

# Understanding The *ISMS* of Nigerian Post-Colonial Art Movements: An Ideological Path for Emerging Contemporary Art

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**Abstract:** Scholars of African art have advocated various methodologies for the study of African contemporary arts. These methodologies serve their purposes, however there is no particular most embracing and consensus approach so far. Since the millennium, the outcomes of African contemporary art actually defy any static approach. This paper proposes the ideologies and aesthetics of some post-colonial art movements in Nigeria and their impact on Nigerian contemporary art, as a methodological path to understanding the emerging contemporary arts of Nigeria. The art movements considered in this paper are Zarianism, Osogbo Art, Ulism, Onaism and Araism which are the most outstanding of Nigerian post-colonial art movements since independence in 1960. These art movements, through their ideologies, have largely shaped what is today considered as Nigerian Contemporary Art. This paper is a contribution to the ongoing dialogues on the identity of post-colonial Africa and the processes of de-colonization of African culture. Contemporary Nigerian art in this paper is the art from the 1990s till date. The paper is based on qualitative research and bibliographic surveys. The findings show that many contemporary Nigerian arts and artists are affiliated or linked with early post-colonial art movements. In conclusion, a successful inquiry and understanding of the formation and practice of the art movements hopefully will create a pathway in the prediction, identity, and understanding of recent works of art in Nigeria and Africa.

**Keywords:** Aesthetics, Art Movements, Contemporary Art, Ideologies, Nigerian Art, Post-Colonialism

## I. Introduction

Ideologies constitute ideas or opinions or beliefs of individuals or groups which characterize a particular culture that is exhibited at a particular period. Ideologies are philosophical, be they social, political, cultural or scientific. The concept of ideology is elementally practical as well as theoretical. According to Lichtheim (1965, pp.164-195) and Saksena (2009, pp.65-69), the concept and role of ideology today has shifted from its definition when it was coined as a vocabulary term by French philosopher Antoine Destutt de Tracy (1754-1836) during the Age of Enlightenment. Today, ideological discourses centre on questions of identity and ethnicity, and the creation and understanding of life changes. Since ideology as a set of ideas seeks to explain some or all aspects of reality and lays down values and preferences for the attainment of defined goals; it is a most suitable concept for this paper that discusses the post-colonial art movements in Nigeria. The ideologies of these movements have played important roles in influencing the direction and practice of Nigerian contemporary art.

Art movements are usually driven by an ideological, stylistic or technical revolution with a specific philosophy that is followed by the artist or group of artists, during a period of time. The suffix *-ism* attached to movements reveals an underlying philosophy that distinguishes the movements' tendencies, and also defines their styles and features. Not all art movements however, are created by conducting experiments, with the sole aim of inventing new art forms and beliefs for aesthetic reasons; sometimes some individuals or group of artists in the quest for fame create movements while at other times movements develop spontaneously from the freedom of expression of individual artists. One of the main objectives for founding art movements is to create new means of expressing different forms and styles apart from existing ones and to the impact the material culture of the society. According to Egonwa (2012, pp.22-50) visual art movements in Nigeria started in the late 1940s with the emergence of an Art Club at Government College, Keffi. By early 1950s the Keffi Art Club had diminished and eventually became non-existent. On 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1958 the Zaria Art Society was inaugurated. The Zaria Art Society became the first serious art movement in Nigeria. Other notable art movements, amidst many others, that emerged after Zaria Art Society include: Uli in Nsukka in 1961, Osogbo Art in Osogbo in 1962, Ona in Ife in 1989 and Ara in Lagos in 2006.

Contemporary art in Nigeria has developed primarily from artists' reactions to their everyday life and social changes in education, politics, religion, socio-economics, entertainment and cultural insurgencies. Babalola (1998) attributed the necessity for the emergence and development of such development in Nigerian art, to the power of decay, continuity and change that is part of life's experiences. Contemporary art in Nigeria has its foundations rooted in the post-colonial movements that have spanned over fifty years. In the last four decades, very many contemporary Nigerian artists have emerged due to several avenues for training and promoting art. Academic art schools that use formal education and workshop centres that are informal have turned out hundreds of

artists who practice contemporary art. Other sources of training include the internet (online lessons), mentorship and even plagiarism. All these have saturated the artistic terrain with myriad of art pieces, exhibiting diverse styles and forms. This situation on the Nigerian art scene is replete in several countries all over Africa. According to Clarke's (2006, p.23) analysis, even though the traditional human figure is still the major form of inspiration for contemporary African artists, conventional symbolic and conceptual expressions have fizzled into new forms that synthesize complex contemporary ideas. Modern media such as photography, computer software and video have expanded their materials beyond their immediate environment. Contemporary art in Nigeria in its present state presents some scholarly problems. Some of these are:

