A Guide to Documenting Art Works Collated From Field Works as Data Analysis and Findings for a Biographical Thesis

By

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Abstract

This study seeks to explore the difficulty in making detailed records of artifacts collated from fieldworks as data analysis and findings in biographical analysis of qualitative research. The find and applied arts students particularly the art history post graduate students seem not to be familiar with the technique of such documentation-a reason for which a lot of their thesis is not written on the biography of Nigeria artists. Axiomatically, an adequate biographical data analysis and findings would have shown the works in their meaning, creative style, techniques, medium, philosophy, theme, and ideology of expression. It would have also enhanced the quality, value and patronage of the works. The aim of the study is to examine the art works collated from field works, with the view of documenting them as data analysis and finding in a biographical thesis. The specific objective of the study is to show the components of data analysis and findings for a standard biographical art history thesis. Consequently, the study can yield numerous uses of data analysis and findings for biographical studies. The findings are based on biographical

survey of qualitative research methods and research questions which test the objective of the study. It adopts the historical survey research technique which relies heavily on primary and secondary sources of data collection. The in-depth interview technique was equally utilized. Related literatures were reviewed. The scope of the study was delimited to the use of field data for data analysis and findings in a biographical study. The interpretive and constructivist paradigm that anchors on psychoanalysis and professionalism guided the study. The study ascertained that, interpreting field data and summaries of findings that comprises; history of creative professionalism, historical chronology of artist's works, the possible insight into artist's creative themes and ideology, and meaning accessible from the works, are the components of data analysis and findings for a standard biographical art history thesis. It therefore concludes that, documenting field data as data analysis and findings in a biographical thesis is useful to the field of art history, as it would serve as guideline in the formation of data analysis and findings for a biographical thesis.

Keywords: A guide to documenting art works, field works, data analysis and findings, biographical analysis, qualitative research.

Introduction:

Making progress in providing detailed historic account of artworks collated from fieldwork as data analysis and findings in biographical analysis of qualitative research methods is on the setback. Analyzing artworks in improper analytic techniques seems to have constituted the problem. The problem becomes more compounding when post graduate art history students cannot properly document the analysis and findings of the works of the hardworking Nigerian artists particularly the intellectual Nigerian artists. The researcher therefore was motivated to write on this issue by the inability of most Nigerian Fine Art students to document artworks gathered from fieldwork as data analysis, and findings in biographical studies. Documentation of field data as data analysis and findings is a very significant aspect of study in biographical studies. It is described as the act of keeping an explicit record of information collated from field work upon the study of a subject matter for further use. The creative paintings of Tobenna

Okwuosa were used to show how works of art are subjected to visual reading. This enabled the researcher to achieve the aim of the study.

Qualitative analysis described as the combination of research principles using unstructured forms of data collection, verbal description and explanations rather than quantitative measurement and statistical analysis, was identified as the appropriate research technique for the subject of this research. It enabled the researcher to seek to understand the interpretations and reality in the changes of Tobenna's creative forms. This idea agrees with the opinion of Nieuwenhuis (2010) that qualitative data analysis is usually based on an interpretative philosophy that aims at examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data.

This implies that every qualitative researcher is free to interpret a specific phenomenon in his own perception of the phenomenon in terms of documentation. In this study, the data gathered from the fieldwork were subjected to biographical, style, formal, contextual and iconological analysis in descriptive summaries and other related observations.

Biographical Analysis collects and analyses a person's whole life, or portion of a life through the in-depth and unstructured interview or sometimes reinforced by semi-structured interview or personal documents. It is a way of viewing social life in procedural terms, rather than static terms. The information can come from "oral history, memoranda and other materials". Its aim is to produce rich descriptions of persons or "conceptualize structural types of action" which means to understand the action logics or how persons and structures are interlinked.

This method can be used to understand an individual's life within its social context (miller 2003, p.15). Okwuosa's art shows professionalism in individualistic expressions. The researcher therefore applies the biographical narrative approach which takes the idea of story to examine the creative issue of professionalism in the paintings.

Style analysis identifies factors that are consistent enough to be distinguishable and changeable enough to have a story. In art, forms which are the primary data for any study must be examined properly to ensure that certain characteristics of the

forms are more or less stable as they appear in other product. It enables a researcher to characterize relationships among works of art made at the same time, or place, or by the same person or group. Writing the history of consistency and change of works of art depends on the availability of information outside the visual components of the work.

But with style analyses a credible historic account can be made with a small part of evidence of a whole. For instance, one signed and dated work may be enough to associate a type of production with a period of time in history, especially, the period important events or changes occurred. Style provides the most comprehensive structure for the history of art. In this study, Tobenna's works are consistent enough to be differentiated and unpredicted to have a story. So the researcher uses the style analysis to establish the chronology of his ideology of painting.

Formal analysis does not consider external influence in the works of artists for interpretation. It confines itself to the visual elements, or properties, or qualities such as colour, space, line, volume, mass, composition and other perceptual aspects within the work and the meanings that are derived from what confronts the senses. In this study, Tobenna's works contain elements of visual analysis for documentation. The researcher also used this method of documentation which provided insights into his creative ideology and established the chronology of his ideology of painting.

