Decolonizing African Art History: A Theoretical Framework for Ethiopian Contexts

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Abstract

Decolonizing African art history involves re-evaluating traditional narratives that often marginalize or exoticize African artistic expressions. In Ethiopia, this process requires acknowledging historical underpinnings of colonialism and imperialism, which have shaped scholarly approaches to Ethiopian art. The current academic landscape in Ethiopia has predominantly focused on Western art histories, overlooking indigenous contributions and perspectives. The research methodology involves a critical review of existing literature on Ethiopian art history, including colonial-era archives, contemporary ethnographies, and interdisciplinary studies. A qualitative analysis will be employed to explore the complexities of Ethiopian art within its socio-political context. The proposed theoretical framework will contribute to a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of Ethiopian art history by emphasising the importance of local histories and cultural identities. This approach aligns with broader decolonial calls for equitable representation in academic discourse. Recommendations include integrating interdisciplinary approaches, engaging with community elders and traditional practitioners, and advocating for institutional changes that recognise and value indigenous knowledge systems in Ethiopian art scholarship.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

This is an abstract-only publication. The complete research paper with full methodology, results, discussion, and references is available upon request.

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