- i. gap in understanding cultural boundaries and stylistic identification due to cross-currents, borrowings and adaptations.
- ii. documentation of contemporary art under stylistic groups or classes
- iii. singular methodology for scholarly identification, classification, guidance and criticism.

It is in the bid to contribute to avenues of understanding the arts that this paper approaches it from the perspective of the post-colonial art movements' ideologies and their ripples into the contemporary art period.

## II. Methodology and Theoretical Framework

The methodology employed in this paper aimed to look for answers to questions. It identified the problems and questions, examined selected relevant variables, collected data, analyzed data and discussed data thereby drawing appropriate conclusions. This paper used a qualitative research method of field investigation and bibliographic survey. Many contemporary Nigerian artists were observed in their works and some who were purposively selected, were interviewed, especially those who are affiliated to the post-colonial movements discussed in this paper. Such artists include Mufu Onifade (Araism), Nike Okundaye (Osogbo Art), Akangbe Kasali (Osogbo Art), Adeyinka Fabayo (Osogbo Art), Abiodun Akande (Onaism), Bruce Onobrakpeya (Zarianism), Demas Nwoko (Zarianism), Oladapo Afolayan (Zarianism), Johnson Oladesu, (Zarianism), Paul Seyi-Gbangbayau (Zarianism) and John Adenle (Ulism). In this aspect of the method, the intention was to trace the trajectory of a particular artist in relation to any of the art movements. Answers were requested to be provided for questions such as "what is the movement of the artist's affiliation that may have molded his/her thoughts and expressions? Has the artist trained in any school or workshop/studio that tends ideologically towards particular art movements? The artist's work history, particular efforts and failures came into play also at this point of interrogation. Photographs that are relevant to the paper were recorded and collected. The research questions in this paper are: (i) what are the physical appearances and attributes of Nigerian contemporary artworks? (ii) what are the visual links of these works to the post-colonial art movements? (iii) what is the underlying ideological structure of the art movements? (iv) how does the ideological structure of the art movements give understanding to the contemporary works and artists intentions? (v) how has the emerging contemporary arts of Nigeria positioned African art globally? (vi) how has the development of contemporary Nigerian art impacted the global society culturally, socially and economically.

Examining the issue of ideology requires theory and extant thoughts on similar issues. The use of theory is an advocated foundation in the study and understanding of contemporary Nigerian art. Reviewing some theories on African art, Egonwa (2007, pp.97-106) mentions several theories on African art, such as the *Tribality Theory* of William Fagg (1982, p.121) which states that African arts are tribal and each tribe is an artistic universe. This theory is inapplicable to contemporary Nigerian art. Another theory is the *Eclecticism Framework Theory* of Henry Drewal (1988, p.71-74). Drewal's theory advocates a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of African arts which can synergize the study of contemporary African art from various perspectives. This paper in the view of Drewal's theory, proposes as a foundation, the *Theory of Contextualism*. Contextualism is a 20<sup>th</sup> century way of thinking that majorly influences contemporary art. It is centered on the belief that all knowledge is "content sensitive". The implication here is that to fully understand contemporary Nigerian art, there must be careful juxtaposition of content in terms of form, medium, style and the ideologies of the art movements. For example *Mother of Twins* (Fig. 1) by Wale Olajide, *Untitled* (Fig. 2) by Taiwo Olaniyi (Twins Seven Seven) and *Arewa* by Adeyinka Fabayo (Fig. 12) all express the ideology of Osogbo art. The quest for exploring indigenous motifs, materials and traditions and synthesizing them with modern expressions has become a trend since 1958 when the ideology of Zarianism moved it as a way forward for the development of art practice in Nigeria. Other theories that were employed in this study are: *Formalism* for stylistic details and looking into the exactness of the creative styles, and the theory of *Iconology* to view if the icons truly represent what is culturally Nigerian. The art theory of formalism used as the framework for this study, was pioneered by Viktor Borisovich Shklovsky (1893 -1984), Roman Jakobson and Boris Eichenbaum. It was developed by Roger Fry and Clive Bell in 1914, and advanced by Clement Greenberg in mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. It uses the analytical comparisons of art forms and styles to review the very nature of an artwork. This study finds this theory appropriate because the nature of specific artworks in the study is the focus of the paper. Basic art elements such as colours, shapes, textures, lines and sizes are emphasized beyond the meaning and context of the works. The theory of iconology was developed by German-Jewish art historian, Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) and is the interpretation of the meanings of forms of artistic objects. In this paper, the theory is applied in the iconographic description, classification, and symbolisms of the different artworks that were observed and documented.