Contextual analysis sees works of art as generated from a particular aspect of need or condition of a person or events that must be clarified before it can be understood. It considers external influences in relationship to personal, social, or historical information that cannot be perceived by simply observing the work. Tobenna's works of art are consisting of tangible and intangible visual elements that need to be clarified. This method of analysis therefore affords the researcher the opportunity to examine Tobenna's creative ideology, and substantiate his creative ideology that is based on restoration of universal peace, and reformation of ideas to solve human problems. And *Iconological analysis* emphasizes identification, description classification and interpretation of forms, symbols and themes in visual arts. Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) advocates that it is a viable

approach to studying the content and meanings of art works that is primarily aimed at classifying and establishing dates including other necessary fundamental knowledge concerning artworks. In this study, Tobenna's works are objects of visual communication that needs to be interpreted to the public. The researcher therefore applies this theory to confront the issue of identifying Tobenna's forms, and meaning. (Elenwo, 2019)

Conceptual Clarification

A guide to documenting art works as used in this study simply means guideline on the documentation of works. Documentation as described in Webster's Dictionary is the preparation or supplying of documents, references, records, etc. Art-work is described in the same dictionary as illustrations, calligraphy, or other decorative elements accompanying printed text. How to document art-works therefore refers to the act of recording the works of an artist(s) for reference purposes.

Hornby (2010, 8th ed.) defines field-work as research or study that is done in the real world rather than in a library or laboratory. In this context, it is the visit of a researcher to an artist(s) to gather the needed information about a subject matter for further use. Elenwo (2019) describes Data analysis and findings as the detailed examination and results of the data collected from field-work in interpretative summaries and other related observations.

Biographical Analysis refers to the act of providing the detailed and accurate account of a person's life activities in whole or part through a systematic procedure of documentation based on in-depth and unstructured interview or semi-structured interview and or personal documents. While qualitative research is a type of scientific research that provides solution to an activity of learning through conventional rules and techniques that agree with the evidence and findings of the study for further research, (Elenwo, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the interpretive and constructivist paradigm that anchors on psychoanalysis, and professionalism. The theory of psychoanalysis proposes that creativity wells up from unconscious drives, and that it is a by-product of

primary processes. The theory also suggests to the future artist to disassociate with real objects and falls in love with the worlds as a whole (Samuel and Samuels, 1975, in Elenwo, 2019).

The theory of professionalism explains the relationship between professional groups, theoretical knowledge and the possibilities for practitioners to exclusively apply such knowledge within their professional practice (MacDonald, 1995, in Elenwo, 2019). The theory contains that paintings is a mode of creative expression, and the forms are numerous. It can be naturalistic and representational but loaded with narrative content, symbol, emotion and politics. The theory is more effective problem solving as it makes for more effective innovations, makes for financial rewards, and also makes for ethical conduct. These theories enabled the researcher to make psychological enquiry about Tobenna's creative works, and narrated the iconographic features of the available works as well as decided their meaning and documented them as data analysis and findings for a biographical analysis of qualitative research. (Elenwo, 2019)

Data Analysis:

This study uses Okwuosa's creative paintings to show how data analysis and findings are formed in biographical analysis of qualitative research methods. Data analysis offers interpretations of the data collated from the research questions on field work and summaries of findings. Interpretation of works of art usually anchors on Martin Heidegger Hermeneutics' theory of interpretation which explains that: understanding is not an isolated act of cognition but part of human existence, and emerges from the assumptions and opinions generated by human concrete experiences in the world. Understanding therefore is rooted both in history and time and is always embedded in the observer' experience. (D'Alieva, 2005:123).

In this study, Okwuosa's works are interpreted based on observation of forms and their creative processes which agree with the ideas above. The analysis of data here privileges contextual and iconographical analyses, because they emphasize "form and meaning" based on the context that works of art are either made to satisfy certain needs or to reflect situations that must be clarified before it can be easily, fully, or partly understood.

Findings

Findings could be described as the discoveries made from or result of research of a subject matter. In a biographical study, the researcher begins the documentation of findings with the artist's biography. The biography should begin with the artist's personal photograph. The next is the artist training, his reasons of choosing fine arts as career, his artistic influences, his favourites artist: living or dead, and the artist's exhibitions and research. Also in the list of the documentation should be; the artist selected articles and reviews, his commissioned works, his contemporaries, the chronology of his works, his creative themes and ideology, his creative philosophy, his ideology of art, his commitment in the art profession, and meanings from his works.

The study here focuses on meanings from Okwuosa's creative works which makes it sensible to skip the analysis of whole life or portion of a life of the artist, hence meanings from Okwuosa's creative works. However, eighty pieces of Okwuosa's creative paintings are examined and analyzed, plates 19-98 respectively. (Elenwo, 2019)

Meanings from Okwuosa's Creative Works

Data Analysis:

Axiomatically, works of art are better understood when their meanings are provided through interpretation of the medium, techniques, and form with particular reference to periods, styles, philosophy, and themes behind their production. Hornby (2010) defines meaning as "the ideas that a writer or an artist wishes to communicate through a book or painting. He defines accessible as "easy to understand". Creative works are produced with the use of skill and imagination. These ideas agree with the theory of iconography that seeks to reveal the meaning of works of art, rather than their form. Iconography recognizes any work of art as a cultural artifact that speaks to the public through its visual language. This language is spoken through the symbolic codes, or a system of writing through pictures that is contained in the work.

