The iREP Report

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Liberating African History from Colonial Archives

by Amarachukwu Iwuala

During the round-table for producers captioned *Access to Archives - Imperatives of Co-operatives and Collaboration*, filmmaker Jihan El-Tahri, traced the history of the disappearance of archived content from Africa to Europe.

According to her, "African filmmakers made deals with their European suppliers to exchange recorded tapes with empty ones and the Europeans, in turn, archived the tapes, which now cost between €800 and €4,000 per minute of archive whilst any archive that has Mandela in it could cost as much as €8,000."

As far as El-Tahri is concerned, Africans should engage in negotiations with Europeans to release such footage to their true owners wherever they are found similar to the way in which African states gained independence from their colonial masters.

El-Tahri also informed the gathering that most archival material is still within the continent because upon the establishment of the Organisation for African Unity (now African Union) in 1963, TV stations across Africa were mandated to drop all their video recordings with the union at the end of every year.

German film producer Bärbel Mauch revealed that it could also be difficult to access archives in Germany because they are not always well-labelled.

It was also suggested that younger archival researchers should be trained not just to recognise faces, but also important moments in history. Participants at the round-table agreed that individuals should establish businesses in archiving, noting that there is a business case for that since the materials can be aggregated and monetised.

The process of commencing such businesses could be as simple as persuading people not to discard their old belongings and offering tokens to acquire the materials where possible. Barter, it was also mentioned, can be employed in acquiring archival materials, which may be audio, visual (motion and still) plus written materials.

The importance of a legal framework was

continued on P4

Enabling a Universal Visual Narrative

by **Aderinsola Ajao**

FIRST STEPS Documentary Storytelling Workshop

The FIRST STEPS Documentary Storytelling Session was one of the workshops at IREP 2017. A project initiated by IREP with DOK.Fest Munich, the 5-day workshop was facilitated by German filmmaker Florian Schewe. At the end of the sessions, 5 (plus 1) stories were selected for development and production. The finished projects will be screened at next year's IREP Film Festival in Lagos and at DOK.Fest in Munich.

Documentaries, a Window to the World

Barbara Off, co-ordinator of Dok.Fest Munich spoke about their continued partnership with the IREP Documentary Festival and further plans for collaboration within the DOK.Network Africa Initiative.

According to Off, both organisations were introduced in 2013 by Marc-André Schmachtel, former director of Goethe-Institut Lagos, at the time when DOK.Fest was setting up a permanent special focus on African documentary film.

Since 2013, the partnership has involved curatorial and staff exchanges, festival visits, panels, workshops, and artist residencies. Other African film festivals in the DOK Network Africa include the Zimbabwe International Film Festival, Encounters Film Festival in Cape Town, and the Maisha Film Lab.

The FIRST STEPS training is in line with IREP's interest in training aspiring filmmakers. "We always want to work with what is important for our partners. We wanted to move beyond exchange of films, and the idea for FIRST STEPS was born targeting first-time filmmakers who had stories to tell but did not know how to approach it," Off said.

Apart from the festival's Africa Day, other initiatives been rolled out by DOK.Fest include a YouTube channel dedicated to African documentary shorts. This is to have a "window into African realities and perspectives with films that would never reach a German audience."

They also plan to establish a university exchange programme between students from Nigerian and German universities, who are interested in history and documentary film. "Everybody is coming to Africa to make films here and there are not so many filmmakers from Africa going to Germany to make films, so that's a huge possibility."

This year, DOK.Fest will host a workshop open to students of film and history, Off said, referencing African oral history and the relevance of documentary film in writing and shaping history.

On the continued relevance of documentary films, she said, "I think it's absolutely essential that documentary films are made. We should care about ensuring funding to filmmakers who document history way beyond news or short-time reportage. CAHIER AFRICAIN is a long-term record of the conflict in CAR. For the German society, it's really important not only in terms of having long term observations but also to get connected to different perspectives like having a documentary film from an African filmmaker like Dieudo's MAMA COLONEL in a place like Congo, with its stereotypes. There are people who do something and try to change societies from within but not with NGOs and from the outside. It's important to make these narratives public."

