

LAGOS: OWNERSHIP AND IDENTITY



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FOREWORD

One of the major programmes for the year 2020 of the Lagos African Cluster Center, Africa Multiple, Centre of Excellence in African Studies, sponsored by the German Research Foundation, through its collaboration with the University of Bayreuth, is the project entitled- Lagos: Ownership and Identities. A cardinal element of this project is a photography exhibition about Lagos. Carefully thought-out as a significant way of telling the story of any community, the history and identity of Lagos cannot be fully understood without the photographs that depict its origin, culture and dynamism. It is the aim of this brochure, and the photographers/scholars therein, to introduce you to this story. I have often been told that photographs speak volumes, they tell stories that a thousand words would struggle to do. This brochure introduces us to the story of Lagos, through the lens of both seasoned and rookie photographers, carefully selected by a team of experts and curators, whose knowledge about Lagos is legendary.

As part of a larger project that includes intellectual debates, the photography exhibition speaks to the overarching agenda of the Africa Multiple, Cluster of Excellence in African Studies in more ways than one. It addresses the need to reconfigure African Studies through the works of African artists and scholars, while at the same time engaging in reflexive and relational debates that depict the artistic qualities embedded in such works of art. Critical and soulful essays written by seasoned academics and custodians of the history and culture of Lagos adorn the over one hundred pages of this brochure, breathing life to what would probably have been lifeless.

In my view, the major achievement of this brochure is the careful choreograph of theory and practice, a feat for which Byenyani Bitrus, the project curator should be commended. Critical pieces written by scholars of diverse disciplines such as Professor Folashade Ogunsola (Medical Microbiology), Professors Ayodeji Olukoju, Rufus Akinyele and Danmole (History), Dr. Akande (Environmental Sciences) among others, provide the necessary diversity and multiplicity to the project. The interesting blend of interviews with key players in Lagos is also a major highpoint of this brochure. The synergy created by the blend of town and gown is reflective of the cosmopolitan nature of Lagos.

I am particularly impressed by the quality of the photographs put up for exhibition. The idea to open up the space for emerging student photographers is commendable. This is in tandem with the mentorship policy of the Cluster of Excellence in African Studies. It is gratifying to note that over fifty of our students sent in photo entries of which only six that reflect the theme of the project were selected.

On behalf of the University of Lagos African Cluster Centre, I congratulate Dr. Taibat Lawanson and Dr. Abisoye Eleshin, both Principal Investigators of the Cluster of Excellence in African Studies for putting this project together. I also thank our partner, Cluster of Excellence in African Studies, University of Bayreuth for funding it. Our partnership with the University of Bayreuth has proved to be a very positive way of reconfiguring African Studies.

We hope this project will open up new ways of thinking, widen the debate and provide a platform for further discourse on Lagos, her origins and her future.

Muyiwa Falaiye, PhD., MNAL
Professor and Director,
Institute of African and Diaspora Studies (IADS) and Lagos African Cluster Centre (LACC)

FROM THEN TILL NOW: COMPLEXITIES IN THE EVOLUTION OF LAGOS

*Bisoye Eleshin and Taibat Lawanson
Lagos ACC, University of Lagos, Nigeria*

Where is this Lagos?

Lagos means many things to many people. It is the largest metropolitan area in Nigeria and has grown from indigenous fishing and farming villages in the 16th century, to a city-state and colony during the colonial regime. It became a federal territory in 1953, and in 1967, following the Nigerian civil war, Lagos became one of 12 states, and the nation's capital, a position she relinquished to Abuja in 1991.

The spatial and political connotations of Lagos continues to evolve. Generally, the term 'Lagos' may be used to represent at least, four spatially distinct entities but also contextually overlapping areas¹. Depending on who you ask, Lagos may refer to:

- **The municipality (Ilu Eko):** covering the extent of what is present day Lagos Island local government area. This area served as the headquarters of the Lagos Colony and remains the core of the modern metropolis and its Central Business District
- **The metropolis (Agbegbe Ilu Eko):** covering sixteen urban local governments in Lagos² state local government are: Apapa, Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Alimosho, Agege, Ifako-Ijaiye, Ikeja, Somolu, Eti-Osa, Oshodi-Isolo, Amuwo-Odofin, Kosofe, Ojo, Mushin, Lagos Mainland, Lagos Island and Surulere
- **The state (Ipinle Eko):** which covers the twenty statutory local government areas (the 16 listed above with Ibeju Lekki, Ikorodu, Badagry and Epe LGAs)
- **The megacity:** covering Lagos state and its peri-urban interface which includes towns and villages in four local government areas of adjoining Ogun state (Ado-Odo/Otta, Ifo, Obafemi Owode, and Sagamu)

Whatever construct we choose to reference, what cannot be denied is the strong role that Lagos has and continues to play in the economic growth and development of Nigeria. However, the very origins of the city is still the subject of contestation.

Lagos and its contested histories

In documenting the origins of Lagos³, the ownership and identity of its founders has remained controversial, especially among academic and traditional historians. Historical records have touched, on the one hand, sovereignty and the population process of the Benin; with German surgeon, Andreas Josua Ulsheimer, in circa 1603, attributing the rulership of Lagos to the Benin⁴, while other records document the migration of the Awori from Ile-Ife to Lagos later that the same time⁵. The ownership tussle seems far from over as the two parties continue to lay claim to the earliest settlement at Lagos, even though the royalty and chieftaincy structure of Lagos now appear to be a blend of both cultures. While some Lagos royal paraphernalia like the Abere is an item on the Royal insignia in Benin, and a number of Lagos chieftaincy titles are similar to those in Benin⁶, the Isale Eko dialect of Yoruba language has tremendously employed Awori terms in its lexicon⁷.

To further cement this controversy, members of the Lagos royal family have differing opinions. While the Erelu Kuti of Lagos (Ceremonial Queen Mother) stated that the Awori people used to pay royalty to the Benins⁸, and Prince Tajudeen Olusi, a Lagos prince, concluded that the Benins were the first settlers in Lagos⁹, another Lagos prince - Sammy Adebisi – refutes this claims stating that the Awori people are the original owners of Lagos¹⁰.

Whatever the dichotomy in accounts of Lagos histories, what is incontrovertible is the fact that Lagos is a

¹ Lawanson T. and Olajie O. (2017) Comparative Research on African City Regions: Case study Lagos. Unpublished report submitted to the Gauteng Regional commission.

² The Federal Government of Nigeria, 2007; Nigerian National Assembly, 2007.

welcoming society, whose rich culture is an admixture of diverse customs and traditions of both her indigenous and migrant populations.

