

---

# ENGAGING WOMEN'S SOCIAL CONCERNS THROUGH THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY FEMINIST ART PROJECTS OF THREE NIGERIAN WOMEN ARTISTS

**Nkiruka Jane Nwafor\***

<https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/ujah.v23i1.5>

## **Abstract**

In this paper, I review the histories of feminism and African feminism to highlight their influence on the evolving nature of women's art practices in the West and Africa respectively. Women Artists in the West had begun deploying feminist rhetoric in their art at the onset of second-wave feminism of the 1960s. On the other hand, women in Africa began using their art to engender intellectual discourses on African feminist concerns as recently as the mid-1990s. Using the works of three Nigerian women artists, Ayobola Kekere-Ekun, Lucy Azubuike, and Fati Abubakar, I, therefore, explore how their themes challenge critical issues that affect women in Nigeria's twenty-first-century contemporary realities. These artists are also from different geopolitical areas (west, east, and north respectively) in Nigeria. In analyzing their art, I also argue that their art may offer possibilities in affirming the relevance of African feminist art.

**Keywords:** Nigerian women artists, Western feminism, African feminism, contemporary art, twenty-first-century art practices.

## **Introduction**

Women in first-world countries began campaigns for equality and suffrage in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

(Krolokke and Sorensen, 2006, p.7) By the 1960s and 1970s, the second wave of feminism had also begun in the West. (Krolokke and Sorensen, *ibid*). The second wave of feminism engendered institutional critique of normalized thoughts in the canons of Western art history. Several female art historians such as Linda Nochlin, Norma Broude, and Mary Garrard, Whitney Chadwick, Jo Anna Isaak, Katy Deepwell among others from the 1960s began engaging in research aimed at bringing visibility to women artists whose artistic productions were not included in earlier Western art history documentations. On the other hand, feminism radicalized the artistic productions of mid-twentieth-century women artists in the West. The earliest feminist artists in the West were Faith Ringgold and Mariam Schapiro, Judy Chicago, Barbara Kruger, Cindy Sherman, Nancy Spero, and the Guerrilla Girls, among others. For instance, feminist activist artists like Judy Chicago or Mariam Schapiro, in varied regards, contest the misconceptions about women's art through the radical nature of their art.

However since white women controlled feminism in the West (Aleksandra and Slobodanka, 2013, p.306), many other variants of feminism have emerged from the late twentieth century which spoke to the needs of subjugated factions like black women, homosexuals among others. (Krolokke and Sorensen, 2006, p.7). In Africa, African feminists theorised other variants such as Africana womanism, Stiwanism, Motherism, and nego-feminism. (Walker, 1983), (Hudson-Weems, 1993), (Ogundipe Leslie Omolara, 1884), (Acholonu, 1995), (Nnaemeka, 1999). The major theories and ideologies of African feminism highlight attribute that, as N' Gone Fall (2007) summarizes, encourage women to seek financial autonomy, gain control over their

destiny, and affirm their relevance to the society without denigrating their nurturing attributes and conviviality with African men.

In her essay, "Providing a Space of Freedom: Women Artists from Africa," N'Gone Fall (2007) emphasizes that feminism is not a unanimous world phenomenon but instead adopts discrete peculiarities within its local emergence. While women in the Western countries were agitating for equality among others in the 1960s, N'Gone Fall notes that the 1960s was a period when many African nations gained independence from colonial rule and the social structure of African women's responsibilities as mothers, wives, and nurturers within the growing modernism in Africa had remained largely unchanged. ( p.20). Women's quest for social change in Africa did not take on the public theatrics of political activism that characterized Western feminism of the 1960s and 1970s. Its initial triumphs, as of Fall mentions, began from the middle-1970s to the 1980s when women, through financial autonomy, gained control over their destiny and affirmed their relevance to society. (p.2). In the literary arts, as N'Gone Fall further notes, while writers like Mariama Ba among others drew attention to the plight of women in Africa through their work by the late 1970s, women in the visual arts were largely silent. (p.3) N'Gone Fall in her essay, therefore, identifies when African women artists in the post-colonial setting began using their artistic productions to bring visibility to women's situation in Africa. (p.3).