Tobenna's works are cultural artifacts that communicate a specific cultural life of a people to the public through symbols, and system of writing through pictures. Iconographic analysis which deals with identification, description,

classification and interpretation of forms, symbols, and themes in visual arts was used in studying the content and meanings of Tobenna's works in terms of classifying and establishing dates including other essential information about the artworks. Therefore iconographical analysis has been used by the researcher to decide the meanings of Tobenna's creative works. (Elenwo, 2019)

Subthemes of Mythology

Indigenous Motifs

Plates 19 to 24 with the caption "*indigenous Igbo motifs"* in the theme of mythology mean *Decolonization.* The forms were produced between 1996 and 1999. They are typical representations of activities in traditional Igbo community. They portray the communal life of people of the same tribe. They also show that every person in the world irrespective of race is a product of one source. In their portrayal of communal life, the dancer, the Igbo drummer, the bountiful harvest, femininity, double personality and I dey see, I dey perceive, but I no fit talk, mean celebration. The dancer, drummer, double personality, and I dey see, I dey perceive, but I no fit talk are special activities organized to make the celebration colourful and interesting. The bountiful harvest means fertility, while femininity means virtues of womanhood. All this are areas of celebration in Igbo traditional setting and involves music and masquerading which attracts performance strategy for invoking life. Plate 22 of the works in this theme attest to this claim, as it is representation of the source of human population. The work shows all the features that every human being has in common which indicates oneness and unity. (Elenwo, 2019)



Plate 19*:* A dancer, 1997, ink on paper 13x38.5cm. Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of the Artist)



Plate 20*:* Igbo drummer, 1997, ink and water colouron paper 13x38.5cm. Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of the Artist)



Plate 21: Bountiful harvest, 1997, ink and water colour on paper, 13x38.5 cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 22: Femininity, 1997, ink on paper, 13x38.5 cm. Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of the Artist)



Plate 23: Double personality, 1997, ink and water colour on paper, 13x38.5cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 24: I dey see, I dery perceive, but I no fit talk, 1999 on canvas Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of the Artist)

Negative Western Influences:

Plates 25 to 28 with the caption *"Negative Western Influences"* showed Tobenna adoption of Afrocentric philosophy in his art. The works mean "*the adverse effect of colonialism on Africans (Nigerians)"*. The works were produced in 1999, and were executed in the theme of mythology. They portray Tobenna's sympathy with the well-fare of Nigerians, because the works reflect youth restiveness, corruption, and frustration.

The youth restiveness, corruption and frustration interpret the present situation of Nigerian economy. Nigeria at present is experiencing a high level of recession. Hornby (2010) defines recession as "a difficult time for the economy of a country, when there is less trade and industrial activity than usual, and more people are unemployed" This phenomenon affects the leadership of Nigeria, and has led the country to a fall in standard of living. The value of money has fallen in the sense that the prices of commodities are exorbitant and there is mass unemployment in the country. Most people of Nigeria particularly the youths are not able to afford many of the necessities, comforts and amenities of life. The graduates are not making the effort of engaging themselves in entrepreneurship to help themselves. They prefer to be known as white colour job seekers. This situation including the high cost of things that ranges from food surfs to the payment of school fees among other exorbitant items have frustrated many Nigerians.

Arinze, (2018) says that *"the pitiful state of Nigerian economy would get a redress when Nigerians begin to call a spade a spade"* but one would observe that the government seem to have trampled on the commentaries or views of ordinary people about the Nigerian economy. Aware of this Nigerian situation, some of the applicants particularly the graduates feel dejected and so, resorted to being idle as they wait for the white collar job. Idleness which is an instrument of the devil for converting good people to evil doings infuses evil thoughts in the job seekers and they become agents of immorality. Tobenna's paintings in plates 25-28 means that some of the Nigerian youths are corrupt. The corruption is the adverse effect of colonialism on them. They have been exposed to fraud, being dubious, and conditions of white collar jobs, so are not interested in doing menial jobs to earn a living. They are the nuisance in the country. They can be identified through their act of indecent dressing, disguising, smoking, deceits (419), stealing, sales of properties, and bad associations, among other profile. (Elenwo, 2019)



Plate 25: Negative Western Influence, 1999, oil on canvas, 66cm x 116.5cm
Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of the Artist)

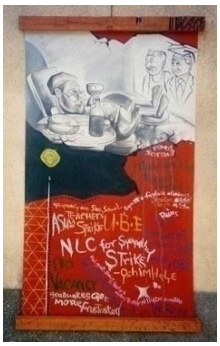


Plate 26: The way we are, 1999, acrylic leatherette and wood,
Source: Okwuosa T.
(Collection of the Artist)



Plate 27: Tortoise and chameleon, 1999, acrylic, leatherette and wood Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of the Artist)

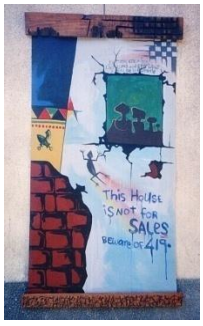


Plate 28: This house is not for sale, 1999, acrylic, leatherette and wood. Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

Moral Leadership:

Plates29-36with the caption *"Moral leadership"* are another group of Tobenna's works on the philosophy of Afrocentricism. The works were executed in the theme of mythology. They were produced between the years of 2000 and 2002.They also reflect Tobenna's sympathy with the welfare of Nigerians. The works mean *"role model"*, a metaphorical expression of pieces of advice to Nigerian leaders. As Massinger (2017) says; *"He That Would Govern Others, First Should Be The Master of Himself"* which implies that a good leader must show good example. The works reflect some leadership qualities such as chastity' and boldness. Plate 35 with the title *leading by example* is a good example of the meaning of the works on *"Moral Leadership"*. The work shows a woman returning from farm with a bunch of fire wood on her head, and her child caring another bunch of fire-wood on her head. The child therefore learns from the mother- the leader.