### Review of Some Methods in Understanding African Art

Several attempts have been successfully made by many scholars within and outside Africa to chart a methodological path for the understanding of the different stages of African art. Some of these approaches are relevant to this paper in proposing an ideological method. Mount (1973) grouped early modernisms into four stylistic categories for easy understanding. According to him, there is the group of artists who have continued in traditional styles and media (survivals) even though they practice contemporarily. Secondly, was the group of art inspired by mission workshop experiments, thirdly, the souvenir/tourist art and then art that did not require African techniques (arts in the copy of European styles). Adepegba (1989, pp.113-137) reviewing a list of books by Evelyn Brown, (1966), Ulli Beier, (1968) and Kojo Fosu (1986), came up with a classification using examples from the collections of the National Gallery of Modern Art in Nigeria. His conclusion was that contrary to Mount's grouping, many modern African artists produce works that fall into more than one of the categories. Adepegba (1989, pp.2-14) also focused on form, content and style. Fosu (1986) based his approach on a historical sequence. His method was to look at the works produced by the African artists according to how when they were made, believing that the time frame will affect the types of art produced. Filani (1989, pp.57-72) in his own effort to create a simple path for understanding contemporary Nigerian art, viewed the art works from the angle of form and content. Contemporary Nigerian art has been infused with new forms such as surface texturing, cubism and elongation to rework older forms which have resulted in new meanings and wide range of individual styles. Filani argued that this is a completely legitimate process because contemporary artists are always aiming for a cultural synthesis of the old and new in the form and content of their works. Jegede (1998, pp.187-195) states that at this contemporary point in time, in the study of African art, no method should be ethnocentric and a global perspective will be most suitable and preferable.

### III. Discussion

#### Nigerian Art Movements and Contemporary Art

*Zarianism* is the ideologically based art movement that resulted from the Zaria Art Society founded on 9<sup>th</sup> October, 1958. This started in the foremost art school in Nigeria in the then College of Art, Science and Technology located in Zaria. The college and art school have since become known as the Ahmadu Bello University and the Zaira Art School. The ideology, approach, adherents and products address the issues of versatility and freedom in art. From the accounts of Oloidi (1997, pp.5-7), Odoh (1998, pp.1-30), Egonwa (2001, pp.55-59), Adekoya (2001, pp.80-81), Adepegba (2003, pp.37-51) and Oloidi (2008, pp.27-32), the founders of the Zaria Art Society, who were students of art at that time, were tired of the imitation of the western approach and styles of their European teachers. This period in Nigeria was the peak of the frenzy for independence and nationalism and the students wanted to produce art that identified with Nigerian cultural heritage. The Zaria Art Society stood for what is considered individualistic expression but reflective of Nigerian cultural idioms, themes and traditions. The movement started as a group sometimes referred to as the "Zaria Rebels" because the desire was to rebel against the status quo and create a new type of art. It wanted an artistic independence from colonialism. The founder of this movement was Uche Okeke and the founding members were Bruce Onobrakpeya, Demas Nwoko, Yusuf Grillo, Simon Okeke, Jimoh Akolo, Oseloka Osadebe, Felix Ekeada, Irein Wangboje and Emmanuel Odita. Many other art students later joined the group. The philosophy of the group later became popularized as *Natural Synthesis*, but the goal remained. Popular second-generation advocates of "natural synthesis" from Zaria are Gani Odutokun (1946-1995) (Fig. 11), Jerry Buhari and Sani Muazu (Fig. 10). *Natural Synthesis* is a hybrid art that merges forms, techniques, ideas and traditions from Nigerian and western cultures. Presently, seventh-generation Zarianists can be identified and are producing contemporary art in Nigeria such as Johnson Oladesu and Paul Seyi-Gbangbayau. The impact of Zarianism on Nigerian contemporary art can best be viewed from the individual contributions of the members of the Zaria Art Society to the development of various other art schools, movements and groups that form the fabric of contemporary art in Nigeria. Babalola (1998, p.170), and Oladugbagbe, Abodurin and Akintonde (2008, p.110) mentioned some Zarianists who have a history of establishing grounds for contemporary art to build on. Uche Okeke is known to have pioneered the Nsukka Art School and Ulism with his colleagues, Irein Wangboje started the Benin Art School and Yusuf Grillo (Fig. 8) was a great influence on the Yaba Art School. Demas Nwoko, (Fig.9) for decades championed contemporary utilitarian arts in theatre design and architecture and the training many young artists in entrepreneurship. Bruce Onobrakpeya is the founder and patron of the popular Agbarhar-Otor Harmattan Art Workshop series that has continued for about three decades. The training, discourses and scholarship from the Harmattan Workshops have created a melting pot for the crystallization of contemporary concepts and art productions in Nigeria and beyond.

