

ERELU: I thought I was going to leave the story of my life to you to tell, but anyways, as an introduction, I am Erelu Kuti of Lagos. I became the Erelu at 1974 and it was an interesting journey. I became the Erelu during the reign of the immediate past Oba of Lagos; Oba Adeyinka Oyekan, who was a die hard traditionalist, and believed in our culture. Although I was quit young, under 30, and he was almost 80 at that time, nevertheless he still treat me with absolute courtesy because I hold the position of his mother; that is the way Yoruba culture is. We do not confer respect by age, but rather by the position given to you, by tradition, culture and of course by almighty God. I have to dabble into many things; in government affairs, traditional affairs, affairs of the children, of the women, I also have a foundation which I set up over 40years ago because of my concern for my people, Isale Eko more especially because I want many. Lagos is highly develop cosmopolitan, but we still have a village where it all started and the area is as depressed, as oppressed and the people, and the people live below poverty line, even till this moment I am speaking, they are the forgotten people. They think the whole of Lagos is Ikoyi, and V.I, these people are screaming for support. Hence again my new project enters; sustainable development for the river rine dwellers, who are the poorest of the poor. I do hope well meaning Nigerians will give me support, because river rine areas are usually the home of indigenous people of all places in Nigeria and they are also usually the poorest. So my program is not just only to support the people of Lagos, but also all the river rine dwellers, who are below poverty line. I think you've heard enough about me.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you very much. First question ma. Can you give us a brief description of the historic pattern of Lagos and its people?

ERELU: You know, when I listen to the argument that are going now, I see it as deliberate effort to factionalize the people of Lagos. Because, you see, in the beginning, we were such closely meet people, closely need family. As we were saying earlier on, we have a palace, we have a place (they call it Ita-Omo) where children, princes and princesses live, and other extended family. We have another section (they call it Idi-Omo), just after that, where mothers of princes and princesses, and other mothers of other relations live. Then we have the third sessions where other people live; the extended family, people who have come to work, to serve the palace and all that live. But they all live happily together, in fact the popular slogan then was that Lagos people don't go beyond the bridge, we don't marry people outside our own conclave or community, we all marry across the street, and that's how closely meet we were, and there's no dichotomy, To the question of people who came from Ife and those who came from Benin, it was no conflict because we understood what it meant. Some people came directly from Ife as Hunters and Farmers, some people came from Ife via the need as royalty, by we were able to find a medium by which we co-existed. Like I always say, in Lagos, anyone can controverse me, I have lived the life, I can boast of at least 300 years of verbatic history of Lagos. Because when I was Erelu, I was 20+ and I was sitting with men of over 90, who has 90years of experience, who had at least another 90 years of experience from their parents, and their grandparent another 100years. So I can authoritatively say what I know, that has been depicted to me. Contrary again

to what people say, the history of Lagos is not obscure, we were learned people, we have been exposed to the international world even before people started coming to Lagos from the Hinterland. So, our histories were documented, and we know who is who, and where we are coming from. So for some people to be saying some people are Benin etc, it is not true, in Lagos Island we don't have the Aworis, what we have is Obashiku and the Dejos. Because Awori incident happens in Ogun state; Isheri, and you have their people went to different part of the south-west, and the one who came, that is Ogunfunmilere Oloofin, he's the one who came towards the Lagos Island with his children. His children today, are the Dejos, and they don't call themselves Awori, they call them the Dejos, and they sit in council with the Oba of Lagos, the administers of Lagos, and that is what has been happening for centuries . So for anyone to come now and be telling us about Awori, maybe out of the creation of the state, part of Ogun state of course was merge with the greater Lagos, and from that angle we can have Awori within the state, but when we talk about the origin of Lagos, the indigenous people of Lagos were Obaship and the Dejos. If we go back to our history, up till today, the Oba sits in council with the Dejos and that how we have administering Lagos, regardless of who are the people holding executive positions in Lagos, we have been the bridge across time, we are the ones who welcomed them and who say goodbye to them. So our lives and history is very clear.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you very much ma. We have a very beautiful question of defining who is a Lagosian? Base on your experience, and oral history that has been handed over to you across the generation. Who will you consider a true Lagosian?