Historical accounts tell us that Lagos (Ilu Eko) was a sanctuary and place of opportunity and prosperity for migrants, both nationally and internationally. The Brazilian and Freetown returnees of the 1800s settled at Bamgbose and Olowogbowo areas of Lagos respectively. Migrants from Nigeria's hinterland also moved to Lagos at a point in time. The Ekiti people settled in Oke-Popo area. The Nupes settled around Epetedo, Oshodi and Bariga areas, with the regular display of their trademark Igunnuko festival. These families prospered in Lagos and today lay claim to indigene status. Examples include the Da Rocha family of Bamgbose, Oshodi Bukuu and Oshodi Tapa families from Benin and Nupe respectively. Later, other migrant enclaves emerged based on socio-economic and/or ethnicity status. For example, the Ijebu and Egba elite are in the Palmgrove and Ilupeju areas, while Ijebus are prominent in Somolu, Hausas (including returnees from the Burma war of the early 1900s) settled in Obalende and Agege; while the migrants from Nigeria's delta hinterland – the Ijaw and Itsekiri – can be found in the waterfront areas of Ajegunle and Ijora. Even expatriate communities of Lebanese and Indians have made Apapa and Ilupeju their homes.

Migration to Lagos in search of opportunities has been the major factor responsible for the demographic and spatial growth of the city. Lagos has grown from 60,221 in 1872¹¹ to over 23million people today.

Lagos as a no-man's-land?

Lagos has urbanized stealthily to become one of the world's largest cities¹², wielding extensive spatial, socio-economic, political and cultural influence. In fact, the entity called Lagos Megacity transcends the jurisdictional boundaries of the sub-national unit. This expansion comes with changing patterns of urban form and tensions along socio-economic and socio-political dimensions, especially in accessing land, political influence and 'the right to the city'¹³. In fact, there have been some claims peddled around that Lagos is a 'No man's land' or that 'Everyone is a Lagosian'.

The status of Lagos as economic hub and erstwhile federal capital has attracted various categories of migrants. And these migrants have contributed in various ways to the evolution of the cosmopolitan Lagos megacity. However, claiming that Lagos is No man's land robs the indigenes (who now make up a demographic minority) of their historical identity and cultural heritage. It also robs them of proportionate representation in political spheres, especially in a country that thrives on federal character. For example, very few of the three senators and twenty four legislators representing Lagos at the National Assembly is an indigene.

What Olukoju¹⁴ describes as the complexity of Lagos, represented by layers of migrations and settlements, as well as the widening boundaries and the tendency of the city-state to include and absorb all manner of migrants, should not negate the recognition of the indigenes who are unable to participate in various imaginings of the city especially 'the diasporic Lagos' - the practice in which migrants take intermittent trips back to the communities and clans from which they come to flaunt their newfound wealth.

³ The origins of Lagos, in this context are within the spatial representation of the municipality of Lagos Island (Ilu Eko)

⁴ Agiri & Barnes (1987)

⁵ Losi (1914).

⁶ Olusi (2020)

⁷ Danmole (2017)

⁸ Vanguard Newspaper, December 10, 2017

⁹ Punch Newspaper, May 5 2019

¹⁰ The Citizen Newspaper, December 10, 2017

Living in Today's Lagos

Socio-economic tensions are also rife in the land governance regime of Lagos, manifesting spatially in a grossly divided city. The Gini Coefficient of 0.64 reveals extreme gaps between the rich and the poor who experience very different urban realities. The poor find sanctuary in the over 100 slum and informal settlements that dot the city scape. These settlements are typically lacking in spatial coordination and basic services, thus contributing to urban sprawl and other urban management challenges. The rich on the other hand aggregate in luxury gated communities and self-created islands of exclusion, developed through dredging/ extensive sand mining, and/or forced eviction of erstwhile informal communities as in the case of Eko Atlantic city, Otodo-gbame and Orange Island respectively. With waterfront communities being preferred by the rich, those living in waterfront slum communities are highly vulnerable, often branded as 'illegal foreigners' and/or 'criminals', leading up to their forced displacement. The case of Makoko, Otodogbame and most recently Tarkwa Bay are poignant examples of spinning narratives around identity to implement harsh urban redevelopment policies in favour of the elite. Moreover, gated communities increase urban socio-spatial segregation.

Whether in a gated or slum community, Lagos residents respond to the challenges of urban life by self-provisioning. Sporadic electricity from the national grid is supplemented by the I better pass my neighbour petrol generators in the slums of Amukoko, and larger diesel-powered plants in the luxury apartment blocks of Banana Island. Furthermore, residents' associations in both low- and high-income areas continue to pool resources to provide physical and social infrastructure including security and street lights

The Spirit of Lagos

The social enclaves of the past, and the economic enclaves of the present amplify the various tensions inherent in a city as large as Lagos. It must be said however that the simple pleasures of Lagos life are enjoyed by all: street food such as suya, puff puff and boli, owanbe parties complete with jollof rice, as well as the resounding belief that no matter the situation, the Spirit of Lagos – epitomized by enterprise and determination – will always prevail.

This Spirit of Lagos recognizes the status of Lagos as both a historical and cosmopolitan city, as both a local and global city and ultimately as a city in flux – constantly reinventing herself and evolving with an aspiration to be Africa's model megacity, in which no-one is left behind.

¹¹ Wood (1881)

¹² <https://www.insider.com/most-crowded-places-on-earth-2017-10>

¹³ The right to the city is defined as the right of all inhabitants present and future to occupy, use, produce just, inclusive and sustainable cities, defined as a common good essential to the quality of life (United Nations (2017)

¹⁴ HABITAT III Policy paper 1: The Right to the City and Cities for All)
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340512213_Which_Lagos_Whose_History

EXHIBITION STATEMENT

The subject of ownership in/of Lagos has been a long-standing debate but I think that what we can collectively agree on at least to a certain degree is that Lagos is a city that belongs to no one and belongs to everyone at the same time - A ***“No Man’s Land”***. The various groups of people who have inhabited this city, from time immemorial -European explorers/slave traders, missionaries, freed slaves, commercial traders, adventurers, migrants, are the people who have and continue to make Lagos the ***“Melting Pot”*** that we often describe it to be. As the city continues(d) to evolve, we have witnessed varied groups of people take up space and claim ownership of the city in various forms, this is the recipe for the city’s rich history and culture. Despite its riches, Lagos is not without complexities, in many ways, it is a dysfunctional city, with poor urban planning, power tussle, overpopulation, environmental pollution, and oppression of the poor. How then do we begin to peel off the layers of complexities that exist within this social construct? We attempt, through the works of a few brilliant and passionate Lagosians, to engage with the city and its residents in a rather unconventional way.

The Lagos ACC is delighted to present an exhibition of photographs, audio-visual components, and rare photographic archives from photographers - renowned late J.D ‘Okhai Ojeikere, Amaize Ojeikere, Deji Akinpelu, Ebun Akinbo, and Olu Daniels; historians Olashupo Shashore SAN and Oludamola Adebawale; and the Lagos State Record and Archive Bureau, LASRAB.

