kingdom, the Agojie. Nawi deals with her suitors. Her frustrated father gives her as a gift to the king.</p>		
		13.38-18.07	<p>This scene describes Nanisca and her feats.</p>		
		18.07-23.34	<p>The new Agojies members are welcomed and sworn in.</p>		
		23.34-29.04	<p>Izogie tells Nawi her virginity story, her mum wanted to sell her virginity. The new Agojies start their training as warriors to be. There is also a contest between Izogie and a male warrior, she wins.</p>		
		29.04-37.45	<p>The training continues and a conversation ensues between Nanisca and Nawi who is so daring and fearless. We also hear Nanisca's story</p>		

	37.45-43.23	as a young soldier and how she was captured by the Oyo empire. Nawi trains at night.		
	43.23-50.59	Oba Ade of the Oyo Empire visits Dahomey Kingdom for a treaty. The Agojies draw out their swords immediately he threatens the King.		
	50.59-1.05.51	Nanisca and Oba Ade fight at the Slave trade market, Nawi intervenes to save Nanisca. Nanisca scolds Nawi back at the palace and threatens to throw her out.		
	1.05.51-1.20.02	There is the final contest for the new Agojie members which Nawi wins and she gets an award.		
	1.20.02-1.30.46	The new Agojies' members swear a blood oath to become full-fledged members. Nanisca		

		<p>1.30.46- 1.43.23</p> <p>1.43.23- 1.58.10</p> <p>1.58.10- 2.07.39</p>	<p>tells Nawi her story about when she had her child in the jungle.</p> <p>The war between Dahomey and Oyo, Dahomey prepares greatly for it.</p> <p>Oyo loses to Dahomey. The king chooses Nanisca as Kpojito. The three Agojies captured by the Oyo Empire also try to escape while they are being showcased to be sold at the Ouidah Port.</p> <p>Nanisca goes to rescue her captured girls. She defies the king's orders. She decides to go because her daughter, Nawi is amongst them. Other soldiers are with her. They attack Ouida Port and Nanisca kills Oba Ade and Nawi defends her injured</p>		
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			<p>mother against the other men.</p> <p>The women are praised as they enter the palace during the feast of celebration.</p> <p>The women end the reign of the Oyo Empire and Nansca is bestowed the title of Kpojito, the woman king.</p>		
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Cultural Values and Woman Power in *The Woman King*

There are values in every culture that are evident in the lives of the people who belong to that culture. Such values make them stand out amongst others. Values are important parts of a culture that cannot be underestimated. They form the integral part of a culture alongside customs, beliefs and traditions. So many cultural values are embedded in *The Woman King*. They are the language, songs, principles, customs and traditions which are highly regarded in the Dahomey's society. Even the women who are part of the Agojies also have values that are part of their lives and lifestyle. These values influence their attitudes in every situation. The Agojie serve as the protectors of the Dahomey Kingdom, despite being women. Obviously, there are differences between men and women as both are wired differently but it is also important to note that each gender has its peculiarities, strength and weaknesses. Women have the abilities to be great through their potentials and skills that they have gathered over time. *The Woman King* gives a vivid portrayal of the context of this work.

Elesin Oba: Synopsis

A ritual suicide as custom demands is intercepted by human weakness and colonial intrusion. The Elesin who is supposed to escort the late king to the supernatural world stays behind for what he called last pleasures. That same night, he gets married to a maiden and consummates it saying 'he wants to plant a seed before going'. He stays behind when he should have gone. He is the next item of sacrifice among eight different kinds. He lived an equal life with the king when the king was reigning. It is a transitional practice. His son, Olunde is to become the next King's horseman just like his father and it is also an abomination for him to see his father before the suicide. The late King calls on the Elesin spiritually and says he would send help. The Elesin who cannot release his spirit says he will do it just like his fathers and resists. After timeless incantations, prayers and suicidal tones, the colonial governor arrests him, saying that the practice will not be allowed and call it rubbish. Despite opposition from the people, the colonial governor forcefully takes the Elesin who should have taken a drastic action immediately in order not to abort the process. Olunde who knows the consequences of the unfolding events confronts the whites and spits out bitter truths only to realise that he has to replace his father as a sacrifice, like a real man. The fact is the Elesin, distracted and overwhelmed by the pleasures of this world, is not ready to go. He is afraid of death. His son calls him greedy and says 'you can't be my father'. Olunde, the eldest son of the Elesin becomes the sacrifice. It is a sad moment for the Iyaloja and other women who are involved in the sacred process. The graphic description of the other side is not too clear, but, it is for immortals. Death is personified in this narrative. At this last moments, Elesin makes the worst decision he has ever made all his life; to enjoy at the moment of his offering. Maybe if he had taken that time for reflection, his passage would have been easy. He marries the bride of the Iyaloja's son; she is given to him as his last wish. Warnings