On plate 29, one observes the decent dressing of the woman that shows the responsiveness of a mother as a lesson to others. Also in the lesson is the advice of making a good home as parents are advised to show good example of love through staying together. Plate 30 showing husband and wife lying together, is the manifestation of the love of one another that is preached about by various religions. For example the second commandment of God in the book of Mark: 12:31 of the Holy Bible that says "Thou shalt love thy neigbour as thy self". Again, Plates 31, 32, 33, and 34 are all of the meaning of moral leadership as they reflect

bravery, cleanliness, dress fashion and specific symbols that are pieces of advice to the people, particularly the leaders. (Elenwo, 2019)



Plate 29*:* Chastity, 2000-2001, oil canvas
Source Okwuosa T. (2002, Vibration of Life – A Joint Exhibition of Paintings)



Plate 30: Duality and Life, 2001 oil on canvas, 80. 3x100
Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of the Artist)

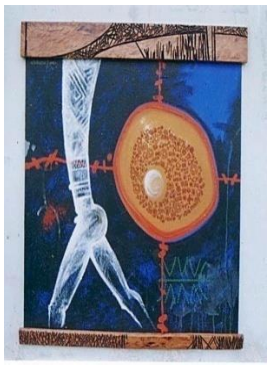


Plate 31: Giant strides of our past, 2001 Acrylic, synthetic leather and wood, 40. 5x41cm
Source: Okwuosa T. (2002, Vibration of Life – A Joint Exhibition of Paintings)

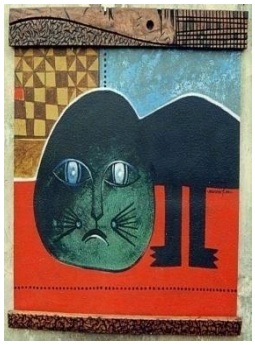


Plate 32: Boldness, 2001 Acrylic, synthetic leather and wood, 41x42cm
Source: Okwuosa T. (2003, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings : Motherhood, Femininity, and Values)



Plate 33: Destiny and Reality, 2001 Acrylic, leatherette and wood; 39x42cm
Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of the Artist)



Plate 34: T, Girl before a mirror, 2001 Acrylic, leatherette and woo 41x43cm.
Source: Okwuosa T. (2003, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings : Motherhood, Femininity, and Values)

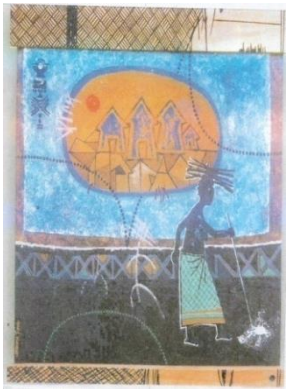


Plate 35: Leading by example, 2002 Acrylic, leatherette & wood, 41x42cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2003, An Exhibition of Scroll Painting : Motherhood, Femininity, and Values)



Plate 36: Aha-Ozo wall painting 2002, Acrylic, synthetic leather and wood, 41x42cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2003, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings : Motherhood, Femininity, and Values)

Mbari Symbols, Design Patterns and Structure:

On plates 37 and 38 with the caption *"Mbari Symbols, Designs Patterns and Structure*" is another demonstration of Tobenna's works on the philosophy of Afrocentricism. The works were executed in the same theme of mythology. They were produced in 2002. They portray Tobenna's sympathy with the destroyed African religious practices by the colonial missionaries and administrators which resulted to the loss of African art identity. The works mean, "*African's Source of Power".* The symbols and other physical design elements in the works are representations of gods in African context. (Elenwo, 2019)

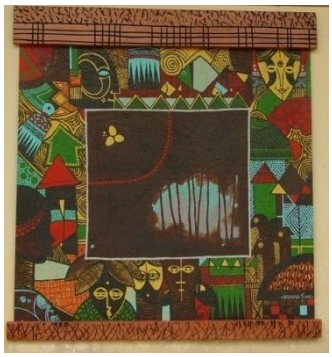


Plate 37: Tapestry of femininity, 2002, Acrylic, leatherette and wood, 41x42cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2003, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings : Motherhood, Femininity, and Values)

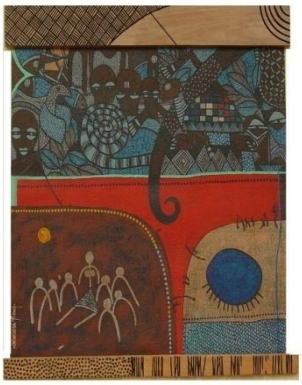


Plate 38*:* in the moonlight, 200, Acrylic, leatherette and wood 41x42cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2003, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings : Motherhood, Femininity, and Values)

Motherhood and Femininity:

Plates 39-47 with the caption "Motherhood and Femininity" also show Tobenna's works on Afrocentricism. The works are executed in the theme of mythology. They were produced between 2002 and 2005, but one was produced in 2000. They reflect Tobenna's sympathy with the well-fare of Nigerians. The works mean *"Festivity"* a reflection of communalism in African culture. They showcase women, in their prime of life. They also show that the artist is in sympathy with the women of Igbo traditional community.

