



Decolonizing African Art History in Kenya: New Perspectives and Methodologies

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Abstract

African art history in Kenya has historically been influenced by colonial perspectives that have marginalized indigenous narratives and methodologies. Qualitative research employing ethnographic interviews, archival analysis, and participatory observation were conducted to document contemporary practices and historical narratives within Kenyan arts communities. Themes of oral tradition and community art-making emerged as central to the artistic expressions studied, revealing a strong connection between material culture and social identity in Kenya's cultural landscape. The study underscores the importance of integrating local perspectives into academic discourse and acknowledges the critical role that contemporary artists play in shaping new methodologies for African art history. Future research should prioritise collaborative efforts with Kenyan artists to ensure authenticity and relevance, while also advocating for policy changes that support decolonization initiatives in arts education systems.

Keywords: *African Studies, Decolonization, Ethnography, Postcolonial Theory, Methodological Innovation, Oral History, Visual Culture*

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