with wisdom from the Iyaloja spring in her conversation with him but he neglects the warnings. Every event in this story is significant: from a passage through the market in its closing stages, to a wedding set in the same location with grand festivity, and a ritual suicide prepared at another side. However, the Elesin later commits suicide in the confinement of the whites. He hangs himself but this is only after he realises Olunde had been sacrificed. He died a shameful death. He is a tragic character with a flaw. *Death and the King's horseman* is a tragedy. It is a clash between two cultures and internal conflict of within the main character.

Qualitative Content Analysis

The film to be content analysed is titled, *Elesin Oba*. It is a Nigerian movie, Yoruba precisely. The tool for analysis is referred to as Content Analysis (C.A), hence, the content is *Elesin Oba*. Two categories have been extracted from the content in relation to the context of this work, namely; cultural values and woman power. These categories are excellently portrayed in the film, as they are the main focus. Cultural values in the film are referenced 24 times. This explains the importance of values to every culture. They are significant parts of culture. The cultural values in this film are held in high esteem. The customs and traditions are highly regarded and treated with importance. Examples are the respect for elders and people in authority, respect for customs and traditions, abstinence before marriage, amongst others. The second category, woman power, is also portrayed according to the context of the film. Iyaloja is the most powerful woman in the film, she is a woman of influence who commands respect. The young ones, maidens, women and elders heed to her call and advice. She actually warns the Elesin to be careful of his actions and decisions. She foresaw the happenings. She is a wise and

powerful woman. Women are powerful and important to our society. They should be given the chance to be heard and listened to.

QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

S/N	Variables of Analysis	Time of Portrayal	Scene Description	Duration of Portrayal	Significance of Variable
1.	Cultural Values	This variable occurs in 10 scenes of the film. 0.54-3.00 3.00-11.53	The Elesin Oba is eulogized through rich cultural music and chants. The King's Horseman, fondly called Elesin Oba is highly respected and honoured in the market place. He refers to the market place as his home and peace. The villagers dance with him as he	This variable is portrayed for 89 minutes 81 seconds.	This variable is very well portrayed in the film. The portrayal reveals how deep and rich the Yoruba culture is and how high its values, customs, beliefs and traditions are held.

			enters the market.		
		11.53-17.35	Elesin has to be given whatever he wants since he is going to the world beyond soon. He seeks a beautiful maiden he encounters in the market. Iyaloja tells him that his burial clothes will be prepared with the same hands that prepares his bridal suit.		
		17.35-22.55	Mr Simon and Mrs Jane Pilkings wear the masquerade regalia. According to the customs, the masquerade clothing is sacred and		

		<p>22.55-28.40</p> <p>28.40-41.30</p>	<p>should not be looked upon, Amusa tried to explain this to his boss.</p> <p>Celebration, dancing and singing is going on in the village, the villagers are wining and dining. Amusa informs Mr Pilkings of the Horseman's ritual suicide which is about to take place. Joseph further explains the process and traditions to the whites.</p> <p>The Pilkings' are still inquisitive about the ritual suicide, they are confused. It is also revealed that the duty of the Horseman</p>		
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			<p>moves from generation to generation, the present Horseman took over from his father and his son will take over from him, this makes it a very important custom and tradition. The Elesin Oba decides to get married and plant his seed before going to the world beyond. We also see the importance of virginity to the Yoruba culture. Olunde, the Horseman's son arrives from England during the wedding.</p> <p>Immediately the Elesin Oba consummated his marriage to</p>		
		41.30-46.20			

			<p>the virgin maiden, his death ritual started. The dead king's favourite dog is sacrificed.</p> <p>The Pilkings defy the cultural values by wearing the masquerade costumes to the ball. The ritual for the Horseman's passing begins fully.</p> <p>Olunde accuses Mrs Pilkings of desecrating and underestimating the ancestral mask (masquerade costume). He tells her he has come to bury his father. She refers to the ritual suicide</p>		
		46.30-53.20			
		53.20-1.00.53			