BBC English (1992) defines "festivity" as the celebrating of something in a happy way. It further describes festivities as the things that people do to celebrate something. In these paintings, women, children, and a man are gorgeously dressed in stylized hair do, caps, beads, bangles and wrapper. A virgin is carrying a pot on her head while another woman is carrying a basket that is full of unknown items. The Caps, Pot and Basket bear similar symbols of the designs on their bodies. Some of them are dressed in Caftan with different styles of embroidery designs. Motherhood in BBC English Dictionary (1992) is the state of being a mother. It states further that girls are preparing for motherhood. It describes femininity as the fact of being a woman; meaning the qualities that are considered to be typical of women. These qualities may include marriage, respect, submissive, caring, neatness, fruitfulness, supportive, honesty, tolerance and compatibility. These paintings in plates 39 to 47, therefore mean that women can celebrate motherhood to mark their natural qualities of being mothers. (Elenwo, 2019)



Plate 39: Affection, 2002, oil on canvas,
101 5x70cm Source: Okwuosa T.
(Collection of The Artist)



Plate 40: Women of honour, 2002 oil on canvas,
101.5x54.5cm Source: Okwuosa T.
(Collection of The Artist)



Plate 41: The virgin, 2002, oil on canvas,
45x20cm Source: Okwuosa T.
(Collection of The Artist)



Plate 42: Edo the great mother, 2002, oil on canvas, 101.5x70cm, private collection Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

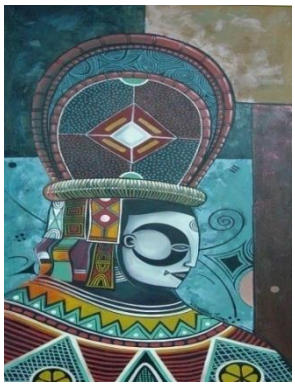


Plate 43: Olichalu Oku (Madden Masquerade) 2000 oil on canvas, 40x21.5cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 44: Mounds of life, 2002, oil on canvas, 45x20 inches Source: Okwuosa T . (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 45: Rhythm and Dance, 2002, oil and canvas, 45x20 inches Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 46: My grandfather with his two wives, 2005, oil on canvas, 81.5x91.5cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 47: Three fertility deities, 2005, oil on canvas, 122x91.5cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

Fragmentation:

Plate 48-62 with the caption *"Fragmentation", reflect the Practice of Bhakti Yogi,- (Spiritual Law, Goodwill, And Justice for All Men")* the works belong to the Afrocentric philosophy, and the theme of mythology. They were produced between 2006 and 2008. They also reflect Tobenna's sympathy with the welfare of Nigerians. The works mean *"The Challenges of Life"*. They further portray the efforts or struggles of mankind, wisdom, and determination in their desire of achieving successful life. They show that the world is full of ups and downs, as such,

demands the maximum co-operation of people for the attainment of universal peace.

In the paintings, line is the dominant compositional element. The lines which include dots, upward swirls, radiating, angle and conflicting diagonals are suggestive of historical events of struggles of life. Uzoaga (2000) identifies dot as suggesting the starting point of an action. He further identifies upward swirls as suggesting growth, idealism, aspiration, spiritual intensity, ardour, and spontaneity. Radiating lines are suggesting concentration explosiveness and sudden outburst of energy, while angles and conflicting diagonals suggest violence, conflict, unrest, hate and confusion. The silhouette used as narrative technique is the dark outline or shape of a person or an object shown against a light background. All the lines and medium used as compositional elements in plates 48-62 including the stitching process is a pieces of advice to the public that determination leads to success. (Elenwo, 2019)



Plate 48: Discussion for four, 2006, Acrylic, Leatherette, twine, Abura wood, 97x92cm Rahman Akar collection.
Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

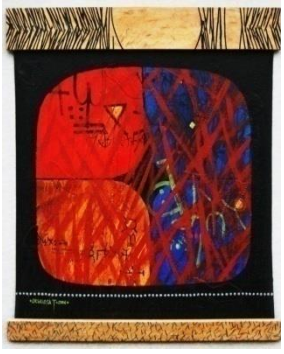


Plate 49: Mutilated history, 2006, 97x92cm65 Source: Okwuosa T.



Plate 50: Fragmented history, 20006-07 Acrylic, Leatherette, Twine, Abura wood, 97x92cm
Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 51: Untitled
Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 52: Dancing scripts, 2006-07 Acrylic, leatherette, twine, Abura wood, 127x76cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2008, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings)



Plate 53: Lost and found I, 2006-2007 Acrylic, leatherette, twine, Abura wood, 127x76cm (Collection of The Artist) Source: Okwuosa T. (fieldwork)



Plate 54: Forces of defacement, 2007, 120x84cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 55: Lost history, lost identity, 2007, 102x92cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 56: Reminants of a glorious past 2007 Acrylic, leatherette, twine Abura wood, 120x84cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2008, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings)

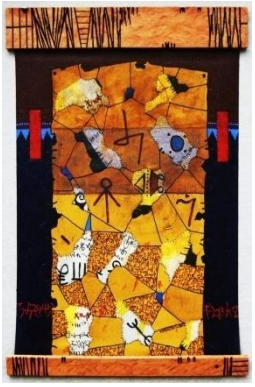


Plate 57: Lost and found iii, 2007, 114x84cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 58*:* Ancient scroll recovered, 2007, 120x84cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

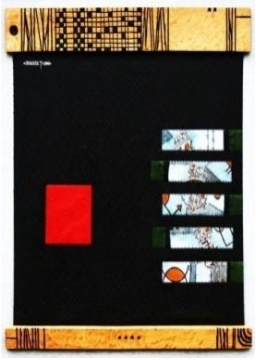


Plate 59: Five strips and a square, 2008 mixed media, 97x94cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 60*:* An orange rectangle in a blue world, 2008, Acrylic, Leatherette, twine and Abura wood, 97x92cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2008, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings)

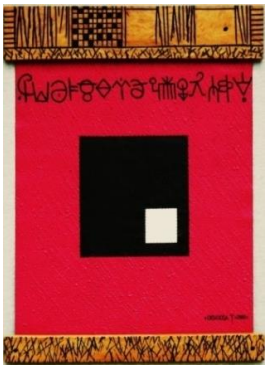


Plate 61: Square in square, 2008, Acrylic, Leatherette, twine, Abura wood, 81x66cmSource: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 62*:* Another beginning, 2008 mixed media 81x66cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