On one hand, the bodies of work presented by Deji Akinpelu and Ebun Akinbo weave Lagosians’ history and current realities to create a tapestry of the inhabitants of the city. They use this as a way to lead us into their stories which, in turn, offer us an opportunity to understand the city and how to engage with it in a manner that creates room for inclusivity. On the other hand, we observe how Lagos has evolved through a

juxtaposition of images.

Allow me to bring to the fore two striking images of the famous Anglican Cathedral in Marina, by JD ‘Okhai Ojeikere and Amaize Ojeikere, where the image of the later created in black and white circa 1965, is situated in a serene and tranquil environment that is hard to reconcile with today’s Lagos, and the image of the former created circa 2008 is color-rich and boasts of a vibrant environment that is immediately recognizable to viewers as Lagos. Archives by Olashupo Shashore, Oludamola Adebawale, and LASRAB takes us back in time, to understand the stages and process of the evolution of the city through its politics, lifestyle, and commerce, while Olu Daniels highlights how the lower-class survived the COVID-19 pandemic.

Without dismissing the place of early inhabitants of Lagos, it is important to acknowledge the rights and presence of people for whom this city has become, and will continue to be, home. The exhibition is an invitation to experience Lagos in its complexities; a boisterous city of beautiful dreams and haunting nightmares with the expectation that you leave with a renewed sense of hope and vigor to keep the city alive, engaging it with truth and empathy and continue to take up space! Lagos is for us all - it is our home.

Byenyan Jessica Bitrus
Curator
November 2020



BIOGRAPHY

OLASUPO SHASORE SAN:

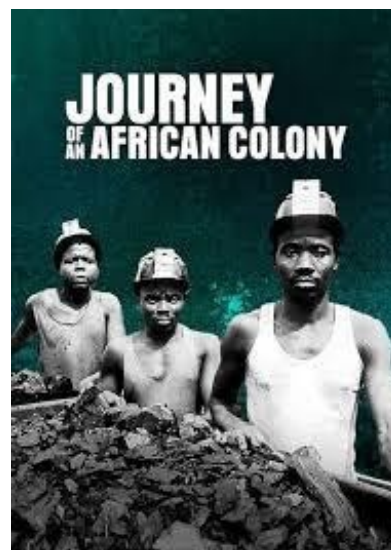
Senior Advocate of Nigeria is a partner at ALP Legal (Africa Law Practice), a leading commercial law firm in Nigeria. Although well known for his defence of multinationals and state sovereigns in many disputes in the Supreme and Appellate courts in Nigeria, he is notably an investigative historian and author. He has served as Chairman of the Lagos History Committee that produced the seminal work “The History of Lagos; from earliest times” with some of the country’s leading academic historians.

After serving in law enforcement and public administration, as Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice of Lagos State 2007-2011. He made more time for his part time research and writing. Resulting in the award winning narrative history works: “Possessed- A history of the Crown Colony of Lagos” (Q Books 2014) “King & Colony – A short history of the British Possession of Lagos” (Q Books 2015) “A Platter of Gold – Making of Nigeria” (1906 – 1960) (Q Books 2016).

He is passionate about Nigeria’s unsung heroes and promoting international history particularly Nigeria’s heritage within world history. A self-styled ‘amateur’ investigative historical researcher, he advocated for the return of history to the educational curriculum of Nigeria’s school’s system and for an inclusion of a more accurate medieval and colonial African story.

In a combination of **both** of his keen interests he is one of the pioneer Trustees of ‘The Legal History Society of Nigeria’; he recently worked as writer and presenter of the seven-part documentary series “Journey of an African Colony” and “A Platter of Gold: ‘Untold Nigeria.’”

Shashore brings his knowledge and expertise to the *Lagos: Ownership and Identity* exhibition through rare archival material, to highlight 19th century life that depict the complexities of governance and conflict in colonial Lagos. From handwritten letters and accounts of key public figures, newspaper records, display of a collection of rare books on Lagos, Shasore’s body of presentation takes us through how the city evolved from a colonial outpost to a location of significance in Nigeria’s national life.





BIOGRAPHY

J.D. 'OKHAI OJEIKERE (1930-2014)

Born in 1930, Ojeikere grew up in the village of Ovbiomu-Emai in the southwestern region of Nigeria. Two years after completing his formal studies at St. Bernard Catholic School in Ihievbe, the artist acquired his first camera, a Model Brownie D in 1950. Excited about the possibilities of the camera, the artist moved back to his hometown and quickly established a reputation as “the photographer.”

In 1954, he was hired as a darkroom assistant and later as a press photographer. Ojeikere moved to Lagos in 1963 to work for West African Publicity – three years after independence – the country was in the midst of nationalistic euphoria. In Ojeikere’s words, “Just after independence, we were full of ideas and energy”.

In 1975, Ojeikere founded his own photography studio Foto ojeikere, and a year later he had his first solo exhibition at the Nigerian Arts Council in Marina, Lagos. Ojeikere was commissioned by the Ministry of Culture in 1977 to document one of the largest cultural events on the continent to date—FESTAC '77, which featured more than 17,000 participants from over fifty countries.

Ojeikere’s work has been featured in numerous solo exhibitions such as, J.D.'Okhai Ojeikere at the Fondation Cartier, Paris in 2000; Moments of Beauty, Museum for Contemporary Art, Kiasma, Helsinki, Finland(2011); J.D. 'Okhai Ojeikere, MAMCO, Genève, Switzerland (2001); and group exhibitions such as Venice Biennale (2013); Global African Project, Museum of Art and Design, New York (2010); amongst others. Ojeikere was awarded the 2011 Chobi Mela VI Lifetime Achievement Awards in Bangladesh

Even in death Ojeikere’s works have continue to generate a lot of interest in scholarly discussions and exhibitions around the world.



©J. D. 'Okhai Ojeikere
The Cathedral
NC 779/65
From The Architectural Series
Courtesy Of the Estate of J.D Okai Ojeikere/Foto Ojeikere

BIOGRAPHY



AMAIZE OJEIKERE

Amaize Ojeikere was born on the 7th of June 1966 in Lagos.

His photographic career has spanned over two decades. This began under the tutelage of his father, J. D 'Okhai Ojeikere (one of Nigeria's foremost photographer) of blessed memory who gave him his first camera (A Canon D70, 35mm SLR camera) as his graduation present.

In Pursuant of his career, Amaize has sat in classes at different photo workshops organized by MR SUNMI SMART—COLE, The Goethe Institute, The French Cultural Centre and The British Council (Lagos, Nigeria), Mon. Giles Perrin and Philippe Salaun in Paris, France respectively.

Amaize's interest in intricate forms and patterns can be seen in his documentation of Clusters which continues to form the basis of his research on congestion in cities. His quest for understanding the sameness of man can be seen in his Fusion of Life. He continues to play a major role in the management of FOTO OJEIKERE, a photography company set up by his father, Mr J.D.'Okhai Ojeikere in 1975.