The *Osogbo Art Movement* was an experiment that started in Osogbo town, located in Southwestern Nigeria, from 1962 and gained recognition from 1965. Many of the artists that emerged are still on the Nigerian art scene and the movement has produced ripples of many generations into contemporary art. It started as Mbari-Mbayo Art Club and focused on skilled local people without formal art training. The organizers, Ulli Beier, Susan Wenger and Georgina Beier brought together talented artists who were spurred on to produce paintings, sculptures and textiles based on their extensive experiences in the mythological beliefs of the Yoruba. Other similar workshops had earlier emerged and flourished in other locations but none of them metamorphosed into a revolutionary creative movement as Osogbo art. The ideological position of the movement, according to Oloidi (2008, pp.27-32),

“stressed a creative stream that had its source neither from tradition or modernity”. The artists from the onset were encouraged to work in their individual styles in the interpretation of Yoruba mythology. The result of this as Oloidi noted is “unusual, cryptic, ethereal but vibrant rather than the endogenous compositions and characters that pay homage to the creatively unknown rather than tradition or modernity” The Osogbo movement became a major trend in Nigerian modernisms, though Adepegba (1999, pp.3-8) classified them as “naïve visions encouraged and fossilized” because these art works were produced from the sub-conscious in spontaneous, unconscious ways. Dreams, esoteric experiences and interpretations of myths and folklores formed the sources of such pictorial expressions. The works deviated from the rules of academic formal art and shared a common ideology and identity. The pioneering and foremost artists of this movement were: Jimoh Buraimoh, Rufus Ogundele, Adebisi Fabunmi, Jacob Afolabi, Muraina Oyelami, late Taiwo Olaniyi (Twins Seven Seven) and Nike Davies Okundaye. Many of these artists are still practicing and have reproduced a very large followership of younger generation of artists such as Akangbe Kasali and Adeyinka Fabayo who are renowned for their contemporary interpretations of Osogbo art ideology and aesthetics.

*Ulism* as an art movement emerged from the Nsukka Art School at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The principal initiator was Uche Okeke (1933-2016) (Fig. 5), who is also one of the founders of the Zaira Art Society, but the Uli movement was not a protest group. The ideology of Ulism is cultural authenticity through artistic understanding that aimed at redeeming the encounters of colonialism in Africa. The cardinal principles of the movement behoove the artists to maintain respect for their roots and at the same time be open to opportunities to borrow and adapt from diverse sources. The group which started in 1961 comprises of artists who are or have been students or teachers of the Department of Fine and Applied Arts at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Adenaike (1982, pp.38-52), linked the Nsukka Art School products as greatly influenced by Uli designs, colours and symbols. He viewed the door to understanding of the art produced by artists from Nsukka to be the ideology of Ulism. The artworks of these artists are characterized by the adoption of the linear patterns of *Uli* and *Nsibidi* traditional art, which are features of Igbo cultural artistic designs. Igbo Uli art is a popular creative idiom found in South-Eastern Nigeria, which is made up of linear, spiral and circular motifs that serve decorative, ritual and cosmetic purposes (Adepegba, 2008, p.119). It is used on the human body, walls and other utilitarian items. The prominent artists of Ulism include: Uche Okeke, Tayo Adenaike, Obiora Udechukwu, Ada Udechukwu, Chike Aniakor, Ola Oloidi, Chike Amaefuna, El Anatsui (Fig.4) and Olu Oguiibe. The younger generation of advocates and practitioners of Ulism include Ndidi Dike, Chinwe Uwatse, Marcia Okeke-Agulu, Barthosa Nkurumeh, Nkechi Nwosu-Igbo (Fig.3) and Sylvester Ogbechie. According to Sowole (2017, pp. 118-124), fifty years of Ulism has impacted tremendously on Nigerian art and has energized contemporaneity in African art.