ERELU: In general term, like it obtains in other part of the world, people who live in Lagos, can ascribe to themselves, to be Lagosian. But you see, when we say we are Lagosians, we have categories, and the interest of those categories must be taken into cognizance, and recognized. I have said that anybody who lives in Lagos can claim to be Lagosian, because they live here, but we have indigenous Lagos, and the indigenous people of Lagos, and their interest must be paramount. According to the culture and practice in Nigeria today, the indigenous people are still the ones controlling governance and all other protocol in various state of this country. I don't see, just because our ancestors have laid down culture of magnanimity, hospitality, peaceful co-existence, that doesn't mean our right should be trampled upon. Our right should be reserved, and we should be giving due respect. I cannot understand why they should grudge us about our right to control our destiny, our own culture. A commissioner for culture in Lagos must be an indigenous Lagosians, because he is the one who understands the culture of the people, the mindset of the people, the needs of the people, and the requirement that the need to excel, and develop their potentials. I will refer to what Oba Oniru just did. Victoria Island is a very cosmopolitan; highly develop area, with multi-national organizations, both within Nigeria and outside Nigeria. But he's still the royal father; he's still the custodian of the culture of the people, and he has not said to anybody, this is my position, I want to harness all the resources, all the magnanimity we have extended to you people, we want reap a bit of return for the development of the indigenous people, I believe they will cooperate, that is the way I want us to interpret who

a Lagosian is. Don't forget, Lagos was not the first capital of Nigeria, we were in Calabar, it didn't stay too long, we were in Lokoja, between the strive of Sango-Kata and all that, it was not conducive until we come to Lagos, and the people of Lagos accepted assimilation, peaceful existence, you know the sky is the limit when you come to Lagos, you can question nobody will begrudge you, they will even wish you well, so why did you now want to deprive the indigenous Lagosians what is theirs. We do not begrudge anybody; anybody can come to Lagos and prosper, but please respect the interest of the indigenous Lagosians because they have nowhere else to go. This is our village, Isale-Eko is our village, Mainland, V.I Ikorodu is an extension of our village, and this is the only place we can aspire to be governor, we can aspire to be Oba, and we can aspire to be anything we want to be. But we have people we have accepted, who are begrudging us our right, and who also has the opportunity to go back to their state of Origin to aspire to be kings, to be governor, to be commissioner, and here we are still struggling with this one state of Lagos. So, for me everybody is welcome, as long as we can co-exist peacefully, but please respect the right of your host who has welcomed you with an open arm.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you ma. What can you say about the different groups in Lagos?

ERELU: Lagos was a mini Nigeria, even before becoming a state; I will say it is the crucible in which Nigeria was formed, and giving direction for development. Anybody who is anybody, at least in the last 20years or so all started from Lagos Island, and they were welcomed and treated like one of their own. Having said that, we have different groups from other parts of Nigeria, who are part of Lagos. We have the Hausa, we have the Tapas, we have the Ijebus, we have the Egbas, and we have the Igbos, anybody, they all formed a beautiful state called Lagos; state of Aquatic splendor and excellence, so they form a beautiful tapestry. Like I said, they are living peacefully, they are made to feel welcomed, they are not alienated in anyway, and I think that is the strength of Lagos, and we do not want it to change, but we want a clear understanding on how affairs of Lagos should be administered, taking it to cognizance that you have the hope.

INTERVIEWER: Yes ma, you didn't mention the Aworis

ERELU: We have Aworis in Lagos state who were cut from the Aworis who went to Ogun state; we have part of it that had come to create the beautiful Lagos state. So, out of that beautiful pattern I'm talking about, we also have the Aworis. The clamor for the recognition of Awori is just like the clamor of people who were cut from Ijebu to form part of Lagos. The boundaries of Lagos state will be from Ikeja to the Atlantic, going further down, they were carved from Ogun state. So if the people from Egba and Ijebu are clamoring for recognition, or they formed part of this tapestry I am talking about, and part of them we also have the Awori, when you go to Sango-Ota which is also part of Ogun, they do not call themselves other than Awori. The Aworis who came to the Lagos-Island, they call themselves the Dejos, that is the bigger Lagos. But when it comes to Lagos state, it is a different story, if the argument is based on that, then I'm sorry, it is still an extension of the indigenous people's right. Because the indigenous people has been here for centuries, but the creation of Lagos is just over 50 years, so there is no way you can equate