Subthemes of Meta-Philosophy

Reincarnation:

Plates 63 to 74 with the caption *"Reincarnation"* belong to Tobenna's philosophy of *Soulcentricism.* He defines Soulcentricism as "art and life philosophy that addresses the mind and body by the practice of the culture of the soul". These works were produced in the theme of *meta-philosophy*. They were produced in 2006, 2007, and 2008 respectively. They reflect Tobenna's sympathy with the welfare of Nigerians. These works also reflect Tobenna's soul consciousness in artistic expressions which he considers as an inherent quality in every person. Tobenna's idea of reincarnation is based on the cyclic nature of natural events. He sees death as a discarded object that can be used for further productions in order to maintain the continuity of the materials used in the production of the discarded object. Therefore his works on "reincarnation" means *"eternity"* the endless opportunities of things to do to earn a living. The works share lines, medium, and colour as compositional elements. The angles and conflicting diagonals lines in the paintings suggest unrest. The dotted spiral lines suggest continuity. The vibrating lines suggest anxiousness. The expanding spheres suggest optimism, and the horizontal lines suggest rest. Therefore the paintings show that foresights and prayer is the key to success. (Elenwo, 2019)



Plate 63: Against all odds, Reincarnation series, 2006-2008, Acrylic, leatherette, twine and Abura wood, 133x75cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2008, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings)

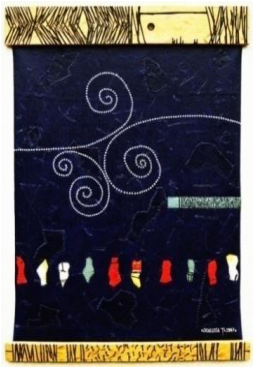


Plate 64: Scripts, fragments and dots I, reincarnation series, 2007 Acrylic leatherette, twine Abura wood, 104x84cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

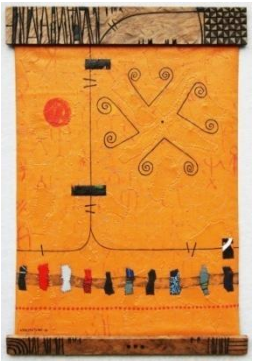


Plate 65: One race, one love, reincarnation series, 2007-08, Acrylic, leatherette, twine Abura wood, 114x84cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 66: Scripts, fragments and dots 11, reincarnation series, 2007-08 Acrylic leatherette twine, Abura wood, 114x84cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

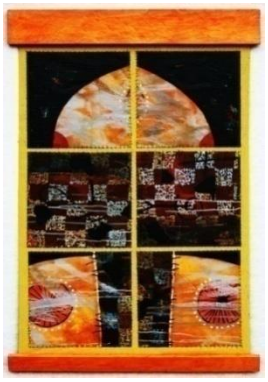


Plate 67: Revelation through the inner Eyes, reincarnation series, 2007-08 Acrylic, leatherette twine Abura wood, 133x75cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2008, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings)



Plate 68: The Lord's Prayer in Bamum scripts, reincarnation series, 2007-08, Acrylic, leatherette twine Abura wood, 120x74cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2008, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings)

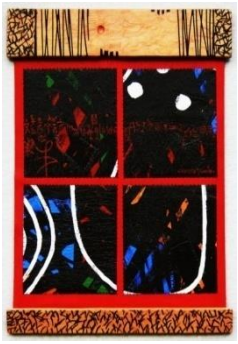


Plate 69: Birth death and liberation 1, reincarnation series, 2007-08 Acrylic, leatherette, twine Abura wood, 81x66cm Source: Okwuosa T. (2008, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings)



Plate 70: Birth death and liberation 11, reincarnation series, 2007-08 Acrylic, leatherette, twine Abura wood, Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

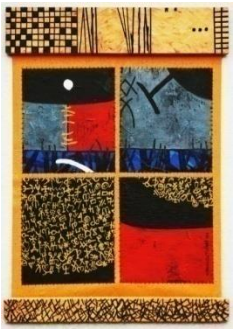


Plate 71: Different parts of a lifetime I, reincarnation series, 2007-08, Acrylic leatherette, twine Abura wood, 81x66cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

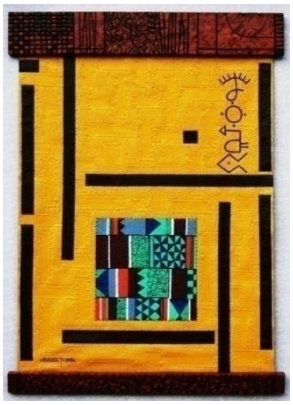


Plate 72: Another beginning II, reincarnation series, 2008, acrylic, leatherette, twine, Abura wood, 113x84cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

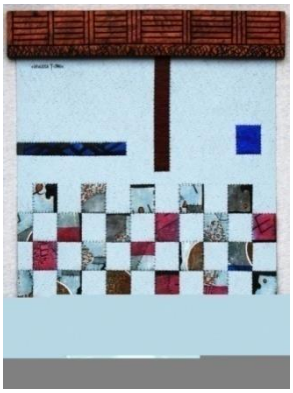


Plate 73: Up in the sky and down below, reincarnation series, 2008, Acrylic, leatherette, twine and Abura wood
Source: Okwuosa T. (2008, An Exhibition of Scroll Paintings)