Fall observes that "until the late 1980s, [African] women were mostly involved in such areas as craft, décor, fashion and hairstyles... and when they did paint, they are expected to create decorative beauty and not deal with intellectual theories." (p.2).

Fall further mentions that by constraining themselves to such limited roles, African societies were not acknowledging that “woman could be a full-time artist who addressed challenging and intellectual issues.” (p.2). Fall notes that it was by the mid-1990s that some African women gained recognition in the visual arts through the intellectually engaging nature of their art.(p;2). She mentions such artists as Sue Willams, Sokari Douglas Camp, Jane Alexander, Ghadar Amer, and Merlene Dumas. Camp is the only Nigerian female artist on her list. However, from the late 1990s, as of Fall notes, more African female artists had

entered the scene creating art of remarkable intensity whether aesthetic, thematic, or conceptual. Exploring issues of race, gender, domestic or psychological violence, power, territory, postcolonialism, and democracy, their works ranged widely over an array of contemporary subjects and concerns. This committed generation raised questions about male versus female, submission versus control, tradition versus modernity and the local versus the global. They took on the challenge of questioning their society- how they fit into it as women and how they relate to the world as Africans. (p.3).

Fall analysed the works of the women artists whose works were included in the exhibition *Global Feminisms* and also explored intellectual issues that affect African women. The women artists of the late 1990s were Tracey Rose, Bill Kouelani, Maha Maamoun, Zineb Sedira, Michele Magema, Otobong Nkanga, Berni Searle, and Berry Bickle. However, the artists

whose works were included in the exhibition were from South Africa, North Africa, and Central Africa as she did not enlist women artists from West Africa or Nigeria. I choose to use this research to identify some of the notable contemporary Nigerian women artists from the late 1990s and to the twenty-first century.

Nigerian women artists from the late 1990s to the first two decades of the twenty-first century also made outstanding art that is aesthetically and conceptually appealing. The themes of their works focused on intellectually provoking African feminist concerns that affect women in post-colonial Africa. Addressing issues that affect African women, through artistic productions entails using the space in which the audience views the works, as a site for raising awareness. Their works, thus, play activist roles within the society. Notable female artists of this era are Marcia Kure, Peju Alatise, Ruby Onyinyechi Amanze, Olawunmi Banjo, Nnenna Okore, Lucy Azubuike, Toyin Ojih Odutola, Fatimah Tuggar, Unoma Giese, Zemaye Okediji, Aisha Augie-Kuta, Chineze Araka, Priscilla Nzimiro, Taiye Idahor, Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Amarachi Okafor, Abigail Nnaji, Fati Abubakar, Patience Torlowei, Mercellina Oseghale Akpojotor, Ngozi Omeje, Addis Okoli, Anthonia Nneji, Ayobola Kekere Ekun.

In this paper, therefore, I analyze the works of three Nigerian women artists Ayobola Kekere-Ekun, Lucy Azubuike, and Fati Abubakar to determine how the themes and concepts resonate with African feminists art concerns and also address contemporary realities in twenty-first century Nigeria. The artists are also from different geopolitical areas (west, east, and north respectively) in Nigeria. In analyzing their art, I also argue that exploring how their artistic projects engage twenty-first-century contemporary realities may offer possibilities in affirming the

relevance of African feminist ideologies beyond mere terminologies.