Amaize has participated in several exhibitions in Nigeria, Germany, Spain, United Kingdom, Belgium, The United State of America, Switzerland and Italy in 1994, 1995, 1997, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005 2006, 2011, and 2015.

He is a member of the International Freelance Photographers Organization, the Photographer's association of Nigeria, the Depth of Field (DOF) and The Invisible Borders: 2009&2010. He lives and works in Lagos, Nigeria.

Artist Statement

LAGOS: OWNERSHIP AND IDENTITIES
BY: AMAIZE OJEIKERE

**"The earth is the Lord's,
and everything in it.
The world and all its people
belong to Him.**

**For He laid the earth's
Foundation on the seas and
built it on the ocean depth**

PSALM 24:1-2

The economic pursuit of man has led him into several things and this includes its claim of ownership to land, state, country, and a portion of the universe.

Considering we came into this world with nothing and we will leave without taking anything with us, I am wondering who truly owns what and what we should claim ownership of. If we claim ownership to Land, what about the air within, the intellect within, and other intangible items that can't be seen or quantified.

Lagos (EKO) as I know it to be called whilst growing up by the Yoruba's has played home to both strangers and visitors for different reasons. Lagos has different attractions to different people, its warmth and receptive nature is addictive with other incentives attached, it is completely irresistible. So the influx of people into Lagos from different parts Nigeria increase daily to either have a taste or a slice at it.

The original settlers of Lagos have given "away" part of their land to their visitors with all pleasure so its ownership and identity with its narrative has changed from its original owners. It is now being influenced and shaped by those who have chosen to make Lagos home either by birth or migration from other parts.

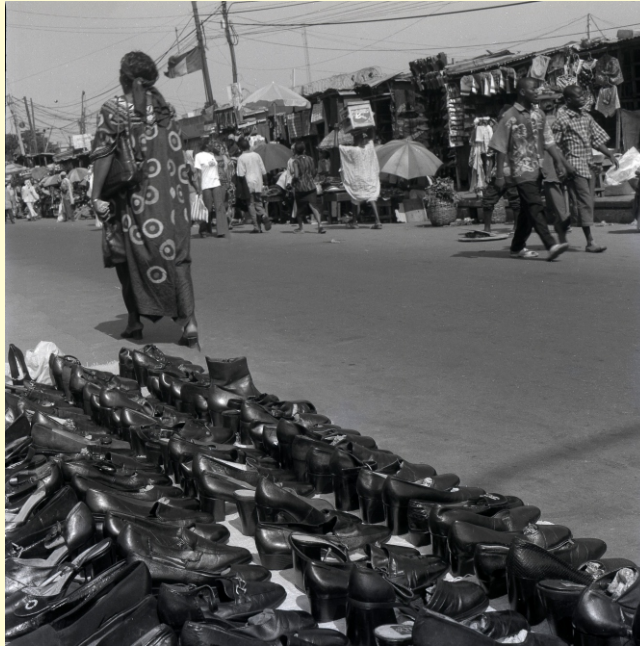
Lagos is a place for the free hearted who is ready to make it home, explore its beauty and the love it exudes.

LAGOS, OCTOBER 2020

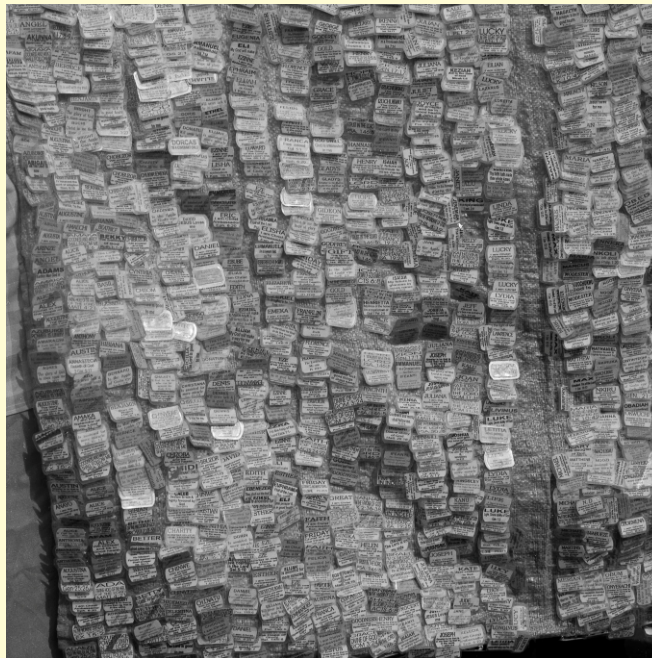


The Source III.
2008
©Amaize Ojeikere

CLUSTERING SERIES



Untitled - Clustering Series
2004
©Amaize Ojeikere



Name Tag - Clustering Series
2004
©Amaize Ojeikere

BIOGRAPHY



DEJI AKINPELU

Deji Akinpelu, a photographer and Documentary filmmaker with an interest in urban development from the perspective of the urban poor. His body of work includes Valid Dreams; a photo documentary on forceful eviction of Otodo Gbame residents between 2016 - 2017. Several of his works have been published and exhibited by Amnesty International, Agence Française de Développement (ADF), Slum Dwellers International and Heinrich Boll Stiftung Nigeria. He uses photography as a means to explore social issues and focuses on documenting stories of people in his immediate environment; their fears, struggles, resilience, and faith. Having grown up observing people around him constantly seeking some form of justice and a means of livelihood to no avail, his desire was fueled to partake in these stories that unfold daily

around him.

Deji is the producer and director of the Documentary film “Kelechi’s Quest”; a documentary that focuses on the challenges of affordable housing in the fast-growing city of Lagos and the founder of Rethinking Cities Initiative, an advocacy group that focuses on urban development issues and communicating possible innovations, using the arts as a means.

Artist Statement

My body of work focuses on the challenges faced by urban poor Lagosians who have very strong historical lineage to the city. Over the years, Lagos’ population has had tremendous growth and the battle for land has been at the centre of urbanisation. Government in and Government out acknowledged the need for housing in Lagos and have struggled to provide affordable housing. Unfortunately their quest for solutions have resulted in a very draconian way of acquiring land from the supposed poor in the city. The Government has constantly gone ahead to evict its citizens forcefully in different parts of the city.

In the last 5 years, I have documented forced evictions that have happened in the city of Lagos - in Otodo Gbame, and over 25 communities in the Tarkwaybay area of Lagos.

I centre the Abule-Glass residents in this body of work, to amplify their plight, highlight their ancestral lineage to Lagos as people who have occupied the land for 40 to 100 years.

What this seeks to achieve is to debunk the myths that these people are not Lagosians, are criminals and clarify the assumptions that there were initial deep, inclusive interactions by the government with these people rather than cosmetic interactions to understand their plight. This body of work exists to humanize the affected people, to show the society that they are real people who have/have had a livelihood, have been part of the city of Lagos for decades and have a strong history to their stay in the city of Lagos and therefore, a right to claim. They are not criminals, they are not foreigners as people like to portray them, they too, are Lagosians! Here, I attempt to immerse myself in the internal conflicts and struggles of the people and I invite you to participate.