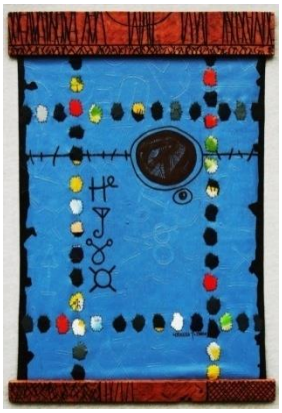


Plate 74: Composition with 53 fragments, reincarnation series, 2008, Acrylic, leatherette, twine Abura wood, 114x84cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

Issues of Nigeria's Oil Pipelines

Plates 75 to 88 with the caption *"Issues of Nigerian's Oil Pipelines"* are also works on the Soulcentric philosophy. The works were produced in the theme of meta-philosophy. They were produced in 2010. They reflect Tobenna's sympathy with the welfare of Nigerians. The works depict the issues of Nigerian's oil pipelines, and mean *"cry of agony"*. They portray scenes of disaster with reference to the events of water pollution, fire outbreak, militancy, and oppression in Nigeria that need immediate attention in order to restore the peace of the country. Plate 75 explains that the streams and rivers located within the Niger Delta communities have been greatly polluted by the Nigerian Oil and Gas Petroleum Spillage in the area. The water pollution has caused a lot of harm to the aquatic life such as fish, among others that are of economic value to the people of Niger Delta. The water is no longer pure for drinking, cooking and bathing. The government seen to be less concern about considering the adverse effect fo the water pollution on the indigenes of Niger Delta.

This painting therefore serves as an evidence of the implication of the water pollution on the people. So also does the painting in plates 76 to 88 show some disastrous events of militancy, oppression, and fire in the Niger Delta region. The works communicate people's attitude of biting the figure that fed them. The Niger Delta communities are marginalized by the government that accrues her major

income from the crude oil and Gas deposits in the region. The marginalization agrees with an Ikwerre proverb that says *"Ani Naahiaa Nwonkpi Amu Sinoshiehne"* meaning that people should not cut of the penis of a male goat because they under-estimate it. It also agrees with another Ikwerre proverb that says *"Nwonpere bukor otnu-oro kor-orna ne-ezi"* meaning that bats are good masons, yet sleep outside.

Plates 77, 79, 80, 82, to 88 depict the extent of the oppression through assassination and setting communities on ablaze over their agitation for recognition as the communities producing the Nigerian oil and gas petroleum. The paintings particularly plates 76 and 78 communicate the government action of *"protest and die"* on the people which defines the agonistic situation of the people. So also does plate 81 depicts the rate of hunger in the region as tapioca becomes the chief food of the people resulting from unemployment, poverty and frustration on the people. (Elenwo, 2019)



Plate 75: The deluge (22 April 1990), 16x12cm
Acrylic on canvas texture paper, 2010
Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 76: Ogoni II, 16x12,
Acrylic on canvas texture paper 2010
Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 77: Greed will kill the beast 2010,
Acrylic on canvas textured paper, 16x12 inches
Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

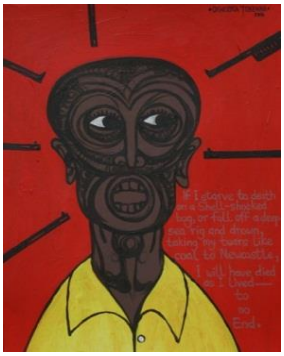


Plate 78: Ogoni III, 16x12cm, Acrylic on canvas textured paper, 2010 Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The



Plate 79: Songs from underground (for NANS at 10), 16x12cm Acrylic on canvas textured paper, 2010 Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

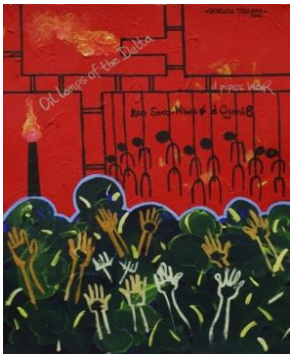


Plate 80: The pipes war I, 16x12cm, Acrylic on canvas textured paper, 2010 Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 81: Woman drying tapioca (the pipes war), 16x12cm, 2010, Acryli on canvas textured paper Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 82: Jese I 16x12cm, 2010 Acrylic on canvas textured paper Source: Okwuosa T (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 83: Home land, 16x12cm, 2010, Acrylic on canvas textured paper Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 84: The pipes war II, 16x12cm, 2010 Acrylic on canvas textured paper Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

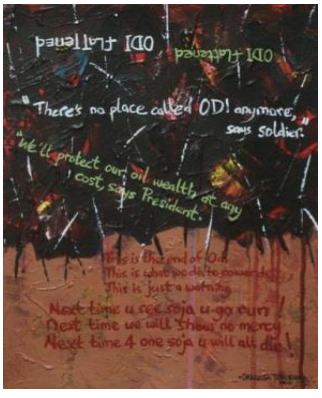


Plate 85: Odi I, 16x12cm, 2010 Acrylic on textured paper Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 86: Jese II 16x12cm, 2010, Acrylic on canvas textured paper Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 87: Untitled 16x12cm Acrylic on canvas textured paper 2010 Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)



Plate 88: Papa piriye (odi) 16x12cm, Acrylic on canvas textured paper, 2010 Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

Urban Spaces and the Changes:

Plates 89 to 97 with the caption *"urban spaces and the changes"* also show Tobenna's works on the philosophy of Soulcentricism. The works were executed in the theme of meta-philosophy. They were produced between 2013 and 2015. They reflect Tobenna's sympathy with the well-fare of Nigerians. The works mean *"modernity"*. They portray government policy on the reformation of cities in Nigeria. In the works, there is restriction of movement of tricycle and motor-cycle in some areas of cities in Nigeria. The works also show that the movements of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycle users are controlled in the cities by the road signs placed at the major junctions. This development of urban spaces and the changes conform to Tobenna's creative philosophy of renewal of thought for better tomorrow.