### **Ayobola Kekere - Ekun**

At the moment, Ayobola Kekere – Ekun teaches graphics design at the University of Lagos and is also pursuing a Ph.D. programme at the University of Johannesburg. However, her professional studio practice centres on mixed media painting. Kekere- Ekun has at various times been inspired by artists like Stacey Gillian Abe, whose concepts drawn from past experiences highlight the strengths and fragility of the female mind, Chiharu Shiota, Nandipha Mntambo, Isabelle van Zeiji, and Wang Ziling among others. (Bitrus, 2019). Kekere–Ekun incorporates quilling in her art. Quilling is a decorative art technique that involves using stripes of coiled coloured paper, glued on two-dimensional surfaces, to create intricate designs. It is interesting how Kekere-ekun deploys paper quilling for challenging ingrained stereotypes about African women. Here quilling which is termed craft “lesser art” and a traditional feminine aesthetics assumes the symbol of ‘high’ art within the gallery space.

Kekere – Ekun first solo exhibition, *Resilient lines* at the Rele Gallery in Lagos, Nigeria, was funded by the Dean’s Collection 20 St(art)ups Grant by Swizz Beatz and Alicia Keys in 2018. (Bitrus, *ibid*). The exhibition highlights the compelling similarities in the experience of Nigerian (Yoruba) women in history, mythology, literature, and twenty-first-century reality. ( Bitrus, *ibid*). In her work *The Real Housewives of Old Oyo: Aja* (2018), Kekere-Ekun depicts a female face. The female face, with rounded eyes and part of the *shuku* hairstyle visible, peers through what appears as varied hues of greenish vegetation. Kekere-Ekun

made the shrubs using quilling paper tree techniques. Vegetation is sometimes associated with the untamed and wild and in this piece I suggest a correlation between Kekere-ekun's interrogation of the misrepresentations of female deities in Yoruba mythology and cosmology and the wild of the 'uncontrollable' forest.



Ayobola Kekere- Ekun, *Real Housewives of Old Oyo: Aja* (2018)  
Mixed media (Paper and Acrylic on canvas)

<https://thesoleadventurer.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Real-Housewives-of-Old-Oyo.jpeg>

Kekere-Ekun accentuates the brown-toned face with stripes of straight and curvilinear designs made out of paper. The lines evoke traditional Yoruba facial scarifications and particularly the linear markings on fourteenth to fifteenth-century bronze heads excavated in Ife, an ancient town in southwestern Nigeria. This is more intriguing because Kekere- Ekun is interested in connecting Yoruba mythology or historical events of

the past with today's reality, and concurrently Ife bronze heads are tangible testaments of a distant Yoruba past. As in many of Kekere-Ekun's other pieces, the nose is noticeably invisible. The pouted and glittering red lips give off an aura of femininity, agency, and boldness.

Yoruba popular culture and mythology accentuate male deities' active supremacy and prowess and on the other hand, diminish female deities to displays of mundane bickering and trivialities. (Obatala, 2019). Robert Graves cited in David Stable (2017), sees mythology as functioning to "justify an existing social system and account for traditional rites and functions." Kekere-Ekun affirms this notion that mythology "is a really interesting signifier of a society's psyche" and suggests that Yoruba mythology reminds one of the erasures of women and the institutional dynamics that sustain these exclusions. (Byenyan Jessica Bitrus, *ibid*). She, therefore, uses her art to re-imagine female deities as powerful and liberated characters and compares them to today's popular all-female reality TV project. (Byenyan Jessica Bitrus, *ibid*). Today's episodes of "Real house wives' TV reality shows feature spirited and glamorous women as they cope with busy personal and professional lives. It shows women in their vulnerable and at the same time most professional and entrepreneurial strengths. Kekere-Ekun, therefore, re-imagines powerful female deities and questions the implications of existing stereotypes of disregarding women's achievements in Nigeria's contemporary realities.