Beyond the filmmaker's responsibility, she added that as a people, "We need to engage each other more. IREP is concerned with development and democratisation, and I think documentary can really do that. You are yourself responsible to change something: Think for yourself, double-check.

"What documentary beautifully does, when it follows one character around in their daily life, it shows, this is real, it's not fake. It's not reality TV, it's not TV."

Speaking after the workshop, Florian Schewe said documentary film festivals in Europe are recording a larger turnout in recent times, even in an age of information overload or the infamous 'alternative facts'.

"There is an urge from people to listen to different stories and characters that are not otherwise accessible but seem to be real [in this case documentary film].There is a need to experience, for yourself, other parts of the world - which is where film comes in, and it's more than clicking through the internet and just accessing content."

According to Schewe, there is pressure for the documentary filmmaker on two sides. One is from getting recognition in the midst of so much information on the Internet, and the other is regarding objectivity and subjectivity: the author's "point of view compared to the objective analysis."

On the stories crafted in the workshop, which Schewe described as a diverse array of ideas, “Everybody wants to do something different.”

Making films is now easier though, as Schewe believes there is access to technical equipment. “With access, it also means more people can do that. Then it comes to the second layer of how do you do that and how do you tell a story with that. It’s certainly relevant where you come from and to whom you want to speak: who should be your audience. What do you want to relay to this people and why. There’s a difference between you wanting to produce a film here in Lagos for people in Lagos or let’s say for the international documentary festival in Munich.”

To support his ‘mission’ for making documentaries that are truly universal and dismantling any stereotypes the participants might have, Schewe started off the workshop by showing a documentary with no dialogue.

“I show the silent documentaries simply to show the idea that you can actually have moving images and music,” he said, “and what that means is telling a story that everybody can understand no matter where you come from. Sounds simple but it’s actually not. You don’t need people talking about stuff all the time: you don’t need interviews all the time, explaining to you what’s happening, you get that idea anyway. You can simply say it’s a moving image, have the music, and do the editing right: that’s another thing.”

He stressed the need to make documentaries that could transcend borders, regardless of distribution or budget constraints.

“For most countries I’ve worked in, there’s the challenge of distribution and also the problem of making quality films that speak clearly to an international audience. There’s a missed opportunity to shape an alternative narrative, let’s say regarding the reality on the ground in Lagos or somewhere else in Nigeria. There are channels right there right now, and everybody needs new and good enough [content] in the sense that I can broadcast that, for example. Distribution is a huge issue but it’s not the only one.”

For aspiring filmmakers, Schewe advises them to “Go out there, and don’t get discouraged. If you don’t have the money, figure out how you can collaborate with people to get things done. To really do that is actually quite comfortable and easy, especially if it’s not a complicated story. Film is a team effort, at the end of the day.”

FIRST STEPS: Winning Projects

BOTTOM POWER by Stella Oluoma

SURVIVING CHILD HAWKING by Temitope Aluko

FAIR FINIAN by Ronya Man

BLOOD AND WATER by Funmi Eko Ezeh

BONE by Gabriel Emmanuel

Plus One: FARLON By Emeka Loveday

An Impetus for Female Directors

by Amarachukwu Iwuala

Late Amaka Igwe could be said to have inspired the 21st century Nigerian female filmmaker through the quality of her films and TV productions. These include *Checkmate, Solitaire, Tempest, Fuji House of Commotion, Rattlesnake, Violated, Forever* and *To Live Again*.

In AMAKA’S KIN, Tope Oshin, one of Igwe's protégés, embarks on this film project to pay tribute to her mentor, and to draw attention to the challenges facing the female filmmaker in today's Nollywood. She interviews about a dozen of her colleagues, who acknowledge Igwe as motivating them to pursue careers in this male-dominated vocation.