The ideology and movement of *Onaism* emanated from the group called Ona. The ultimate objective of this group was to integrate colours, patterns, materials and the philosophy of the Yoruba of South-western Nigeria, into contemporary art works. The Ona group emerged on 20<sup>th</sup> February 1989 among the art graduates from the Ife Art School located in the Department of Fine and Applied Arts, University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), Ile-Ife. The founders, Moyo Okediji, Kunle Filani, Tola Wewe, Bolaji Campbell, Tunde Nasiru, Don Akatapo and Tayo Ojomo made deliberate efforts to project and develop Yoruba aesthetics using its motifs, concepts, styles and materials in their improved forms. Onaism is well articulated theoretically and practically and has birthed other 21<sup>st</sup> century generation art movements in Nigeria. According to Adepegba (2008, p. 120, 154-155), the ambience created by the status of the town of Ile-Ife as the spiritual home and mythical centre of the universe for Yoruba existence, has helped the rapid growth and spread of Onaism. Okediji (1989, p.25) believed that Onaism being hinged on the Yoruba tradition is of great necessity because it is “the link to the past, the ladder to the future and the stem from which all the brilliant petals of the Nigerian art flower today” Onaism was fueled by several annual exhibitions tagged “Best of Ife”. These exhibitions encouraged individualism and importation of diverse cultures. Filani (2005, p.25) identified some younger generation artists that have been working strictly in consonance with Onaism and these include Wole Lagunju, Deji Dania, Adeniji Dada, Demola Ogunajo, Akande Abiodun, Stephen Folaranmi, Rasheed Amodu and Mufu Onifade. All these artists are from the Ife Art School.

One of the later generation practitioners of Onaism, Mufu Onifade (Fig. 6) developed *Araism* as a movement on July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2006, exhibiting thirty-four works by him and five works from other followers namely: Olaniyi Omojuwa, Tope Oguntuase (Fig. 7), Oludotun Popoola, Akande Abiola and Jonathan Ikposa. According to Mufu Onifade (2006, pp.5-7) the ideology of Araism rests on the Yoruba philosophy of Ifa Corpus and other socio-cultural representations of Yoruba folklore, proverbs, idioms and worldview. Araism focuses on a stylistic technique which presents works that are marked by granules of paint strokes that interrelate to form patterns, textures and images. The images are revealed by mere acts of paint strokes co-mingling in the forms that are across the pictures. This technique is reminiscent of European Post-Impressionism. Annual exhibitions and workshops promoting Araism have continued for sixteen years. Both the technique and the ideology has spread extensively across art schools in Nigeria, particularly in the southwest.

In the Smithsonian Institution’s Gallery of African Art, the 1967 works of Nigerian artist, Taiwo Olaniyi (Twins Seven Seven) (1944-2011) (Fig. 2), are categorized as *Nigerian Modernisms*. However, in the past fifty-four years from 1967, what is known as Nigerian modernism has metamorphosed through stages that have defined and redefined what has become contemporary

art today. Reviewing the present state of African art within contemporary international practices, Copan (2007) who viewed the similarities between contemporary African art and western art, summarized the features as the following:

- i. blurring of old distinctions
- ii. globalization and multiculturalism
- iii. access to the internet information and media
- iv. truth as a matter of perspective
- v. individuality

In 1990, the Smithsonian Institution documented some Nigerian artists in Nigeria and London, to capture the emerging contemporary African art. (Kelly & Stanley, 1990). Artists such as El Anatsui, Nike Davies-Okundaye, Ben Enwonwu, Lamidi Fakeye, Taiwo Jegede, Uche Okeke, Bruce Onobrakpeya, Obiora Udechukwu and Sokari Douglas–Camp were inclusive. From the list of documented artists, three groups could easily be detected in their practices:

- (a) artists who produce purely western-styled works that are realism
- (b) artists that turn out stylized copies of traditional art like masks and figurines
- (c) artists who stylize their works by abstraction and other styles from modernism.