Kekere-Ekun approaches themes of femininity and womanhood through mythology to show that normalized and 'naturalized' perceptions about women perpetuated in contemporary times are rooted in literature, folklore, and



mythologies of yesteryears. (Byenyan Jessica Bitrus, *ibid*). Kekere-Ekun also drew parallels with other long-established prejudices against women or goddesses in Yoruba mythology. She talks about the predicaments of Aina Elewure who lived around the time of the first Olofin in Lagos's history. (Byenyan Jessica Bitrus, *ibid*). As she says, Elewure was wealthy and hardworking, yet she suffered much humiliation, neglect, and disrespect because she was single and unmarried. Kekere-Ekun compares Elewure's story with recent events about single women finding it almost impossible to rent houses in today's Lagos. (Byenyan Jessica Bitrus, *ibid*). By making these comparisons across time and space, Kekere-Ekun asserts her reality about gender injustices against Yoruba women and the need for society to change. Her work, therefore, resonates with African feminist ideologies that advocate changing normalized perceptions about African women's lived experiences. In drawing analogies between mythology and today's attitude toward women she invariably seeks a fair and just society. Moreover, Kekere-Ekun also donated a percentage of the exhibition's proceeds to a centre in Lagos, Nigeria, that offers medical and psychosocial services to survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. (Byenyan Jessica Bitrus, *ibid*).

In her piece, *First world problems, third world editions* (2018), Kekere-Ekun depicts two brown-toned skins, young women. They are seated casually on a silver-toned sofa and holding red wine glasses in their hands, in friendly-like conversational composes. The one on the right, dressed in a red top and sky blue pants, reclines on the arm of the sofa with her torso and legs in a sideways pose and her face appearing more frontal. The other lady seated closely wears a mix of orange and

yellow top and deep-blue pants with her body taking a frontal pose and her face looking sideways in a manner akin to Egyptian figures and towards her companion. Both figures appear in varied cross-legged postures, with the figure to the left being in a more meditative-like pose. Their side and back are supported by deep-ash-toned throw pillows that give an aura of privileged comfort, which many other women perhaps living in Nigeria cannot afford. Kekere uses paper quilling technique to create spirals of lines both on the sofa and the two female figures. The background is flat orange with a framed, dotted design which on closer look appears to be sanitary pads Kekere-Ekun incorporated into the work.

In *To be free: Interview with Ayobola Kekere-Ekun*, she stated that throughout the exhibition *Resilience*, viewers were unaware that the picture in the background of the painting is made of sanitary pads. (Bitrus, *ibid*). The piece sends a poignant message about how oblivious some privileged women in Nigeria are to issues that affect underprivileged women and girls in Nigeria. (Bitrus, *ibid*). Kekere-Ekun is disgruntled with the terrible state, and lack, of sanitary health facilities, clean toilets, and running water in many public schools in Nigeria. (Bitrus, *ibid*).



Ayobola Kekere-Ekun *First world problems, Third world Editions* (2018) Mixed media (Paper and Acrylic on Canvas) <https://thesoleadventurer.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/First-World-Problems-third-World-Editions.jpeg>

This, as she says, undermines girls' and women's sanitary health. Thus she situates menstrual health that should be a basic necessity, as a luxury in her piece *First world problems, Third world Editions* (2018). (Bitrus, *ibid*). Kekere-Ekun's advocacy, through her art, that privileged Nigerian women should be supportive of other females resonate with African feminist concern.

### **Lucy Azubuike**

Lucy Azubuike also uses the concept of menstruation to interrogate and challenge the plight of Nigerian women. However, her (Azubuike) concerns deviate from the sanitary health implications in Kekere-Okun's work *First world problems, Third world Editions* (2018).` To some extent, Azubuike's 2006 menstruation series titled *Feels Great* and *The Wispers* recalls the rhetoric of 1970s Western feminism. As Helen Molesworth notes, feminist artists of that period "offered 'positive' images of women, explored female sexuality and focused on the biological processes of the female body such as menstruation and childbirth."(1999, p.107). Judy Chicago's 1972 piece called "Menstruation Bathroom," where used tampons were displayed inside a trash can, is seminal to this concept of art that has been termed essentialist by several art critics. (Molesworth, 1999, p, 109). However since Western feminism excluded realities of third world countries, the liberal attributes of Alice Walker's *womanism* provide an inclusive and more suitable framework for engaging African women's (like Azubuike) exigencies with menstruation art. Menstruation art is a radical art movement that is related to conceptual and contemporary art approaches. Other women who explore such categories are Jet Lewis, Rupri Kaur, Vanessa Tiegs (who coined *Menstrala* as a term for menstrual art), Ingrid Berthon-Moine, Amanda Atkinson, Bee Hughes and South Africa's Zanele Muholi, among others.