HERE, IS WHERE WE BELONG



Ahmadiya
Abule Glass
2020



1963
Abule Glass
2020



The Beach Cleaner
Abule Glass
2020



The Carpenter
Abule Glass
2020



The Trader
Abule Glass
2020



The Brick Maker
Abule Glass
2020



Widowed
Abule Glass
2020



Battle scared
Abule Glass
2020



Homeland
Otodo Gbame
2017



Boundary
Otodo Gbame
2017

Lagos is aggravation and aggression
 Bright baking sunlight on streaking yellow roofs
 Hot heads failing to tame tempers inside flaming buses
 Stained wooden seats rimmed by sharp metal
 Tetanus shots rarer than
 A market woman's toddler in more clothing than a pant
 Market stalls as cinema halls
 Of the quotidian horrors of
 People sliced open and burned
 Or simply cut and bruised
 Bodies bumping
 Knees touching
 Inappropriate touching;
 In Lagos I've been an ashewo since before breasts, before boys
 Because boys in the market said so
 Nowadays they know they can't afford me
 Because I tell them
 And we laugh
 And I am angry but still I laugh

Lagos is being bored, but not enough to go the Island
 Not enough money to go to the Island
 Where coffees are costlier than three meals
 On the moneyless side of the water;
 Where windows are wound up
 To keep the aroma in and poverty's hands out,
 Small and smelly and too beggarly too early,
 Delicate-boned hands that have never learned to hide
 From the standard-issue violence of teachers stuck
 In a dead-end, in traffic, in the money-filled mirage
 Of aspirational education,
 The hamster wheel of class walls sans mobility
 Class walls covered in colour
 at the hands of semi-literate artists
 immortalising cartoon heros misshapen by
 lack of familiarity or
 lack of skill or
 an unknowable mix of both;
 school uniform fabric emblazoned with
 names echoing neocolonial sensibilities;
 a tacit understanding of hierarchies
 the rank and file of whom can never impressively answer,
"So where did you go to Uni?"

Lagos is the studied-abroad-and-just-got-back
 metro-neo-afropolitans vibing with the outdoor band,
 it is that one girl who gets on stage to roll her backside
 as expertly as the R's of their accents
 doing shockingly private things for the music
 she gets loose but she won't go home with you;
 she wants babies of her own someday and wife material is

easily stained
 So you take her number, call her in the morning
 and God help you
 if you don't have a house of His to invoke when she asks
 where you pray on a Friday before the club
 or on a Sunday after

Lagos is "Is there light?
 Igba wo ni won mu lo?
 Take the meat out of the freezer
 put it in the soup, stir quickly!"
 It is Jollof rice straining sky-high after church,
 church for outfit's sake
 church as country club
 church to sing your hurt into your neighbour's ears
 off key, off kilter
 slowly ascending to heaven to escape the heat of
 lethargic Sunday afternoons
 Stirred by the lazy swing of standing fans
 siren screams and manic movement
 cheap Chinese chargers going pop at sudden surges
 stabilizers and UPS for your TV because man,
 Man U is on

Lagos is a designer bag for every budget,
 lace and voile and not knowing if your headache is your
 gele or your man
 it is beating prices as low as you can
 whining your waist as slow as you can
 at the weddings of strangers whose mothers don't know
 yours,
 whose mothers could be yours,
 these women who dream in their mother tongues and
 count in English thousands
 and have no language for the delicious secrets buried at
 the bottom of long unopened boxes

Lagos is bridge over water
 bridge built to dreams
 of gated estates and badly made interlocking streets
 weeds sprouting from cracks watered by overflowing drains
 empty mansions on tracts snatched from the killed and
 dying
 spastically choking your wife because she knows you're
 lying
 plastic choking the life out of a brand-new jet ski
 screaming when the stinking spray touches your skin
 screaming with laughter at the Burna Boy bloc parties
 down the row of daddy's houses
 imported girls in imported bikinis

MY EYES. *by OluTimehin Adegbeye*

henna tattoos
hennaed hair
hair in updos
friends texting 'come through!'
friends sexting your boo
Much ado about cheating
In Lagos, cheating is nothing

Lagos mainland is like your father's Main Girlfriend's body
a maze it is understood
that he will neither know nor care to learn to navigate;
its depths might as well be Mordor
and if you don't get the reference
then we know where you went to Uni or probably even
Poly;
and we know your uncle isn't a big enough man to get you
a job
so you sit at home
let your grandmother's worries wash over you
your mother's prayers rising with the sun everyday but
especially on Sunday
"Won't you go to church don't you know you need a miracle
at least join the choir don't you love your life apostle will
pray for you?"
so you switch off the generator and go
hoping God will remember your name
even if no one else in this godforsaken place does

Names in Lagos are dropped and swapped
in weddings too high profile to be strictly by invitation,
monied monikers wafting in eager whispers behind their
owners' backs,
owners exploding at the door,
at the bar,
at the disrespectful attitude
of the party's parking attendant
"Do you know who I am?!"
In this Lagos, where
jobs are scarce and cash even more so and
tips are given in crisp clean notes
no one has bothered to count?
It pays to know who they are
Big madam, Mummy mummy,
"Chairman Sah abeg no vex
I no recognise you before my eye dey pain me
no money for doctor
school fees na next week
ah, thank you, God bless you
I go watch your car for you, nobody go scratch am..."
Scratch my back, I scratch your own;
This city is an endless itch spreading along the coast,

venereal diseases distributed in private beachfront villas
girls not quite eighteen marooned into sexual submission
Did you hear about so-and-so's husband?
He never picked up those Law School babes,
never picked out expensive cars for women half his age
What he really wanted was boys
Well, men, if you will, but still
Imagine that!
Imagine so-and-so, soft with womanhood and grief
wondering in disbelief if she dreamed her dreams wrong,
Those little girl dreams of playing house post-true love's kiss
Those little girl dreams whose glitter started to give
when
the landlord's son first touched her and she knew they would
be homeless if she screamed so she let him
and when mummy found out first she cried then she said "I
raised you better than this"
In Lagos there are many things our mothers raise us better
than when they do raise us:
like claiming ancient Gods
Or shaming false ones
Like sitting with our legs far enough apart
for other women to find their way home
with no road signs to give away the game
No road signs, no names,
No labels during that morning-after call
This is Lagos, after all

This city is relatives' malicious whispers in your own living
room
Designer glasses at funeral services
Okada-riding like death does not have your phone number
footsies under the table at the board meeting
Braiding the gleefully gleaned miseries of clients' marriages
or lack thereof
into their scalps
Children stealing chickens they know will be missed
Adults cutting corners to make it home or hammer
Roasted corn and ube, grilled fish and pepper soup on the side
of the road before you discover
that there is no cold pure water or beer to be had
And Everyone, everyone dancing all night as survival

This place, this many-sided metropolis, is a dusty turned-over
canvas
with a riveting kind of ugliness seeping from its seams
growing and packed full and overflowing
with tear-rubber tear-eye disillusioned dreamers
and not a single one of us really sure we want to be here.
But that's kind of the point, isn't it?
In Lagos that's kind of the point
I think.