your right, with those who has been here for centuries. To all of us who say everybody comes from somewhere, yes everybody comes from somewhere to the world, when the world was created it was just Adam and Eve, but now look at the millions and billions we have become, so everyone came from the garden of Eden. So there is no argument there, and I know states/kingdoms of Nigeria that are younger than the kingdom of Lagos, and they have a strong cultures and very strong rights, and the people who are making noise in Lagos dare not go there, even if they live there all of their life; they dare not even lay claim to such right that they are advocating for in Lagos. Because we are good people, because we are kind and nice, must we then be trampled upon?

INTERVIEWER: Thank you very much ma, that's quite insightful. Another question that we have, you've spoke about your passion for women empowerments. Because Nigeria is a portrayal kind of society, we just want to know in history and development of Lagos, have women play a prominent role? What has this role been? How has women empowerment manifested in the history and development of Lagos?

ERELU: There is a popular saying in Lagos, especially in the royalty of Lagos, that when situation become tough, it is women you will see on the front line championing the cause. The histories of Lagos are bounds with real women. The first one is Erelu Kuti the first; who was the daughter of King Ado (the first king), and the sister of King Akinsemoyin. She controlled the market, and at that time the trading was not with the hinterland Nigeria, was with the Portuguese and foreigners coming from abroad who discover this Island, the royal island of Lagos, and of course the famous slave trade, and there were other goods that were traded in, and she will be the one when it comes to the trading part of it, she is the one who interface these foreigners when they come, so if you want to come to the market; if you have good and wear to sell, then you have to be in favor with Erelu Kuti, and anything that was exceptional like velvets, fabrics etc. She is the one who will decide who will wear it, and usually maybe they send some to Oba of Benin, or Oba of Lagos, and that culture exists till today. The head of the market is still Erelu Kuti, and under that umbrella will champion the cause of women, because all women organization, part of my terms of reference as Erelu Kuti documented by the government of this state, is that I am the head of all women organization of Lagos, especially the markets. We have different Iya-Olojas, we have head Iya-Olojas of different groups to administer the market, but really that is her main portfolio. I now took it upon myself not to only rest on the market but to evolve, to encourage, I use to encourage lot of women organization, they use to love to come to the palace to meet the king, to tell us their aspirations, and whatever we could do, we bring to the attention of government, and they use to make tremendous progress. For instance, the international women society, they will not fail to come, and we are always are always there for them, maybe they needed land to build a school, etc, this are part of what one was doing; encouraging, engineering, facilitating the affairs of women, and I didn't think that was enough, I had to set up an organization more for the alleviation of poverty, and sustenance of our culture and tradition. And usually in on the drop out children, especially the female child, you see, what