Azubuike specialized in graphics in the fine and applied arts department at the University of Nigeria Nsukka where she studied photography as an undergraduate in 1999. She noted that El Anatsui, who was also teaching in the same institution, had encouraged her to seek creative interrogation or to ask intellectual

questions, as she puts it, “through the eyes of a camera.”(E-mail correspondence with Lucy Azubuike) Her work, therefore, ties together guiding principles from conceptual art and photography, mixed media, and African feminist concerns that are culturally specific to Nigeria. Some of the issues that Azubuike explores in her menstrual art however intersect with Kekere-Ekun’s narration of Aina Ekuware's predicaments in history and its parallel implications for single women in today’s Lagos. In a photography exhibition titled *Like a Virgin* in which she featured alongside Zanele Muholi in 2009, Azubuike uses her works



***Feels Great*, Lucy Azubuike, Photography, 2006. © Azubuike.**

such as *Feels Great* (2006) and *The Whisper* (2006), to also revisit Nigeria’s flawed and negative perception of single, unmarried or barren women. (Silva, 2009), associates the stigmas of menstruation with how women in Nigeria have internalized and normalized the social construct of marriage and motherhood. This

symbol of successful womanhood in Africa, in many instances, overshadows and disparages some women's personal accomplishments. I take a detour by exploring if Azubuiké's contestations reveal a prevalent treatment of women in Igbo, which is her ethnic group. Unlike married women who could only have access to ancestral land through their husbands and sons, unmarried or barren women are dispossessed and sometimes ridiculed if they dared to ask for a portion of land in their ancestral homes. For Azubuiké therefore, the onset of monthly menstrual periods signifies disappointments and failures to accomplish societal expectations. (Silva, 2009). With regards to inheritance, on the other hand, Nigerian (Igbo) men are the benefactors of patriarchy. They do not experience such biased dispossessions as bachelors or fathers.

Another Nigerian woman who is using photography to explore gendered themes among others is Fati Abubakar. Abubakar was born and raised in Maiduguri in Borno in northeast Nigeria. In the past decade, Maiduguri has been a major stronghold of the Boko Haram insurgency in northern Nigeria. Since its inception in 2002, the resulting war and conflicts have caused many devastating destructions and displacements and have also been the focus of mainstream media. By the 2000s when these terrorist attacks were unfolding, Abubakar in trying to escape the depressing scenario that had plagued her community relocated to London where she studied for a Master's in Public Health and Health Promotion from South Bank University. (Hassan, 2020). She returned to Maiduguri in 2015 and was overwhelmed at how the local community had persevered to overcome the trauma of the Boko Haram insurgency. (Hassan, 2020). She deployed photography to highlight. (Hassan, 2020).

Thus her quest to bring visibility to more positive everyday resilience of the Maiduguri community, and alternative stories excluded from mainstream media, inspired her to take up photography. She studied media (photography) in public health propagation and later an MFA in experimental and documentary arts. (Hassan, 2020). Abubakar's relation with photography is uncommon for the traditional northern Nigerian female. As she states, "everybody wants you to be married, with children, living a very obedient wife lifestyle." (Quist-Arcton, 2016). Thus Abubakar's photographic project "Bits of Borno" captures life at the time of the Boko Haram insurgency and in many ways, as she suggests, also changes the conservative society's patriarchal view of the place of the woman. (Quist-Arcton, 2016).