AMAKA'S KIN however leaves out a lot of vital details whist including some extraneous material.

Anyone who does not know the late Igwe would think that a film tribute in her honour is chiefly anchored on her pioneering role in the renaissance of film-making in Nigeria in the early 1990s. However, Igwe and her husband established The Best of the Best of TV and Film, an annual TV

The Centre of Excellence in Film and TV, the training centre where Oshin honed her skills under the late Igwe's tutelage, is also not mentioned in AMAKA’S KIN.

and film market, which was organsied in Abuja, the nation's capital, between 2003 & 2012.

The Centre of Excellence in Film and TV, the training centre where Oshin honed her skills under the late Igwe's tutelage, is also not mentioned in AMAKA’S KIN. Perhaps, Oshin assumes that everyone who will see this film knew the late Igwe, hence her failure in revealing the woman's outstanding contributions to the development of the industry.

The filmmaker is interested in producing a critical mass of female film-makers, which is brilliant. However, there is no indication in the film that the late Igwe etched her name on the viewers' minds due to the fact that almost all her projects are world-class.

Amaka Igwe never failed to acknowledge Lola Fani-Kayode (*Mirror in the Sun*) as her own inspiration. 20 years ago, there were only 1 or 2 female directors, but today they are over twenty and counting. Therefore, the task at hand is not just to grow the number, but to entrench a culture of excellence, which distinguishes anyone in their chosen professions.

When audiences see a good film, they are hardly bothered about the gender of the filmmaker. After all, the highest grossing film in Nigerian cinemas yet was directed by a woman.

Green Peril

Dan McCain's choice of a title, NOWHERE TO RUN is a phrase that may sound as apocalyptic as it is poetic. Truth be told, it reminds us that we are all in this together. The climate and environmental crisis are the threads that binds us – inescapably so. Therefore, we must gradually build resilience together (regardless of ethnic differences) play our part in ensuring that we find solutions, starting from tree planting to avoiding actions that encourage deforestation in the first place.

by **Wome Uyeye**

In 52 minutes, we are visually confronted with the stark realities of desertification and climate change. The tap roots of this environmental degradation clearly run very deep. The causes of climate change (including global warming) are as varied as they are complex. This documentary takes an all-encompassing approach from a variety of perspectives. Global warming in particular is an acute crisis for us in Africa because the expected temperature rise here is at least 50% above the global average.

NOWHERE TO RUN covers the length and breadth of Nigeria and may well be the definitive and most accessible visual document on this subject matter in our nation. It shows the inter-connected nature of the impacts of climate and environmental change from the desertification in Northern Nigeria ravaging eleven northern states; the shrinkage of Lake Chad, and the intense flash floods that we experience nationwide. It also covers the questions of gas flaring, sea level rise along our coastlines, and the increasingly heavy oil pollution of the Niger-Delta.

With a rising population and direct dependency on the environment for food and energy, it is crystal clear beyond reasonable doubts that our environment is our life and the stark technicolor of this film screams that the Nigerian environment requires urgent attention.

McCain outdid himself by filming frame after frame of crisp, powerful and insightful presentation of complex issues. The raw undisguised emotions expressed by the participants in this project have given a voice and faces to the pain and challenges environmental degradation has brought upon them and their communities.

From the facts provided in this documentary, we can see that there is undeniable evidence that pioneer environmental campaigners like the late Ken Saro Wiwa were right on track.

It is a fitting tribute that the narrator of this documentary is the late Ken Saro-Wiwa Jnr. While simultaneously leaving us with a sense of hope that a great, safe and sane future for our nation (and indeed mankind) is attainable, Saro-Wiwa Jr. urges us, towards the end of the film, to take action and encourage others to do same.

Continued from P1

emphasised with a mention of the principles of Fair Use and Fair Trade as instituted by US-based Stanford University.