I have found is that a lot of our women, the children (both boys and girls), they have great talents. But once they've missed the opportunity of solid education they dropped out, but they still got talent. One of my interests to draw the foundation is to give second chance to this drop out children, and we succeeded, our head quarter for the foundation is at Lagos Island. Although I have been struggling with government to get a proper C of O for over 30years, now were able to empower a lot of people, we were able to give them tools to start making a living, and we having been doing this for over 30years without having to wait for anybody's money, or grant for U.N, we were using our own wealth with us. Occasionally, we have people who came to support, but that's my own understanding for setting up a foundation, it is because you have excess of your own that you want to use to add value to your community and the lives of others, not setting up a foundation because you want to attract grant. Yes, it can be an addition, but you yourself, it is because you have something to give to your community. We've been doing that, and we do a lot of counseling for the women, and of course, you know in my palace, every 9days we have Ose iga, where you have the opportunity to counsel the women, especially when it comes to the issue of domestic affair, even issues relating to their children, to their family, what you can do, you do, the once you can't do, you'd give them referrals, and I hope we see more women doing that, a lot of other women are doing great things now, but we still need to do a lots more for women. Because in the end really, the development of a nation, if you neglect %50 of it, you will see we aren't going anywhere. So, the empowerment of women really, is way to be, for the development our great country, and of course Lagos. And you know, Lagos, we didn't discriminate between boys and girls, when it comes to education. You know, Lagos family, everybody was educated, both boys and women, all the first lawyers, doctors, I can list old families in Lagos which women, boastin of Doctors, Lawyers, our Grandparents, all educated, so a lot of things, and I believe it became a template for other part of the country, which I thinking is fastening and hastening the development for the fortune of women and by extension, for the development of Nigeria. Because Lagos is a state of excellence, everybody is the same, and definitely we do not mistreat widow in Lagos, we respect widows in Lagos. In Lagos, no family will cart away, the property of their daughter in-law, just because their son died. If anything, they look upon her, and they will always want to support her, that has always being the practice, I have experience it, and nobody came to bother me that they want to take the house from me, or they want to take the car from me and my children. Lagos has been a fantastic template for the development of this country, and hence, that was the reason, when I wrote my first book; Lagos 'the legacy of honor', at the time that, the capital was moved from Lagos to Abuja, I wrote the book 'the legacy of honor' and the subtitle was 'less they forget', less they forget the role of Lagos in the development of Nigeria, after we've gone to Abuja. In any case, everybody ran to Abuja, and they are all coming back, and more are coming back in droves every day, and we are still welcoming them, welcome to the kind to the indigenous people of Lagos, who are so welcoming, are so peace loving. I'm using this to appeal, to well meaning Lagosians, who resides in Lagos, to really champion the cause of the indigenous people of Lagos who have nowhere else to go.

INTERVIEWER: there has been the question of the Aworis How do we reconcile this, for the development of the state? In addition to that, from the historical condition, we would also like you to share a bit on your plan on the current tension about Lagos as a no Man's Land. So people go around saying Lagos is a No Man's Land, so please when you are responding to the historical question of identity we want you to shed a bit more light on the current tension of Lagos is a No Man's Land.

ERELU: Well I think what we have been saying for almost 30mins is actually answering that question of Lagos is a no Man's Land. With everything I have been saying, any rational person will know, Lagos belongs to somebody, although they are welcoming and accommodative, people are here, and when they came, we accepted, and we still recognize your right to live here, at least according to the constitution of Nigeria. But we still have indigenous people, just like we have the indigenous people in the river rine areas, where in fact, because oil is coming from that area, a whole ministry was dedicated to the interest of the indigenous people of that area. Moreso that was the latest before we have the ompadec, NDDC taking care of the indigenous people of that area. But people forgot the part of Lagos is contributing at least %50 (even till now) to the national Gdp of this country. I don't even think any indigenous person get to be head of the port authority in this place, and my ancestor, the kings of Lagos were the ones who use to collect the royalty for the port of Lagos. Port of Lagos has always been in existence, it was not a creation of the amalgamation of the federal republic of Nigeria, but that right was taken from us and went for substitute. So, how can you say it is a No Man's Land? It was a kingdom; it was in existence, centuries before 1940, which was the amalgamation of Nigeria. How old is Nigeria now? We were the few people who were here before the amalgamation of Nigeria, majority came after that to meet us who have been living here for centuries, and then you claim it is a No Man's Land. What was it when you arrived? It is highly developed sophisticated kingdom. One of the kings wrote that he came to the palace of Oba of Lagos and met the King wearing a blissful blossom outfits, drinking champagne and eating mussels (isan), and long before Nigeria came to be. Writing by a Portuguese trader, met the King in white beautiful attire, drinking champagne and eating mussels, not with carrier, but with our own local delicacy of mussels, that is our stock. And somebody comes from nowhere, 100years ago, 150years ago, and says Lagos is a No Man's Land. They should even be ashamed to even voice it, in fact anyone who say that from now, should be noted is an illiterate and ignoramus. This is Lagos start from its own point of entry, how long can its own points of entry be? 100years? 150years? Even 200years? Not to talk of people who came here yesterday, those who are saying their allegation, and those who actually came 50years ago, and started saying, I don't know anywhere else, I am a Lagosian. Fine, nobody is disputing that, but you have indigenous people, just like you have indigenous people where you are coming from, and their rights are recognized. So I think, we should advise ourselves not to even use that phrase anymore, because it sounds ignorant. You know, when people say, who are the owner of Lagos? The way I will like to handle it is, okay, this argument; let us situate it within time. Because when we situate things within time, I came before you, you came before me, it makes it easier. The claim is not Lagos state, Lagos state is made with about