		1.00.53- 1.30.35	<p>custom as barbaric.</p> <p>Mr Pilkings arrests the Elesin Oba and stops him from completing his ritual duties. The Elesin is humiliated, he has left the king's spirit to wander on earth.</p> <p>Olunde sacrifices his life in place of his father's for his people and his father's honour.</p>		
2.	Woman Power	<p>This variable occurs in 5 scenes of the film.</p> <p>3.00- 11.53</p>	<p>Iyaloja is revealed as the head of the market. She is a</p>	<p>This variable is portrayed for 62 minutes 92 seconds.</p>	<p>This variable reveals the strengths, abilities and powers of a woman. It proves that a woman can be at the helm of affairs at any</p>

			respected woman.		sphere of life.
		11.53-17.35	Iyaloja is a powerful woman who commands respect. She also has the final say, whatever she says stands. Even the Elesin Oba honours her. Iyaloja gives the Horseman her son's betrothed since that is what he requests for before his transition to afterlife. She however warns him to be careful of his actions and decisions.		
		22.55-28.40	Iyaloja encourages the maiden's parents and her son.		

		28.40-41.30	We see Iyaloja's influence when Amusa comes to disrupt the marriage consummation of the Horseman.		
		1.00.53-1.30.35	Olunde is barred from succeeding his father, because the Elesin is stopped from fulfilling destiny. The king is left to wander around as the Elesin does not fulfil his duty to the king. The Iyaloja visits him in the cell Pilikings locked him in. She had warned Elesin not to leave a cursed seed in the process of enjoying himself before his passing. She		

			scolds him and speaks to him in anger. She tells him about Olunde's sacrificial death through parables.		
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Cultural and Woman Power in *Eleshin Oba*

It is core tradition for the King's horseman to prepare for going to the world beyond with his master. A King's horseman, according to the culture, is almost accorded the same respect as the king as they are inseparable entities. As soon as the King dies, the King's horseman is to prepare to go along with his King. This has been since the beginning and will always be. The King's horseman is to enjoy himself before his passage to the world beyond. The Yoruba culture abhors greed. In the play, the king's horseman is so greedy, hence his tragic end. He wants everything before his passage. The King's horseman can be said to be full of fear; he lacks the courage to meet his master on the other side. Bravery is the garment of a warrior; not fear. Iyaloja is the most influential woman in this context. She literally has a say to a large extent, the people obey her voice and even her gestures. She gives the King's horseman a long rope to pull. She provides all that he asks for but disgraces him when he fails to prove his manliness and courage. She warns him about his inability or tardiness in fulfilling his destiny and responsibility to the late king.

Discussion of findings

The African culture is well portrayed in the selected films. It shows the beauty and uniqueness of the African culture. All these can be found in the music, language, dialogue, costumes, setting and

production design. The African culture possesses core values and norms that guide their offspring from generation to generation. It portrays who we really are and our source. These values are evident in the films. Despite women being at the helm of affairs, the cultural values remain respected. Culture will remain culture irrespective of gender, financial or educational status, family background, age or sex. Various cultures view women similarly (but with slight differences) as the society is patriarchal. The selected films prove that women indeed have a voice; a strong one at that. Women are indeed powerful, resilient and praise worthy. Women deserve to be heard. They should be given the opportunity to perform in the best of their capacities. Through films, women can find their lost voices and virtues as they become confident to showcase their abilities and powers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The African culture is very rich and unique. Embedded in it are beautiful elements of culture and a good people. The representation of African culture and cultural values in films will help to authenticate the unique qualities of these culture. The cultural values which are peculiar to Africa, when showcased in our films, will help to portray a more positive image of Africa in the world rather than the gloomy and negative news about Africa at all times. As the two films show, Africa is a land of courage, tradition, customs and dignity and not minding the globalisation and the effects of colonialism, Africa will continue to give to the world. Therefore, our cultural values that are fast receding in present day Africa, should be revived, enhanced, upheld and integrated into our modern lives. Women in the society are powerful beings who play an important role in the society and uphold cultural values. As the film *Woman King* shows, they can still be the protectors of the society and at the same time rule the society. This women power which is neglected and ignored in present day Africa needs to be recognised,

harnessed and utilized in a way that will stop Africa from ignoring a vital half of her make up. This will bring African women to be at par with women in other parts of the world like Europe, Asia and Americas. Conclusively, the portrayal of women power in the films show that women have arrived and the quicker the patriarchal society realises this, the better for the society and the world.

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