The fact that an individual archives a newspaper from 20 years ago does not mean the said individual can use same in his or her documentary without the permission of the publishers. Yet, footage that are 30 years and older fall into public domain and can be accessed free-of-charge.

Tony Abulu, Nigerian film-maker, maintained that when the fibre optic cables owned but under-utilised by telecoms operators are put to better use, the problem with archiving will be solved speedily. At the end of the session, it was agreed that any material that has representation can find usage because it is elitist to separate what is worthy from what some people label 'less worthy' or 'unworthy'.

A Legacy of Egocentrism

by **Adefoyeke Ajao**

Zimbabwe's history will be rendered incomplete without a mention of its infamous president, Robert Mugabe; but "What do you do to a hero or a father who has gone wayward? Can you discipline a hero? Can you discipline a father?" These questions sum up the moral dilemma Zimbabweans face as they make attempts at navigating the delinquencies of a despot.

In 91 minutes, filmmaker Simon Bright's ROBERT MUGABE…WHAT HAPPENED? analyses the fall from glory of the Zimbabwean president by constructing a timeline from his celebrated appearance on the country's political scene (in the 60s) to the disenchantment with his leadership up till the year 2008.

continues on P5

Continued from P4

Bright uses an abundance of narration, archival footage and interviews to tell the story of a ruler under whose watch a country once regarded as the 'jewel of Africa' morphed into a wasteland. Mugabe did not begin as a villain; he was once a celebrated national hero who was instrumental to the country's deliverance from white supremacist rule. While Bright presents a plethora of possible contributors to Mugabe's sharp descent (such as a sense of entitlement to the freedom he worked tirelessly for) he doesn't exactly present a motivation for his preoccupation with consolidating his

hold on power. While this documentary is a compelling watch, it is sometimes marred by background sounds that interfere with the voice-over narration.

"He who fights with monsters might take care lest he thereby become a monster." Bright's citing of Nietzsche in the film's opening scene makes one wonder if Zimbabweans have ever considered that the egocentric turncoat they are burdened with is a creation of British rule. The Empire's inroad into the continent bears a semblance to Mugabe's clampdown on dissent and opposition. Have Zimbabweans also considered that he could also be a creation of their excessive worship?

Like Jihan El-Tahri's BEHIND THE RAINBOW, also screened at this year's IREP festival, Simon Bright's ROBERT MUGABE…WHAT HAPPENED? exposes the dangers of handing power to revolutionaries. It questions their qualifications for handling the corruptive influence of absolute power.

Xenophobia is not the whole story – Ronke Macaulay

by **Enajite Efemuaye**

What was at the back of your mind when you were making this film?

The last block of xenophobic attacks got people in Nigeria very heated. It was all over the media, on social media, people were railing against South Africa. At that time I was travelling to South Africa a lot and the South Africa I was seeing was not representative of what I was hearing. It's like xenophobic attacks flare up ever so often but in between what is the reality? And so I wanted to look at what lay beneath. What is the underlying thing that maybe causes this terror from time to time? That's what I was looking at. To me, xenophobia is not the whole story.

I don't want to downplay the fact that people are being attacked, some people have been killed, properties damaged and all that. That is very painful. But, it is not the whole story.

After the recent spate of attacks did you get in touch with your interview subjects to find out how they fared?

I'm in touch with everybody that I interviewed. For me, we connected. They shared their stories with me. It wasn't, 'let's just shoot it and go'. We're going to go back to South Africa with the film because they want to see how the film turned out. And we want to them to see it. Nigerians and also South Africans, we want them to see the whole story.

In the film you interviewed just two South Africans. Were you trying not to overplay their presence or you didn't get enough people to interview?