Boko Haram which literally means "Western Education is forbidden" had also caused the closure of many schools due to the incessant kidnapping of many school girls, and more recently boys, as a way of entrenching their ideology in the entire northern region. Abubakar noted that Boko Haram also tended to use "out-of-place women as suicide bombers." (Fati Abubakar, 2021). She shows support for girls' education by photographing girls attending classes in make-shift schools in Internally Displaced Persons' (IDP) camps and posting them on Instagram as part of the "Bits of Borno" project. One of the "Bits of Borno" photographs on Instagram is that of a female child of about four or five years. The young girl leaning on a wall stays in a brothel because that was the only place her father could earn a means of livelihood. (Leduc, 2016). Through her work, she has also raised funds that have helped children go back to school. (Leduc, 2016) (Searcey, 2016). In Abubakar's project titled "Education in a Crisis," she captures school girls and school boys resuming school

after the government had closed schools in the entire state due to insecurity from May 2014 to November 2016. . (Sarah Leduc, 2016). (De Maddalena, 2019).



**Fati Abubakar, Medium: Photography. Instagram photo by @ bitsofborbo**





**Fati Abubakar, Medium: Photography. Instagram photo by @ bitsofborno**

Abubakar's project "Lipstick, Brush and Boko Haram, Meet the make-up artists of Maiduguri," also counters Boko Haram's relegation of women "to a patriarchal world of servitude and submission to men." (Abubakar, 2021). As Abubakar (2021) notes, more men had died from the continuous war resulting in women fending for themselves and their families. (Abubakar, 2021). Thus, as she mentions "women have fought for their survival, and seized control of their destinies and, in the process, the role of women is undergoing an extraordinary evolution." (Abubakar, 2021). While some women have joined the vigilante groups to fight the terrorists, others have returned to schools in defiance of the risks. (Abubakar, 2021). Still, others have turned into entrepreneurs, starting small businesses with the help of

government and NGOs. (Fati Abubakar, 2021). Now that a lot of women occupy non-traditional roles, Abubakar considers it a society shift because women who were previously on the sidelines are now on the frontlines. (Fati Abubakar, 2021).



Fati Abubakar, Medium: Photography.

<https://mg.co.za/africa/2021-06-19-lipstick-blush-and-boko-haram-meet-the-make-up-artists-of-maiduguri/?amp>



Fati Abubakar, Medium: Photography.  
<https://mg.co.za/africa/2021-06-19-lipstick-blush-and-boko-haram-meet-the-make-up-artists-of-maiduguri/?amp>

In this regard, many female make-up artists are setting up state-of-the-art beauty salons in Maiduguri. (Abubakar, 2021). Abubakar (2021) explains how the experience elicits happiness from both make-up artists ( as a passion and financial independence) and their clients especially as they are still caught up in the trauma of living through the insurgency. This, as Abubakar opines “will lead us to women’s liberation.” (Fati Abubakar, 2021).

### **Conclusion**

In this paper, I reviewed feminism’s and African feminism’s influence on the evolving nature of women’s art practices in the

West and most importantly in Africa. I established that African women artists began using their art to address feminist concerns in the late 1990s. I analyzed the visual art projects of three Nigerian women artists to determine how they have deployed their art for women's concerns, in the twenty-first century, peculiar to their geopolitical regions. I explored how they have woven their realities into their artistic projects. Kekere-Ekun draws parallels between how women are derogatorily portrayed in Yoruba mythology and the plight of women in today's Lagos. She also highlights some of the sanitary and menstrual health problems that affect less privileged girls in Nigeria. Kekere- Ekun wants privileged women to be sensitive to what happens to other less privileged girls in her work, *First world problems, Third world Editions* (2018) thus invariably encouraging, as I argue, a genuine sisterhood with black women. On the other hand, Azubuike uses the shame and stigma associated with menstruation to contest society's disposition towards single and barren women. I also correlate Azubuike's contestations with how single and barren women are dispossessed of ancestral land in many communities in eastern Nigeria. Abubakar captures photographs of girls and young women from northern Nigeria. These females had braved the war and been at the fore of countering the flawed extremist narratives of Boko Haram insurgents. For instance, the women and girls in Abubakar's photographs have resumed education. Abubakar also photographed schoolboys in IDP camps which also shows that she is also concerned about the education of boys particularly since brainwashed boys are usually the target of Boko Haram's child militants. Again since many of their men had lost their lives or livelihoods to the raging war, many women have gained financial independence through undertaking

professions, such as becoming make-up artists and joining local militants in combating the insurgency, among others, which have enabled them to take responsibility for the needs of their families.