From the groups it is obvious that majority of African contemporary artists belong to the groups (a) and (c). The result is that African contemporary art has shown works of art by African artists that may appear completely western and works that are fusions of many adopted or borrowed forms, styles, techniques, materials and technology. However, many African contemporary artists take it upon themselves to infuse into their works, what they consider as African aesthetics. In the bid to do this the artists imbibe the ideologies of the earlier art movements that had set out to do that.

There is the tendency to view contemporary African art based on the perspective of the physical environment of Africa in the present time. Today, African communities are highly influenced by western elements to the extent that the cultural past is almost corroded, eroded or ignored. Most indigenous languages, religions, medicine, agricultural practices, laws and creative arts; music, dance and crafts have been affected. However rather than view the re-emergence of African art in new forms as a result of the overwhelming presence of post- colonialism, Nzegwu (1998, pp.1-18) who rejects the one-sided view of Eurocentric African art, Oguike (1999, pp.16-29), Hassan (1999, pp.214-235) and Enwezor (2009, p.21) all agreed that modern African art though post-colonial, should be seen as international since art is now global. The issue of borrowing and adaptation of contemporary African art (African artist copying or integrating European models into their art) should not be seen as Eurocentric but rather an evidence of mutual influence in the global creation of contemporary art. In all the attempts by art historians, artists, curators and scholars from related disciplines to define, classify and categorize contemporary African art (of which Nigeria is inclusive), especially from the 1980s to the early 2000s, the scholarship on African art has stayed on the foundations and narratives of post-colonialism. Contemporary African art reveals a type of art that is post-colonial, globalized, collected and patronized internationally. It is art that has broken away from the western labelling as “ethnic”, “tribal” or “traditional”. This does not however remove its distinctness. Most of its distinctness comes from properties that feature symbolic peculiarities that are termed as “African Aesthetics”. According to Adepegba (1999, pp.3-18), Africanism has been a major expectation in contemporary African arts.

### **Nigerian Art Movements and Emerging Contemporary Art**

Phrases such as “Modern Nigerian Art” “Postcolonial Nigerian Art”, “Twentieth Century Nigerian Art”, “New Nigerian Art”, “Post-Modern Nigerian Art” and “Contemporary Nigeria Art” have been used by various scholars, sometimes interchangeably, to describe the stages and periods of the present state of art in Nigeria. However, the core of these studies is mainly about the continuing relevance and viability of particular traditions in the emergence of novel practices. The new tendencies may be viewed as the end of traditions due to the immense changes brought to the traditional African life (Adepegba, 1995), yet the emergence of movements in the new era has helped chart an understandable path for changes in art in Nigeria. Akatakpo (1998, p.5), on his stylistic studies on contemporary Nigeria arts reveal that the most vibrant and more competitive and challenging period of Nigeria’s art history is between the late 1970s and the 1990s because artists were turned out in large numbers from most Nigerian art institutions. This period also witnessed the emergence of seasoned practitioners that can be classified as modernists of the “third” and “fourth” generations, considering the likes of Aina Onabolu as first generation and Zaria art school as second generation. These artists have inclined to borrow directly from the artistic expressions of art movements in their vicinity.