My intention was not to make it balanced, say, 50 Nigerians, 50 South Africans, it was supposed to be about Nigerians. Since we were in South Africa, there should be input of South Africans as well. But I wanted to interview South Africans who know and understand Nigerians, not the ones who just see them from afar. These ones have lived with Nigerians and can speak from that point of view. I did intend to interview one South African who lived in Nigerian, was brought up in Nigeria where he moved when he was younger because of apartheid. He was sponsored by the Nigerian government or organisations who looked after the refugees from South Africa that time. This man went up to university level in Nigeria, he speaks Yoruba fluently and he is a South African. So we wanted to have this voice, but unfortunately it fell through.

Most of the Nigerians in GREEN PASSPORT IN A RAINBOW NATION seem to be by themselves. They didn't seem to go out of their way to mix with South Africans or integrate. There was a lot of 'I don't go out'. Do you think that Nigerians integrating more with the community they live in will help address some of the issues they face?

It's a personal choice. For some people, they don't like to go out. But there are people who are trying to integrate more. But I think on the whole, compared to other societies I've lived in like Nigerians in the UK, where I lived for many years, Nigerians are much more outgoing in the UK and the US than in South Africa. In South Africa, they've learned to put up certain walls. And it's a pity because if more of the people intermingle and interact, there could be some changes.

In the spirit of the festival theme, *Archiving Africa*, is there anything you're doing to make sure that a hundred years from now, footage from your documentary will still be available?

I haven't even thought about that yet. I think I need advice on how to do that. It presupposes the fact that you think your work is great. For me, this is very early days, but I'm also a writer and a big supporter of preserving stories for future generations. I also want to make even more films. So I would love to learn about archiving, how to go about it and the impact it has on film as a medium.

"How do you tell history in a film?"

by **Michaela Moye**

Jihan El-Tahri knows what she is talking about. This is my impression of the Egyptian-French director and producer, the guest filmmaker at the 2017 iRep festival. During the 'In Conversation' sessions after each of her documentaries, El-Tahri's engagements reveal her vast, deep knowledge and understanding of issues on the African continent. I am first exposed to El-Tahri's work when I receive the advance copy of the iRep brochure: I am excited to see documentaries on Cuba and Egypt and decide to watch all the screenings of her work. I read as little as possible beforehand – I want to see these films with no preconceptions. I do not realise just how much of a lesson on filmmaking, research and history, I am to receive.

Separate Myth from Fact

Beginning with 2007's CUBA: AN AFRICAN ODYSSEY, an introduction to the conversation on failed post-colonial systems, I am excited to learn of, and intrigued by, the seeming silence on Cuba's active involvement in the nationalistic movements of several African countries. El-Tahri herself explains how it is possible for chunks of history to apparently disappear. After the screening of her documentary on internal conflicts within South Africa's ruling party, BEHIND THE RAINBOW (2009), she says that, "The mythologies of independence were constructed in such a way to cut out a lot of people." She adds, "The need for a single narrative cuts out a lot of people in the engagement with the future."

The quest for fact and the drive to engage with 360 perspective may very well stem from El-Tahri's personal relationship with journalistic reporting and the realities of the individuals who are portrayed in news stories. She cites the Gulf War and her experience as a foreign correspondent in Tunisia as a catalyst to pursue and produce stories that are important to her. As an Egyptian working for the *Washington Post*, El-Tahri found the news coverage of the six-month long war, "really traumatizing," and eventually chose to stop working as a journalist. El-Tahri says, "I want to work on issues that are important to me whereby I can take the time to actually figure it out."

El-Tahri also narrates how she landed her first official documentary job. After watching the BBC documentary, DEATH OF YUGOSLAVIA, she decided to become a filmmaker, and approached the production company, persistently seeking employment until she was hired to work on a film on the Israeli-Arab conflict. "Out of that experience, I've moulded my own way of how I want to tell a story." El-Tahri's work is part-academic, part-humorous, talking head interviews richly interspersed with archival footage, and in the case of EGYPT'S MODERN PHAROAHS, clips from Egyptian cinema.