five divisions, we have Epe, Badagry, Ikorodu, Greater Lagos and we have Ikeja, Agege areas. An Epe man cannot tell you he is a Badagry man, rather than a Badagry man tell you he is an Ikorodu man, neither will an Ikorodu man say he is a greater Lagos's person, and those from Ikeja, Agege, will probably call themselves the Aworis. But in Lagos, because the dispute is Lagos (just like we have New York; we have New York town and we have New York City); we have greater Lagos and we have Lagos state, let us not confused the two. Because I believe the argument you are talking about is the Greater Lagos, not Lagos state. Like I told you, in Lagos (proper Lagos), the Aworis are from Ikeja. In Lagos proper, as far as we have concern of today, just like Obaship, you can say you are from Benin, we can either say we are from Ife or Benin, whichever way you want to put it, from this argument, let's say we are from Benin. The Dejos can also say they are from Ife, and they are the product of the incident of Awori in Isheri. By the time we all came into Lagos proper, we have the metamorphism to Lagos Kingdom; the kingdom of Lagos. Meaning the children of Olofin, who are part of the Awori group, they came into Lagos, he had his children, and they form the royal kingdom of Lagos with the Oba, and they are called the Dejos. So in Lagos proper, we have the Dejos and we have the Obaship. It is clear, if anyone say I'm wrong, let them contradict and explain it to me, because the groups that form Lagos and administering Lagos, we have the Dejos and we have the Oba, outside that tell me who has, all the others are beneficiary from this control stage. Now who came first? Ogunfunmilere came from Ife, the incident of drowning Awo was in Isheri, they all found different directions and they came to Lagos; he came here with his children. When he came, and nobody has ever contradicted this, The Benins got them to be paying royalty (isakole), which was being sent to Oba of Benin, so to all purposes and intents, maybe they didn't even form a community, but they were already trading, you have the great Benin kingdom, the Ife kingdom, the Oyo kingdom, they were already trading with the foreigners. Because if you go into the archives, there is a big kingdom called Benin Kingdom, and they were interfacing with them, history is there. After a while, Ogunfunmilere and his children said, we've been here long enough and we are not going to pay royalty to anybody. Hence, expedition was set for the Benin to calve them in and their father was captured, and taken to Benin, incarcerated there. Long before he came back, Asipa was sent here to create a community and start administering Lagos. After that, his son was crowned the King here in Lagos. By the time he was released from persuasion in Benin, we already have Obaship in place. So, now, time. How old was he when he came from Ife? 20? 30? Before he has all those children? He couldn't be less than 30. Let's say he was 30years when he first arrived at the Island, let say he was living here, and paying whatever, or whether they were paying or not paying , but let's say they were already here for about 20years, it can't be more than that, that takes him to almost 50years, and he was taken away. But within those 20 years, is it 10 years after? Is it 5years after? Or is it almost 20years after that the Obaship was set up before he came back? But by that time, his children were already absorbed into the administration of Lagos with the king. They are the ones who had come there; they are the one who are now sitting in council (The Dejos) with Oba of Lagos. So what I am trying to say is that when you situate this within time, that one of them came before