BIOGRAPHY

Ebunoluwa Akinbo (b.1994) is a Nigerian documentary photographer with interest in exploring societal and cultural issues as well as questions of identity. Ebunoluwa believes that photography is not just about creating visually interesting images, it is about storytelling. She embarked on a photography career after attaining a sociology degree in 2018. Ebunoluwa has since carved out a reputation for herself since her introduction to photography.

She was the winner of the Fashola Photography Competition in 2018. In the same year, she was commissioned by the Newyork Times to document the #Thisis18 project in Lagos, Nigeria a scholarship in August 2019 to attend the annual Foundry Photojournalism Workshop in Kigali, Rwanda. In the same year, She exhibited alongside other photographers at the 25th Bamako Encounters - OFF exhibition under the Nlele Institute. In 2020, Ebunoluwa was nominated for the Joop Swart Masterclass, World Press Photo. She is a mentee at the Nlele Institute, a member of the African Photojournalism Database and a member of the 1884 collective.



EBUN AKINBO

Artist Statement

On my first visit to Badagry, I was taken by the serenity of the coastal town. During the course of my stay, I observed that whenever I met the indigenes and greeted them, they would ask - “how is Lagos?” which would often surprise me. My response was usually, “we are all in Lagos”. This sense of alienation I observed made me begin to question ownership in Lagos, and propelled my exploration of settlers within the enclave of Badagry.

As a result, I was inspired to learn and understand more about this group of people which led to this body of work - “Rethinking Roots”. The body of work which is ongoing, Intends to trace identity via a trajectory of consciousness. Migration takes a long route, sometimes a short route before it becomes a settlement. There are stories that exist within these migratory routes as a result of what the push factor from the previous settlement was, the good and the bad encounters on the journey, the significance of the life and properties carried on the journey, shared from the take off point to the destination. These narratives serve as oral history and symbols that are passed from one generation to the other which helps in tracing, owning and giving clarity to one’s identity.

Rethinking roots takes a closer look at the Ogu people of Badagry, it seeks to understand their indigenouness based on oral and written history, using photography, audio and iconography to explore the narrative of migration, history and identity. This body of work is an entry point into a larger conversation that I intend to keep investigating.

RETHINKING ROOTS



John Ajibotewe, a middle aged man who has lived in badagry all his life.
2020



Ayisi Ajoye, a middle aged woman who came into her family of orientation and had her family of procreation in badagry.



Rufus Travi, a descendant of Tosavi, one of the earliest settlers in Badagry.
2020



The entryway to the point of no return from the Lagos lagoon and the Atlantic ocean which is the point of no return where slaves were traded and taken on ships overseas to serve their masters.
Diptych I 2020



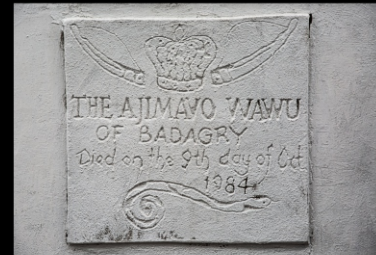
The interior of the mission house which is the first storey building in Nigeria, located in Badagry, Lagos state. The building served as a pacesetter for Christianity, and education in Nigeria. It accommodated the first preachers of the gospel in Nigeria - Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther, a freed slave that translated the English Bible to Yoruba in 1845 and Mr Claudius Philips, the first Primary School teacher in Nigeria.
Triptych I 2020



The Iroko tree on the spot Tosavi settled when he left Dahomey as a result of the war in the 15th century. The spot was significant to him, therefore he erected a small shrine where his clan worships. After his death, an obelisk, a tapering stone pillar which stands as a monument or landmark, was built in his compound.
Triptych I 2020



The canon and the Union Jack significant to the abolition of slave trade. Wawu is famous because his family refused to support slave trade at the time that it got banned in the 19th century. He stood up against other clans who wanted to continue engaging in the trade because it was lucrative. In 1843, the British donated two cannons to him, to support his engagement in the abolition of slave trade. In the same year, the Union Jack was hoisted for the first time in Nigeria, located in the Wawu compound in Badagry. The hoisting of the flag was to signify the stoppage of slave trade and to also mark the beginning of the process that birthed the Nigerian nation.
Triptych I 2020



Monuments in memory of deceased High Chiefs of the Wawu clan, erected over their burial place in the Wawu compound. The Wawu family, according to oral history descended from Ile-Ife and settled at Ouidah (Whydah) in the Republic of Benin. Later on, the Ifa oracle asked them to return through Gberefu to their present location in Badagry.
Triptych I 2020



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Triptych I 2020



The influence of colonialism is evident especially in architecture, religion, education, from pre to post colonial times. Badary was one of the major entry points, through the Atlantic ocean, for the colonial masters into Lagos and Nigeria as a whole.

2020

BIOGRAPHY



OLUDAMOLA O.ADEBOWALE

Oludamola O.Adebowale is the creative director and founder of ASIRI Magazine, Nigeria's foremost vanguard when it comes to history, great archival content and well researched contents. His research works with ASIRI Magazine have been featured in Top Colleges, Universities and Academic Institutions all over the world. He is a major contributor to the Arts and Culture pages of Guardian Life – the Sunday Magazine of Nigeria's Guardian newspaper. His ground breaking articles on topics like Women Arise in the face of Misogyny: A Cultural and Historical Perspective; Jaja of Opobo: Rivers of Oil and Blood; Re-Discovering the Benin Art: scholars within and outside Nigeria.

A Universal Vessel for Cultural Importance; ÀBÍKÚ: A Thin Line that cuts between Tradition and Science, have been cited by Academic.

Oludamola was one of the few participants selected for the Horniman Museums and Gardens (UK) for the #ThenandNow Nigeria at 60 Interrogative Project.

As a curator, Oludamola has curated and produced exhibitions including:

- Ogun State African Drum Festival Exhibition (2019)
- Chief Ebenezer Obey Museum Booth at the Federal College of Education, Osiele, Abeokuta (2019)
- Colours of Our History: 1851 Bombardment of Lagos (2018)
- Wole Soyinka at 86 WSICE Birthday Exhibitions (2019)
- 1851 Bombardment of Lagos and other Stories (2018)
- Timeless Memories: ELASTIC EFFECTS OF WOLE SOYINKA (2019) (2020)
- British Council 75th Anniversary Virtual Exhibition.