Continued from P6

Follow the Story

Beyond being clear about the type of stories she wants to tell and how to tell them, El-Tahri's work is evidently well-researched. El-Tahri, also a writer, describes herself as an avid reader – classics, literature, and of necessity, research documents. She discusses her work ethic with the iRep 2017 audience, beginning the narrative with the question: "How do you tell history in a film?" During the post-screening dialogue of BEHIND THE RAINBOW, El-Tahri shares that she compiled a 700-page chronology of daily events from which she "reconstructed" historical accounts "from the memories of the people involved." First-hand narrative is important to the filmmaker, and discussions with her are chock-full of anecdotes on seeking the relevant and necessary voices for her work. The multi-lingual El-Tahri talks about arriving in Cuba and literally knocking on every door asking questions until she could find a person who had been to Africa with Che Guevera. These anecdotes are not just amusing stories. They are valuable lessons for anyone interested in research, in finding out.

Stay Curious

"Find a story you care about and tell it with passion," Jihan El-Tahri advises young filmmakers, but she also encourages one to "follow the story", a more organic process that I believe lends such depth and richness to El-Tahri's documentaries. "Do you think I decided to make a film on Zambia?" she asks me as I interview her. "It just happened because I was following the trail." The resulting film, THE PRICE OF AID, released in 2003, won the European Media Prize in 2004.

Following a story's trail requires perception: During Egypt's January 25 Revolution, El-Tahri discovered a vital part of her native country's history after buying an old photograph from Tahrir Square, of a person who turned out to be Egypt's first president, Mohammed Naguib. This previously expunged historical fact served as a crucial launch pad for her 3-hour documentary, EGYPT'S MODERN PHAROAHS (2015).

Contd. on P8

Archiving for the Future

by Enajite Efemuaye

At the opening ceremony of the 2017 iREP International Documentary Film Festival, the film FREE FELA by Theo Lawson was screened. At the end of the screening, one of the major issues viewers had was the absence of any actual footage featuring Afrobeat icon Fela Anikulapo Kuti. The documentary was mostly a patchwork of interviews and performances at the concert held in Freedom Park as part of the 2016 Felabration.

The absence of archival footage featuring the subject of what should be an homage might not essentially be the filmmaker's fault, since a large part of the archives of Nigeria's history, such as documents, audio and video, are not in Nigeria. Often, accessing these archives involves travelling outside the country and buying the rights - at great expense to whomever needs them. How to ensure that Nigerian archives in the future are owned by Nigerians and easily accessible was the crux of the panel chaired by Jane Mote.

One of the major points made was that archives begin as memories, data that are privately owned. The challenge is getting all these memories together in one place or platform so that the collection is available to the public. This is how the world's biggest archives are built, something that Nigeria has been unable to do effectively. The few archives that exist – like the National Archives in Ibadan – have an accessibility problem. "The National Archives is 63 years old," Ed Keazor said. "There is a lack of accessibility to those documents. You need to pay for every photocopy and the state of the documents is poor." Bureaucracy is also another challenge in government-run archives.

"Digitisation is the way forward for archives," Marion Wallace said. The Lead Curator, African Collections at the British Library, had made a presentation before the panel. The presentation included images, videos and audio files from different African countries.

According to Mo Abudu, the mandate of Ebony Life TV is to do 1000 hours of programme in a year. And it is important to her that these programmes are archived. "We have an IT department dedicated to making sure everything is backed up. [. . .] We started with tape and now it's all on cards. We have to take them from tape to digitise them so that we can save all these content. [...] There's many interesting content that in the future will become valuable [sic]. It is critical that we continue to store," she said.

The Nsibidi Institute in Lagos is an independent knowledge and cultural centre that does a lot of archiving work. Their ongoing 'Collective Memory' project, gathers materials from private collections and family archives with the goal of preserving historical accounts in pictures and to facilitate public access to private collections. Dele Meiji who was involved in the British Council's FOOTPRINTS project noted that there needs to be more avenues for people to contribute their memories and share their stories to a platform that is accessible to all as a way of building archives.