the other, we are talking about centuries, and we now want to go outside the pages of newspapers and starts talking about who came first, who didn't came first, side by side with people who are saying it is a No Man's Land, who came 10years ago. We must be great fools, or we are very spoilt, so to for that argument is a moon scatter; it is something that we should just bury immediately. But I have said assuming Ogunfunmilere and his children came first, so we are saying you came 20years first, after 20years they took you away and replace yourself, so you came 20years before the Benin, or the Benin said when you came, they were making you to pay royalty, it means they have been there before you came. So really, who came first, I came first, you came first, but the meeting point for me is that situating the whole all saga within time; time frame. I hope you have observed my mathematics? So we are talking about a time frame of, maximum, 20years. What is that? They said 500 centuries. When you have people who arrived today at Ido, saying that they are Lagosians, and it is a No Man's Land. 500years after, you are just coming, what is that? And I think it is a pity that indigenous people of Lagos do not appreciate their worth and the legacy they have depicted to this great country as Lagos. You know, a classic example of peaceful co-existence is the section of Lagos, during the reign of Oba Dosumu, when you have the great British Empire trying to seize part of control of a small kingdom of Lagos, it is like a sledgehammer of their hand, but our ancestors succeeded, on a round table, peaceful agreement, by which the honor of Lagos was saved, the Oba didn't allow his Ego and pride as an Oba, to go into a conflict with a sledgehammer, because that will be suicidal. It happened in Benin, other part of Nigeria, but here, because of that singular peaceful resolution of that attack, Gun boat stationed across the palace of the Oba, stunned looking Armed Soldiers, stationed in front, all over the town, and Gun boat booming all over, they were not crowdly, they still have preference of mind, and what was the British looking for, they were not looking to take over our great Island, they just realized there is a great opportunity for trade, and they wanted to sign a trade relationship with the kingdom to hoist other Europeans so that they will have exclusivity, and we were able to do that. The port was the first point of attack, they allow the Oba to keep collecting the royalty he was collecting from the port, but as trade develops, they were the ones carting away the excesses and the greater percentage, but they still respect his right, to keep collecting royalty from the port. It is all documented; I'm not just saying it. Go to the British archives, you will find all these things I'm saying, we even have archives in Lagos state now. They are black and white; they were real events. He was allowed to hold his ground and rule his people according to the African rulership tradition, as a result, you know what that means, we were able to keep our own lifestyle, our own kind of food, our own kind of dressing, our culture and tradition. There are many part of Africa, where they have concentration, some of them don't know what they have seize their lives, some of them only use European blankets to cover themselves as their national wear. That was the legacy our ancestors depicted to Nigeria, not just in Lagos, and yet, you will say we do not exist, you will say it is a No Man's Land. What about all the efforts of our ancestors who stood firm to maintain the integrity of Nigeria, because the templates of what was signed with Oba Dosumu, was what they now took to continue to go inward into Nigeria until when they got to the end of Nigeria, and

they were able to form the modern portray trade, and today the tradition of the modern region is so very much more intact, despite the settlement of their colonialist. And I think also, I will not even blame other Nigerians or other Lagosians, we do not tell our own story, we allow other people to tell our story. So, there is a whole lot of discussion, because I am sure, if history and the truth I am saying today are being taught, by now, people will know the real story of our ancestors, the prowess of our ancestors, the legacies they have depicted to us, would have been a guiding principle. If all these are being taught, I am sure the strive that is happening at Kaduna state perhaps may not be in place, because they will see those who have lived peacefully, and use roundtable for the settlement of problems, the way they have been able to achieve this, they too will have something to emulate. Urgently, I think, the teaching of history, should be reinstated immediately in the school curriculum, it is so important and so imperative, because at least if you don't know where you are going, you should know where you are coming from, and that would be a pointer for you for the future. So, you know, another sub point, I'm reading something the other day; it is the beginning of Eyo. We know our beginning, how can we not know how Eyo started, Eyo didn't jump from the sky, it is part of our reality, our culture, and if we know our ancestors, how would we not know how Eyo started? Eyo started, we know where the fetish came from, and the fetish came from somewhere else. You know the popular slogan of Eyo is 'Moyo fun e, Moyo fun ra mi', when you have not been able to have children, or you are suffering from Abiku, they brought this fetish which was from the kingdom of king of Oshi; the father of Queen Olugbani, who was the mother of Erulu Kuti first, because she wasn't having children, or her children were dying. So her father who was the King of Oshi, sent the fetish to Lagos, because Queen Olugbani is by the way the wife of Oba Ado, all her children are dying, her father who was also a King sent the fetish to come and take care of her and do whatever that was needed to be done, so that the children can stay, and that is when we had 'Erelu Kuti', the full meaning is 'Ikutikuti' (her children will not die anymore), and that was what the fetish came for, and when they had the baby, of course 'Moyo fun e, Moyo fun rami'. Also use it for a final funeral right of a King, and again Lagos we were so emancipated, we do not know, when you see fetish covers their faces, you are curious, you want to know what is behind it, and on the outing, to protect them from the curiosity of people of Lagos. It was during the reign of Oba Akinsemoyin, he now got hefty men in the society, he gave them a stick, to protect the fetish, and they are called Ilaba-Ekun. That's why the Laba will tell you they are the head of the Eyos, because Eyo is different from fetish, but when you have the Eyo play, that is when you have the people in white with colorful alga, that is the creation of the Oba of Lagos. The fetish was the one that first brought some answer and it was only the Laba group that was the protector of Eyo. It was when the fetish, we have Adimu, Oniko, Ologede, Agere, those are the first set that came, it was when they don't feel too comfortable from the protection that they got from Laba, that they too started having their Eyo group to protect them when they go out. So you have Laba; who were the first Eyo group, and they always claim till tomorrow that they are the Olori-Eleyo, and people confused it with the Olori of the Fetish (Head of the Fetish), it is different from Olori Eyo anyway. So they now started having it, so we now have the followers of Ologede (who use

