Two chapters on Loango Coast ivories follow, including one that features unflinching descriptions of the slave trade. Strother makes a convincing case for reading ivories not as a winding linear narrative, as other scholars have proposed, but as sets of vertical juxtapositions. She then moves on to the colonial period, leaving the Loango Coast for northeast Congo and several in-depth analyses of gourds from the Uele region made at the peak of the so-called Red Rubber brutality. Next, in a chapter examining arts made by Congolese artists for fellow Congolese, Strother takes the reader to Pendeland, where she conducted extensive fieldwork. Here she discusses sexually explicit satire, as well as the "power object" of a Belgian officer killed at the outset of the 1931 Pende revolt. Finally, Strother concludes with a chapter on *arts populaires* from 1950 to 1997, ending with Chéri Samba and the fall of Mobutu.

Humor and Violence is an excellent book of art historical scholarship and a pleasure to read. By focusing on a relatively small number of objects, Strother allows herself to dwell on particulars. She slowly unspools meaning from details like expression, gesture, and clothing, while calling on European and African sources for context. The only drawback is that a reader may become so enveloped in the story of an object that the larger narrative becomes lost. The scope of the book is vast, covering precolonial trade to postcolonial regimes and an area the size of western Europe, and the examination of Congolese history through art is an innovative approach. Readers will be rewarded with insightful analysis, clear presentation of historical events, and the occasional laugh-out-loud moment as dogs and monkeys make their away across the page.

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Chika Okeke-Agulu. *Postcolonial Modernism: Art and Decolonization in Twentieth-Century Nigeria.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2015. xix + 357 pp. Illustrations/Paintings. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $29.46. Paper. ISBN: 978-0822357469.

In *Postcolonial Modernism*, Chika Okeke-Agulu discusses how ideologies of pan-Africanism, decolonization, and nationalism influenced the emergence of postcolonial Nigerian artistic modernism. Okeke-Agulu focuses on the Art Society, a group of young artists who studied at the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology in Zaria in the late 1950s. Okeke-Agulu demonstrates how the artistic works of the Art Society "show both a deep connection with local artistic traditions and the stylistic sophistication" (2) of twentieth-century modernist art, revealing how artists translated Nigeria's political independence from Britain into artistic modernism.

Okeke-Agulu analyzes not only the aesthetics of contemporary Nigerian visual art, but also the intellectual and institutional history of colonial art schools, particularly the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology (NCAST), Zaria. The founding of the Arts Society by former students of NCAST, and particularly the works of Uche Okeke (b.1933), represented postcolonial Nigerian artistic modernism, which in many ways was an improvement over earlier versions of colonial modernism. Okeke-Agulu argues that Uche Okeke's theory of "natural synthesis," the selective use of artistic resources and forms from Nigerian/African and European traditions, inaugurated postcolonial modernism in Nigeria. Colonial and postcolonial modernism resisted both "uncritical nativism" and undue Western artistic influence (89). Okeke-Agulu coins the term "compound consciousness" to explain the tensions and oppositional ideological influences on Nigerian artistic modernism. To better illustrate this point he explains that "postcolonial Nigerian art constantly reconstituted itself by selective incorporation of diverse, oppositional, or complimentary elements" (11). Apart from art, compound consciousness in itself is illustrative of the ways in which the "Westernized" colonial elites such as Herbert Macaulay were "thoroughly immersed in Victorian Lagos culture" (28) and yet deeply anticolonial. The concept also explains why artists like Uche Okeke and Bruce Onobrakpeya, as practicing Catholics and ethnic Igbo and Urhobo, saw no contradictions in depicting themes from the Bible and their respective indigenous religions and folklore. Though Nigerian artistic modernists such as Aina Onabulu, Uche Okeke, and others rejected European imperialism, they appropriated that continent's knowledge base and aesthetics in their struggle for decolonization.

Okeke-Agulu maps the artistic, nationalist, and intellectual influence of the Art Society in the Nigerian cities of Zaria, Ibadan, Lagos, and Enugu, skillfully weaving together the relationships among African and black diasporic literature, drama, and arts. In chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6, Okeke-Agulu recounts the intellectual history of Nigerian art institutions (particularly, the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology in Zaria) and the history of Nigerian literature and drama. He also discusses the making of Nigerian artistic modernism, including the paradox that this largely nationalist and pan-Africanist movement also expressed a cultural nationalism that was unified in response to military interventions, ethnic nationalism, and the Biafran secession and civil war. For example, Uche Okeke's depiction of Nwanyi Mgbolod'ala, a legendary Igbo Amazon, as the leader of the anticolonial Aba Women's riot in 1929 emphasizes Igbo ethnic nationalism.

The book is divided chronologically into seven chapters. The first chapter examines the colonial and pan-Africanist antecedents of Nigerian modernist art in the first half of the twentieth century. Chapter 1 also foregrounds the works of Aina Onabulu and shows the ways in which he opposed Murray's insistence on "colonial nativism." Chapters 3 and 4 build on these arguments and make the point that Onabulu's colonial modernism influenced the Art Society's ideals of decolonizing Nigerian society through art.

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Most of these ideas were expressed in Anglophone African and black diaspora publications such as the well-known *Black Orpheus* magazine, as well as the exhibitions and workshops at the Mbari Artists and Writers Club, Ibadan. Chapters 5 and 6 examine the works of individual artists in the Arts Society, such Bruce Onobrakpeya and Demas Nwoko, analyzing particulary how the ethos of "natural synthesis" is evident in their art. Chapter 6 also examines the intellectual and cultural milieu of Art Society artists in Lagos, especially after 1963. Chapter 7 concludes by arguing that postcolonial political crises such as the 1966 military coup, the Nigerian Civil War, and ethnic nationalism have all adversely affected Nigeria's postcolonial modern art scene.

The book includes high quality color reproductions of some of the major paintings that are discussed and is very readable and useful for both academic and lay audiences. It will be an important point of reference for postcolonial African/black art and intellectual history. One small critique: Okeke-Agulu might have included the works of non-elite artists without formal training in his analysis of modernist art in Nigeria.

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Clémentine Deliss, Yvette Mutumba, and The Weltkulturen Museum, eds. *El Hadj Sy: Painting, Performance, Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015. 407 pp. Photographs. Foreword. Contributors. Image Index. Biographic Chronology. Contributors' Biographies. Selected Reading. English/German Text. $50.00. Paper. ISBN: 9783037348413.

El Hadj Sy (El Hadj Moussa Babacar Sy) is a well-known Senegalese artist, curator, and cultural activist. He stands out not only as a painter, but also as a performance artist and the founder of numerous artist-led workshops, collectives, and studio spaces in Senegal. For the past forty years Sy has regularly challenged state authority in the interests of asserting his artistic autonomy and that of his peers. In 1977 he occupied an unused army base where he and others established what was to be the first version of the Village des Arts. As Deliss describes this venture in her introduction to this volume, it brought together some seventy actors, writers, musicians, filmmakers, and artists. A few years later he established Tenq (which means "articulation" in Wolof), a project space that hosted international workshops in Dakar and St. Louis. He was also a leader in the Laboratoirè AGIT'ART, an artistic collective where he supervised visual staging and costuming.

Sy is known not only as a cultural activist, but also as an acclaimed contemporary painter. His works, as noted by Philippe Pirotte in his essay