### **IV. Conclusion**

Art movements have played vital and impactful roles in the development of contemporary Nigerian art and the cultural advancement of its society. The new generations of artists are not ignorant of previous debates on nationalism and cultural revival. For example, an art work produced in 2009 by a graduate of painting from an academic setting may appear to be in the mold of works from Osogbo Mbari Club, which are informal renditions. Logically, to understand the work, the researcher or scholar

overlooks the fact that the artist is a formally trained one and has deliberately not spontaneously, but consciously chosen to apply the ideology and style of Osogbo art. Thus, to understand such art, the scholar must refer to the ideology and aesthetics of Osogbo art movement. Adepegba (2008, p. 120) asserted that Onaism has produced younger generations of artists who work in line with the philosophy and style of the movement. Artists such as Wale Lagunju, Deji Dania, Adeniyi Dada, Demola Ogunajo, Abiodun Akande, Stephen Folaranmi and Rasheed Amodu are popular second-generation practitioners of Onaism. Ikwuemesi (2010, pp.170-205) referred to the loud influence of Ghanaian born “Nigerian Master Artist” and Ulist, EI Anatsui, on three generations of artists down the line of practice. Apart from the works of younger artists trained at the Nsukka School where Anatsui retired from as a Professor of Art, artists who have nothing to do with the artist’s tutelage are being infested by his conceptual ideology of Ulism. The implication of this is that the large percentages of practicing artists in contemporary Nigeria are linked in practice, style and ideology to the post-colonial art movements. This implies that by using the ideological approach to be able to understand a contemporary work, the observer must first seek to identify the elements in such work and trace them to a particular art movement or movements. Presently there is no sudden break from the past or the birth of newer art, hence contemporary art in Nigeria has continued to be new branches from the old stem of post-colonial art movements. In the future three possibilities may be expected. Firstly, the extensive borrowings from expanded sources may result in art works that completely stray from status-quo into a completely new type of Nigerian art. Secondly, Nigerian artists may abandon the cultural clinging and due to the influence of technology, drown in a globalized art. Thirdly, there may be an African renaissance that will spur African artists back to traditional arts so as to remain distinctly relevant within a globalized art.



Figure 1: Wale Olajide. *Mother of Twins*. Mixed Media. Source: National Gallery of Art



Figure 2: Taiwo Olaniyi (Twins Seven Seven). *Untitled*. Oil Colour. Source: National Gallery of Art

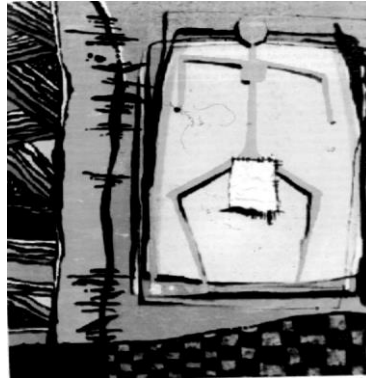


Figure 3: Nkechi Nwosu-Igbo. *Beyond Silence*. Mixed Media Source: Ayodele, O. (2011)



Figure 4: El Anatsui. *Gbeze*. Source: National Gallery of Art (2008)



Figure 5: Uche Okeke. *Maiden*. Oil Colour. Source: National Gallery of Art (2008)



Figure 6: Mufu Onifade. *Osun Olomoyoyo (Goddess of Fertility)*. Acrylic. Source: Onifade, M. (2006)



Figure 7: Tope Oguntuase *Onijo Ara (Wonderful Dancer)* Acrylic. Source: Onifade, M (2006)



Figure 8: Yusuf Grillo *Omolomo* Oil Colour. Source: National Gallery of Art (2008)



Figure 9: Demas Nwoko. *Adam and Eve*. Wood. Source: Ayodele, O. (2010)



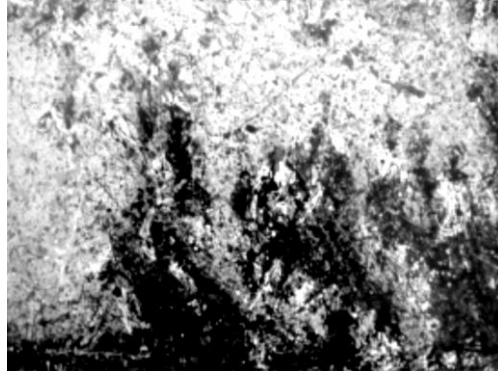


Figure 10: Sani Muazu. *Liquidized Technique*. Oil on Canvas. Source: National Gallery of Art (2008)



Figure 11: Gani Odutokun. *Natural Synthesis*. Oil on Canvas. Source: National Gallery of Art (2008)



Figure 12: Adeyinka Fabayo, *Arewa Wood*. Source: Mayowa Adebayo (2009)

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