

Spring 5-8-2018

# Midterm Paper: Comparative Analysis of Black Film Aesthetics in *Daughters of the Dust* and *Yeelen* (Brightness)

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### Recommended Citation

Sawadogo, Boukary, "Midterm Paper: Comparative Analysis of Black Film Aesthetics in *Daughters of the Dust* and *Yeelen* (Brightness)" (2018). *CUNY Academic Works*.  
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**City College of New York - CUNY**  
**Fall 2018**  
**MCA 31134; BLST 31162 African and American Cinema: Parallel Movements**  
**Professor: Boukary Sawadogo**

**Midterm paper:**  
**Comparative analysis of black film aesthetics in *Daughters of the Dust* and *Yeelen***  
**(Brightness)**

Over the course of several decades, Africa and its diasporas have tried to develop film language or aesthetics that best reflect their own experiences, sociopolitical realities, and storytelling techniques. Films such as Julie Dash's 1991 *Daughters of the Dust* and *Yeelen* (Brightness, 1987) by Souleymane Cissé provide insights into the formulation of black film aesthetics. In an essay of 1,000 words, write a comparative analysis of how *Daughters of the Dust* and *Yeelen* intersect and differentiate in their stylistic elements (narrative structure and cinematography), thematic treatment (migration, and family feud), or religion (African spirituality, Christianity, and Islam). You could, for example, construct your paper argument around questions such as: what are the recurring themes in *Daughters of the Dust* and *Yeelen*? How similar or different are the representations of the black subject (in comparison to those in mainstream cinema)? To what extent do these two films break with conventions of mainstream cinema? What stylistic elements contribute to the uniqueness of each film? How do the setting and its significance contribute to anchor the stories in black realities?

These questions are not meant to be exhaustive; they only serve as a guide to help you better organize and structure your ideas. Your essay is expected to have an introduction, body, and conclusion.