Artist Statement

My artworks are an array of over 20 photos, old maps and land documents drawn from a vast pool of archival portals, private collections of the ASIRI Magazine(which I founded 7 years ago) and beyond to help retell our collective past. Since establishment, ASIRI Magazine— an online history bastion, has dwelt significantly on the history of Lagos: from its earliest settlers down to when the relatively peaceful fishing village was annexed by colonial Britain in 1861. We have also talked about the city's evolutionary trajectory to becoming the commercial nerve center of Nigeria. The works on exhibit are a revisit of a series of topics that focus squarely on the uniqueness of Nigeria's most populous city.

Over the years, Lagos has continued to evolve and people of different hues and backgrounds come in their droves in search of the proverbial greener pasture. What makes Lagos tick is the unrivalled ethnic diversity. This I reckon is a massive strength that should be leveraged rather than a weakness like some people are wont to portray.

Thus the artworks on ground are meant to highlight the cultural multiplicities of the mega city which is in agreement with the overarching theme of this collective exhibition. Today's Lagos, is an amalgam of autonomous towns and adjoining villages that were literally distinct from

Eko: a name given by the Edo settlers. Eko- meaning camp, has since assumed the city's generic name. Hence, the perennial contention surrounding the city's ownership will continue to linger for a while. But, is this enough reason to say the city state is a "no man's land"? In the main, the idea behind this exhibition is to give participants and guests a historical experience around the importance of Lagos: its land, waterways, ports, etc and how a small fishing village has been transformed into Africa's commercial giant.

The 'Butterfly Effect' on the other hand resonates with the history of Lagos and the narrative around it over the years.

"Unless we have discovered our roots and are rooted in the lores and mores of our people, we are in danger of a false modernization in which we might gain this world only to lose our souls as Nigerians"- Professor Biobaku. Circa: 1976.

-Oludamola O. ADEBOWALE. 2020



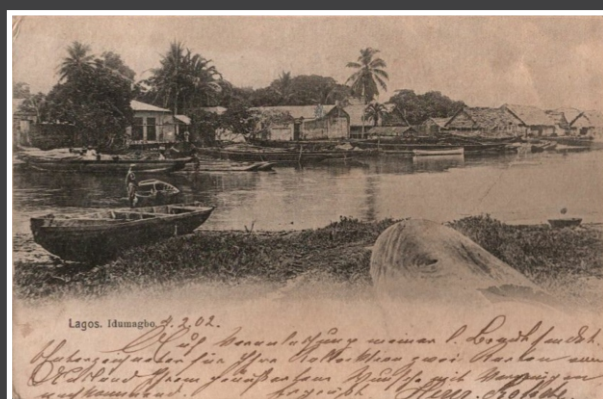
Christ Cathedral Church Marina. Circa:1950's



Aerial View of Tinubu Square. The landscaped Square in the middle gave way for the Tinubu Square Fountain which was donated by the Lebanese Community on the occasion of our Independence in 1960. Circa: 1960's



Lagos Mainland Hotel. Circa: 1960'



Idumagbo, Lagos Island. Date04/02/1902:



Marina Dock showing a cargo liner. Circa: 1920s



Ebute Ero Shoreline. Circa: 1920's



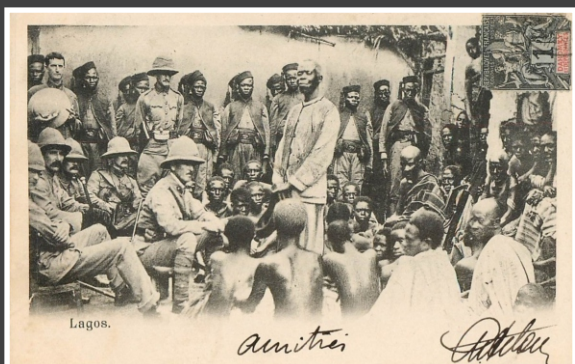
Marina, Lagos. Circa:1920s



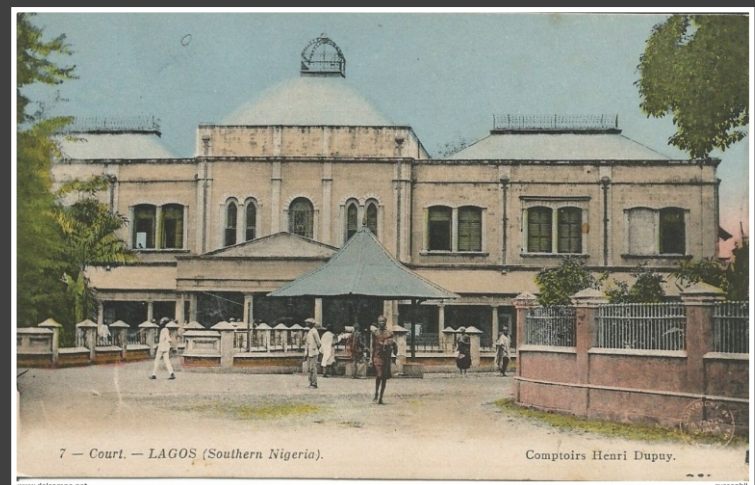
Marina waterside. Circa: 1920's



Carter Bridge with Independence Day decorations on the Bridge. Circa:1960



Annexation of Lagos. Circa: August 1861



Lagos Court around Tinubu Square. Circa: 1920s



Lagos Post Office, Marina. Circa: 1960's



Epe Village, outskirt of Lagos. Circa: 1910



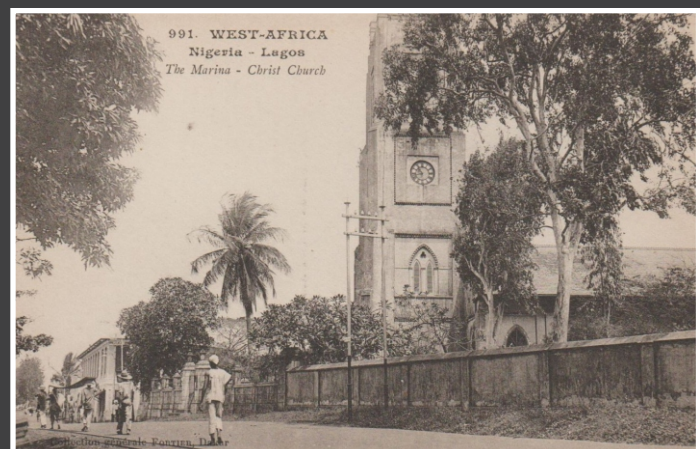
Cater Bridge. Circa: 1960s. The Bridge was built in 1901, it was named after Sir Gilbert Thomas Carter, a former Governor of the Colony of Lagos



Construction of Lagos Canal. Possibly the Macgregor canal was built between 1903 and 1904 during the colonial administration of William Macgregor. Circa: 1900's