green), Oniko (who use yellow), Adimu (who use black), and Agere (who use purple). We started with that group, and then from there, when we now use it for the funeral of another Oba, we now have the Dejos, and they started having Eyo groups. Nowadays, we use Eyo to celebrate even dignities, who have contributed to Lagos. If for instance, we use Eyo to celebrate, like, chief Toye Coker (who was a famous Lawyer), we would now have Eyo omo oloku, because we are using it to celebrate him, his children will also wear white and put on alga to follow them, because they have to go and do a montage, a ceremonial burial body of the person you are celebrating. His children will now be Eyo Omo oloku. SO any subsequent outing, we will now have Eyo Coker, and that's how the ranks and files of Eyo group keeps developing and getting bigger. Everything makes sense, everything has a method, but the person who doesn't know the inner workings of the kingdom of Lagos, because of its cosmopolitan nature, will think it's a No Man's Land, it is not true, the Eyo group is still evolving. For instance, I think the last one was the Eyo Elegushi, next time we have an Eyo outing, we are going to have the Elegushi group of Eyo, and they will choose another color for their agar, which is what differentiate different groups, the color of their agar, everybody wear white. I had Eyo for my father I don't know how many years ago, 30years ago or so, aside from the fact that I had the Eyo of Erelu Kuti, my family (the omo oloku at that time) has its own Eyo group, and it's a yellow. That is the story of Eyo in a nutshell, but I guess some people, you know when you interview people who didn't know, some said it started in Badagry some said it is the fishermen, there is no such obscurity, it is very clear. The first person to organize an Eyo outing is Erelu Kuti, and that was at the final burial of her mother; princess Oshi; Olori Olugbani. That was the first time they used it as a funeral, because it was from her family. They used it as the first Eyo outing, as a final burial ceremony for her, and then the used it for Akinsemoyin and subsequent others. It is very clear. Just like you are saying Lagos is a No Man's Land, and I'm sure that everything we've said today has shown that Lagos is not a No Man's Land, and the Eyo too is very pure. That is why when Eyo groups go out, my palace at Kadan, which is the tomb of the first Erelu Kuti, all Eyo groups must go there and pay homage, the night before, and on the actual day of the Eyo outing. They all passed through there, which is why I'm there, hosting everybody, and spending the fortune, to give schnapps and kolanut to everyone when they come. Lagos is full of rich history. It is a beautiful heritage we have, but we are not telling our stories enough, and we should.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you very much ma, for telling us this work, legacy and rich structure of Lagos. Do you have any final word for us?

ERELU: First of all, I must congratulate your crew, because what you are doing is a fantastic work, you are putting things in the right perspective, you are clarifying and putting history and the prowess of our ancestors on a pedestal to enhance the future of our children. I think it is a very fantastic work, and I congratulate you, and I commend you for this great effort. I am glad to say to everybody, everyone is welcomed in Lagos; we are all people of Lagos. Of course we have people, whose ancestors have created this conducive atmosphere for all of us to be able to

co-exist in peace. So please, acknowledge their interest, and give support to actualize their interests of your host in Lagos. I thank everybody, and I wish you all well.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you so much ma.