Many of the issues raised in their artistic projects are key issues in African feminism. All the women artists have agency since they assert their realities and have in some way used their art to create awareness and even raised funding for centres helping women in abusive relationships or aiding both girls and boys in education in IDP camps.

**\*Nkiruka Jane Nwafor**  
**Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka**  
[nj.nwafor@unizik.edu.ng](mailto:nj.nwafor@unizik.edu.ng)

## References

- Abubakar, F. (2020, February 14). 'Everyday life in the time of Boko Haram.' 'Reporter's Notebook.' *Aljazeera*. Accessed 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2021. Retrieved from [https://www.aljazeera.com/author/fati\\_abubakar\\_200212064404291](https://www.aljazeera.com/author/fati_abubakar_200212064404291)
- Abubakar, F. (2021, June 19). 'Lipsticks, Blush and Boko haram: Meet the make-up artists of Maiduguri.' 'Africa.' *Mail & Guardian*. Accessed 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2021. Retrieved from <https://mg.co.za/africa/2021-06-19-lipstick-blush-and-boko-haram-meet-the-make-up-artists-of-maiduguri/?amp>
- Acholonu, C. (1995). *Motherism: The Afrocentric alternative to feminism*. Owerri: Afa Publications.
- Admin. (2019, May 9). 'A new narrative of Nigerian Femininity and Womanhood by Ayobola Kekere-Ekun.' 'Art.' *Obatala*. Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.obatala.co.uk/blog/art/a-new-narrative-of-nigerian-femininity-and-womanhood-by-ayobola-kekere-ekun>
- Alkali M, Talif R, Yahya W, Jan J. (2013). Dwelling or Duelling in possibilities: How (ir)relevant are African feminisms?. In *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*. Vol.13, Nos.3, (September) pp.237-253.
- Azubuiké Lucy – *Biography*. Accessed 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2012. Retrieved from <https://www.lucysees.blogspot.com/>

- Bitrus, B. (2019, July 11). 'To be free: Interview with Ayobola Kekere-Ekun,' 'Features Summer Editions.' *The Sole Adventurer: Contemporary Art Magazine*. Accessed 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2021. Retrieved from <https://thesoleadventurer.com/to-be-free-interview-with-ayobola-kekere-ekun-by-byenyan-jessica-bitrus/>
- De Maddalena, I. (2019, December 05). 'Fati Abubakar: Bits of Borno.' *Fotofemme United*. Accessed 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.fotofemmeunited.com/article/129>
- Ebunoluwa, S. (2009). Feminism: The Quest for an African Variant. In *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, Vol.3, No.1, (September). pp. 227-234.
- Fall, N. (2007). Providing a Space of Freedom: Women Artists from Africa. In *Global Feminisms Exhibition catalogue*. New York: Brooklyn Museum. Assessed 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2013. Retrieved from [https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/global\\_feminisms/](https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/global_feminisms/)
- Goredema, R. (2010). African Feminism: The African Woman's Struggle for Identity. In *African Yearbook of Rhetoric*. Vol.1, Nos. 1. Online Publication (January). pp.33-41. Assessed 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2013. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/10520/EJC169591>
- Hassan, A. (2020, September 20). 'Fati Abubakar: Storytelling through the Lens of a Camera.' 'Life.' *Guardian* Accessed 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2021. Retrieved from

<https://guardian.ng/life/ati-abubakar-storytelling-through-the-lens-of-a-camera/>

Hudson-Weems, C. (1993). *Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves*. Houghton: Mifflin Company.