The need for commercialisation of archives as a way of ensuring their sustainability is one that is explored.

"Archiving is an opportunity for someone. It will make business sense. We go outside the country to find archives about Nigeria and we pay for it. Archiving should be run like a business," Mo Abudu said.

Keazor agreed. "A lot of the work I do doesn't pay and I do it because I enjoy it. It shouldn't be this way. It has definitive possibilities once you can cross the legal barriers of proprietary ownership. Someone can invest in the technology and the platform that makes it easy for people to offer the data they have. It needs an entrepreneur to look at it and ask, 'how much is this worth?'"

No matter how one views the subject, the need for home-grown and locally-owned archives is a necessity, at least to ensure that future generations have an eye on the history of now.

Out of Bounds to Nigerians

by **Enajite Efemuaye**

In 2008, 2015 and 2017, Nigerians living in South Africa experienced concerted xenophobic attacks from the people of their adopted homeland. Lives and property were lost and the fragile relationship between the two countries was further strained.

The expectation from a film like GREEN PASSPORT IN A RAINBOW NATION, which director Ronke Macaulay described as an investigation of what it means to be a Nigerian in South Africa, is that it would address this matter of xenophobia in as in-depth a way as possible. However, it barely skims the surface.

Nigerians living in South Africa as in every society fall under the categories of rich and poor, law-abiding and criminal, skilled and unskilled and so on. This film shows us the Nigerians who have their own businesses, are law-abiding and are model immigrants. One will be tempted to believe that the other Nigerians – the ones living in the poorer parts of town – do not exist. The criminal elements are mentioned in an off-hand manner, distant relatives of whom no one wants to speak.

"It's not a Nigerian-specific problem. It's just that Nigerians are many. So we get blamed for most offences. [...] We have had to seize passports from people who are not Nigerians. We confiscate these passports," Mrs. Uche Ajulu Okeke, the Nigerian High Commissioner to South Africa says in her interview. She went on to give the statistics of the Nigerians working in academics and other respectable professions.

The other Nigerians who talk about living in South Africa have one thing in common: they work (or study) hard and keep/stay in their homes. It is not explicitly said by anyone that going out at night or leaving your immediate environment puts you at risk of violence but it is implied. That 200 Nigerians have died due to police brutality is a disturbing fact mentioned in the film but there is no follow-up.

Nigerians make a mini-Nigeria for themselves wherever they go: their cuisine, their businesses, and of course their churches – the film shows footage of a Nigerian church at worship; and in a lot of countries this is welcome. But in a South Africa where Nigerians are stereotyped as drug dealers and prostitutes, this may not be the best way.

"Once people hear you are a Nigerian, they have this negative perception of you. There are Nigerians that are professional and live an honest life, family-oriented. They take South Africa as a home," Clovis, a South African says. Sheila, a South African landlord with Nigerian tenants agrees. It might help that they attend a Nigerian church.

The xenophobic attacks and following conversation show that the majority of South Africans do not see this side of Nigerians. GREEN PASSPORT IN A RAINBOW NATION does and hopefully it is watched by the people who need to see it the most: South Africans.

Ronke Macaulay, director.

"...history in a film?" *Contd. from P7*

Awam Amkpa, author of *Theatre and Postcolonial Desires* (2003) and Ropo Ewenla, a culture consultant, have both described Jihan El-Tahri's work as "complex" – statements that El-Tahri corroborates several times during iRep 2017. "I like complexity," she tells me when I ask if a film on Nigeria is on the horizon. "I find Nigeria fascinating and multi-layered. The complexity, figuring out how all these things work together, that's what I find fascinating." I suppose that we would have to see which stories will emerge from El-Tahri's curiosity for Nigeria. I too am curious.

The iREP Report Newsroom

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