This development of urban spaces and the changes has helped in reducing traffic jam in the cities of Nigeria. It also made the government to provide traffic light, traffic calming, traffic circle, traffic island, traffic cone, flyover, tunnel, and pedestrian crossing, among others. All of this is to prevent road accident, and to enhance easy movement. These changes conform to Tobenna's creative philosophy of renewal of thought for better tomorrow. (Elenwo, 2019)



Plate 89: Okwuosa Tobenna, (2013), City scape and Tricycle, Enamel, leatheretteand plywood 9 panesl,, each $15^{3}/_{4}$ x$15^{3}/_{4}$ Source: Okwuosa's Ph.D. Art Exhibition catalogue (2017), Visual Dialectics of Texts and Forms on Recent Changes in Urban Spaces.



Plate 90: Okwuosa Tobenna (2014), Stop, Get Ready, Go, Enamel, Marker, Leatherette and Plywood, 20 Panels, each $10^{3}/_{4}$ x $10^{3}/_{4}$ cm.
Source: Okwuosa's Ph.D. Art Exhibition catalogue (2017),
Visual Dialectics of Texts and Forms on Recent Changes in Urban Spaces.



Plate 91: Okwuosa Tobenna (2014), The 3 Don'ts, Leatherette, enamel, marker and plywood, 6 panels, each 15¾ x15¾ cm. Source: Okwuosa's Ph.D. Art Exhibition catalogue (2017), Visual Dialectics of Texts and Forms on Recent Changes in Urban Spaces.



Plate 92: Okwuosa Tobenna (2014), Density and Movement, Enamel, leatherette and plywood, 8 panels, each 15¾ x15¾ cm Source: Okwuosa's Ph.D. Art Exhibition catalogue (2017), Visual Dialectics of Texts and Forms on Recent Changes in Urban Spaces.



Plate 93: Okwuosa Tobenna (2014), BRT Bus Only, Enamel, leatherette and plywood, 6 panels, each 15¾ x15¾ cm
Source: Okwuosa's Ph.D. Art Exhibition catalogue (2017), Visual
Dialectics of Texts and Forms on Recent Changes in Urban Spaces.



Plate 94: The New Urban Signage, 2015. Enamel on plywood, 4 panels, each 15¾ x15¾ cm. Source: Okwuosa T.



Plate 95: Okwuosa Tobenna (2015), The New Face of Lagos, Enamel on plywood, 5 panels, each 15¾ x15¾ cm. Source: Okwuosa's Ph.D. Art Exhibition catalogue (2017), Visual Dialectics of Texts and Forms on Recent Changes in Urban Spaces

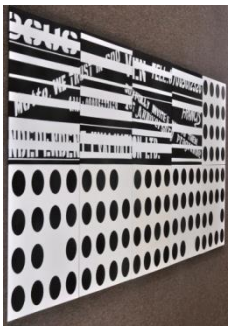


Plate 96: Okwuosa Tobenna (2015), Texts and Forms (Reconfigured) Enamel on plywood, 10 panels, each 15¾ x15¾ cm. Source: Okwuosa's Ph.D. Art Exhibition catalogue (2017), Visual Dialectics of Texts and Forms on Recent Changes in Urban Spaces



Plate 97: Okwuosa Tobenna (2015), A City in Flux, Enamel on plywood, 12 panels, each 15¾ x15¾ cm. Source: Okwuosa's Ph.D. Art Exhibition catalogue (2017), Visual Dialectics of Texts and Forms onRecent Changes in Urba Spaces.

Poetry

Plate 98, the squatting soldier is an indication of the support to the anticipated Biafran Government.



Plate 98: Okwuosa Tobenna (2016), Land of the rising sun, we love and cherish, beloved homeland of our brave heroes; we must defend our lives or we perish, We shall protect our hearth from all our foes; but if the price is death for all we hold dear, Then let us die without a shred of fear. Oil, acrylic, photographs, and marker on canvas 173 x 122 cm Source: Okwuosa T. (Collection of The Artist)

Recommendations

Based on this study, the following recommendations are proffered;

1. Art scholars especially the post graduate art history students should take advantage of this paper and learn how to form data analysis, and finding in thesis of biographical analysis of qualitative research.

2. Art history students should also take advantage of this paper and develop interest in studying the hardworking Nigerian artists, particularly the intellectual artists in the professionalism of their profession.

3. Teachers of art history should be subjecting the art students to regular seminar work on biographical analysis of Nigeria artists. This will enable the students to be familiar with the techniques of forming data analysis, and findings in theses of biographical analysis of qualitative research.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the issue of documenting art works collated from fieldwork as data analysis and findings in biographical analysis of qualitative research methods. It establishes that there is dearth of literature in these aspects of study. That most art scholars are ignorant of the components of data analysis, and findings for theses of biographical analysis, so also does poor biographical analysis affects the quality and value of the works of Nigerian artists.

The paper submits that artworks collated from fieldwork should be subjected to visual readings, and the iconographic features should be established in interpretative summaries and other related observations as data analysis. From the analysis, the meaning, medium, creative styles, techniques, philosophy, theme, and ideology of the works will be known. So also shall the periods of production of the works will be determined, and the quality and value of the art is enhanced. The findings therefore will be established from the information derived from the works including the biography of the artist whose works were analyzed.

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