Ikpakronyi, S. (2004). Introduction: Nigerian Women in the Evolution of Nigerian visual Art. In P. Dike & P. Oyelola (Eds.), *Nigerian Women in Visual Art: History, Aesthetics and Intervention* (pp.4-51). Abuja: National Gallery of Art.

Izgarjan A, Markov S. (2013). Alice Walker's womanism: perspectives past and present. In *Gender Studies*. Vol. 11, Nos. 1. pp. 304-315.

Krolokke, C, Sorensen A. (2006). Three waves of feminism: From suffragettes to grrls. In *Gender Communication Theories & Analysis: From silence to performance*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. Assessed 5<sup>th</sup> July 2013. Retrieved from <https://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/6236 Chapter1 Krolokke 2nd Rev Final Pdf.pdf>

LaDuke B. (1991). *Africa through the eyes of women artists*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.

Leduc, S. (2016, September, 23). 'Nigerian photographer captures Maiduguri life beyond Boko haram.' Culture.' *France24* Accessed 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2021. Retrieved from <https://amp.france24.com/en/20160922-nigerian->



[photojournalist-fati-abubakar-bitsofborbo-life-maiduguri-beyond-boko-haram](#)

- Makonde, R. (2018). Images of woman and her search for happiness in Cynthia Jele's *Happiness is a four-letter word,* in *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde* , vol. 15, Nos. 1, pp.110-121.
- Mekgwe, P. (2010). Post Africa(n) feminisms?" In *Third Text*. vol. 24, Nos. 2, pp.189-194.
- Mekgwe, P. (2008). Theorizing African Feminism(s): The 'Colonial' Question. In *Quest: An African Journal of Philosophy/Revue Africaine de Philosophie*. Vol. 20, Nos. 1. pp11-22.
- Mohabty C, Talpade R, Lourdes, T. (Eds.). (1991). *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Molesworth,H. (1999). Cleaning up the 1970s: The work of Judy Chicago, Mary Kelly and Mierle Laderman Ukeles. In M. Newman & J. Bird (Eds.), *Rewriting Conceptual Art*. London: Reaktion Books. Chapter 6.
- Ogundipe-Leslie, O. (1994). *Re-Creating Ourselves: African Woman and Critical Transformations*. Trenton, N. J.: Africa World Press.

- Puppin-Lerch, S. (2008). *Contemporary African Women Artists: Commentaries on everyday life in art*. Ohio: ProQuest LLC.
- Quist-Arcton, O. (2016, October 2). ‘Who’s the woman with the camera chasing smiles and styles in Nigeria.’ ‘Goats and Soda.’ *NPR*. Accessed 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2016/10/02/495011103/whos-the-woman-with-the-camera-chasing-smiles-and-styles-in-nigeria>
- Sable, D. (2017, October 10). No more gods and heroes: What the myth of the future is missing, *Linkedin*. Accessed 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/more-gods-heroes-what-myths-future-missing-david-sable>
- Searcey, D. (2016, June 29). ‘From Boko Haram’s Birthplace, Instagram Posts Beyond ‘Death and Despair.’ ‘Maiduguri journal.’ *The New York Times*, Accessed 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/30/world/africa/boko-haram-nigeria-maiduguri-bitsofborno.html>

Silva, O. (2009, January 29 – March 14). “Like A Virgin... Lucy Azubuike & Zenele Muholi.” *ARTSPEAKAFRICA*, Accessed 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2013. Retrieved from <http://artspeakafrika.blogspot.com/2009/02/like-virgin-lucy-azubuike-zanele-muholi.html>.

Spivak, G. (2006). *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*. London, New York: Routledge.

Steady, F. (1981). *The Black Woman Culturally*. Cambridge, Massachussets: Schenkman Publishing Co.

Walker, A. (1983). *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovonovich.