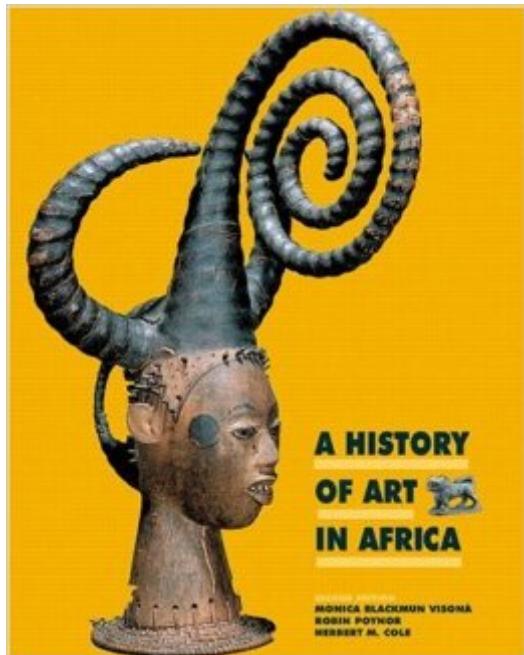


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# A History Of Art In Africa (2nd Edition)



## **Synopsis**

A History of Art in Africa, Second Edition, is the only comprehensive art historical survey of the African continent to incorporate discussions of contemporary art and artists. It is both a reliable resource for art historians and an accessible introduction to the vibrant arts of Africa.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is the most well-written, comprehensive, and lucid survey of African art available to date. I am using it as the primary text for my introduction to African art at both Princeton University and York College, CUNY and expect my students to come away with a valuable reference text that will not become outdated to quickly.

I simply wish that I had this book and/or Dr. Poynor's courses in West African and Central African Art prior to living in Central Africa. Now that I had these courses, I find that this book is less a formal text and more a comprehensive guide to understanding the art forms created in the various regions of Africa by the peoples and cultures. This book is a must for anyone who has a true interest in following this fascinating subject. I especially recommend this book to anyone planning to visit or live anywhere in Africa, particularly the Sub-saharan regions. It brings to all, the reality of such a fascinating and previously skimmed subject, without interjecting personal belief or opinion. All facts in the book are well researched and presented.

I took an african arts class with Poynor and he used this book and the slide images. This was a wonderful tool. I usually HATE reading art books but this one read like a recreational book. GREAT

illustrations! If you would like to learn more about the culture this is definitely the book to get.

The good thing about this collection is that it includes art and architecture from not only all regions of the continent, but also of the African diaspora from the 16th Century onward. The other good thing is that it includes architectural works, such as those of Great Zimbabwe, Lalibela, and Djenne. The bad point of this book is that the selections are limited. For example, the art of the Nok (the oldest African art outside of the Nile Valley) includes only a few pieces. The worst thing about this collection is that nearly all of the photos are in black and white. It's difficult to appreciate art of such a vibrant nature (with the exception of photography) without colour.

This book was required for an art history class that I took. It was interesting but I found some incorrect facts after I did more research. The history of African art is almost too large to fit into one but this book does give a good foundation.

There are definitely great aspects to this book. It is extensive in what it covers. I would have loved to give it a four or five stars but my major dislike about the book was the addition of African words within the text. There was so much of it I thought that I am learning a second language that included all the different regions of Africa. It was hard to get through the book because of it. Many times I was confused if the name was a city, culture or ethnic group and to which region it was referring to. If someone is very familiar with Africa it might not be a problem. Clearer maps of present day Africa would have been helpful with color guides to what belongs to East, West, North, South and Central. It would also have been great to include a list of all the different ethnic groups and tribes as an overview. It is sad to give such a otherwise great book such poor ratings but could not say that I liked it. Artwork is excellent in it.

I studied and taught African art before this text existed, using mainly exhibition catalogs and theme-based books such as Frank Willett's "African Art." This book presents the information found in those sources in a single source. It moves around the continent by geographic area, which is the way African art is usually taught, so it is easy to adapt to a course. It is readable without dumbing down. Students like it. Beyond the classroom, it is a good reference source because it includes information about so many ethnic groups--far more than a single course can cover. I have a few criticisms. For one, I would like to have a more continuous thread in the treatment of non-Islamic art of Northern Africa. In the account of material from Zimbabwe, I would like the authors to mention

Peter Garlake's interpretations of Great Zimbabwe and rock paintings. Visona et al. illustrate a rock painting that Garlake calls "The great recumbent figure of an archetypical trancer" (The Hunter's Vision, pl. XXXII). While Garlake makes a persuasive argument that paintings such as this reveal substantial continuity with the modern-day San, Visona et al. simply say that the painting is too old to interpret. They shouldn't disregard the views of the preeminent scholar in the area. Also, I wish the components of the captions were more clear, such as by following the example of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. It would help to use the term "peoples" after ethnic groups so that the ethnonyms are easier to distinguish from place names, etc. They could include the names of major groups along with the subgroups in the captions, as the Met does--for example Kota peoples, Hongwe subgroup. That would help to unify the style areas. There is usually a place in the text that clarifies the groupings, but it would help to do so in the captions, too. Still, the book is an excellent introduction to African art by prominent scholars.

I bought this book for an African Art class that i was taking. This book is overly informative and captivating. I would recommend it to anyone interested in learning more about African Art!

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