Aerial view of Marina. Circa: 1920's



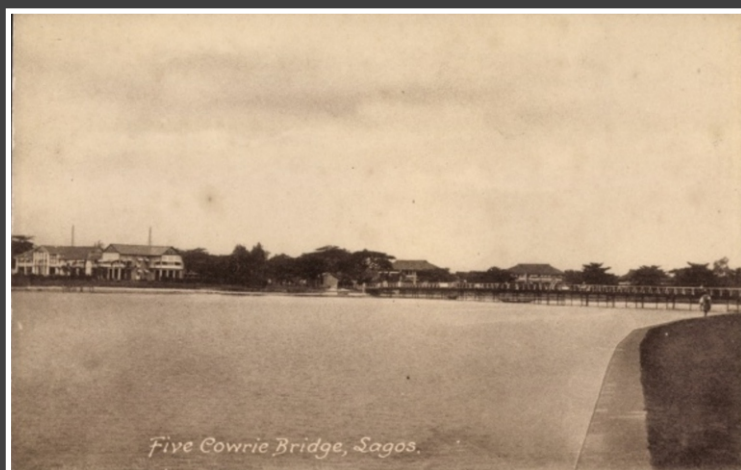
Christ Cathedral Church. Circa: 1900's. The foundation stone for the first cathedral building was laid on 29 March 1867 and the cathedral was established in 1869. Construction of the current building to designs by architect Bagan Benjamin started on 1 November 1924. The foundation stone was laid by the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) on 21 April 1925. It was completed in 1946



Post card from Lagos with an Image of the Oba of Lagos and an aerial view of the State House Marina in view. Circa: 1920's



Post card from Lagos. Circa: 1950



Five Cowrie Bridge Lagos. Circa: 1930's



Inspection of Troops by Sir Frederick Lugard on Marina. Date:18/3/1912



Marina Street in Lagos showing the tramline. Circa: 1910's



Aerial view of Broad Street. Circa: 1910's



The images in this exhibition depict the dynamics of Lagos from commerce to fashion, and politics to everyday life on the Lagoon. Lagos, through time is an amalgamation of cultures which offers opportunities to all, bearing in mind that the indigenous people are the Aworis and the Benins. The Aworis are said to have migrated from Ile-Ife and dispersed from Ido to the Creeks and the hinterland of Lagos. The Benin migrated to Isale-Eko through conquest, the Ijebus migrated from Remo and settled in Ikorodu. There are also the Nupe people, freed slaves from Freetown and returnees from Brazil. Lagos' status as a "melting pot" dates back to the 19th Century and we are proud custodians of its history.

LIFESTYLE



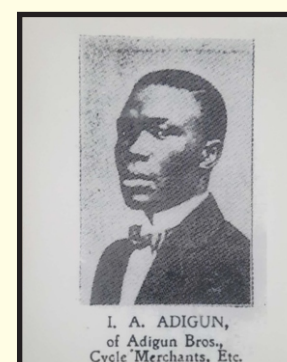
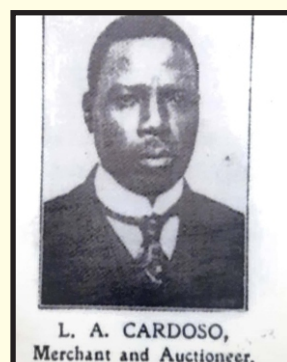
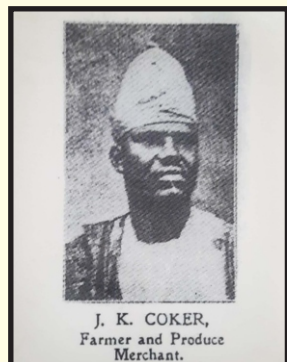
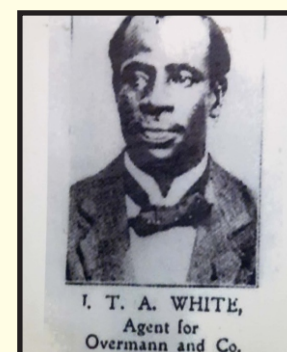
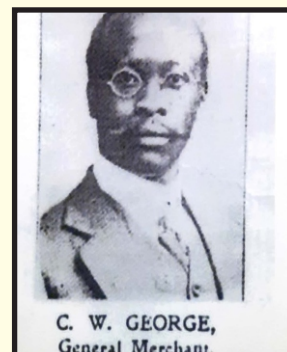
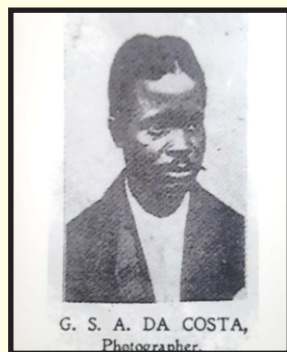
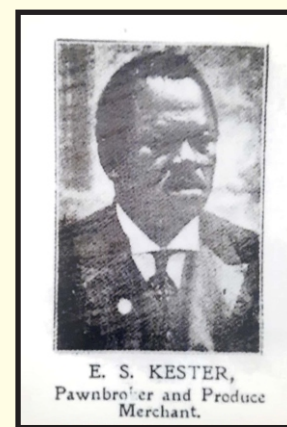
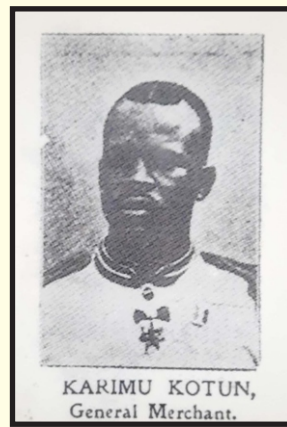
Marina Street in Lagos showing the tramline. Circa: 1910's

Aerial view of Broad Street. Circa: 1910's

POLITICS



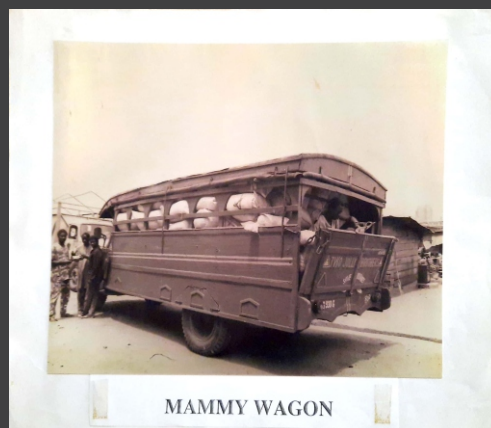
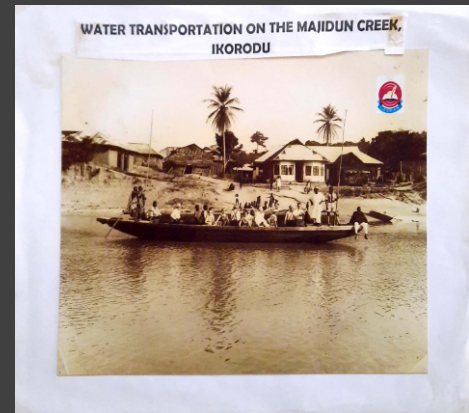
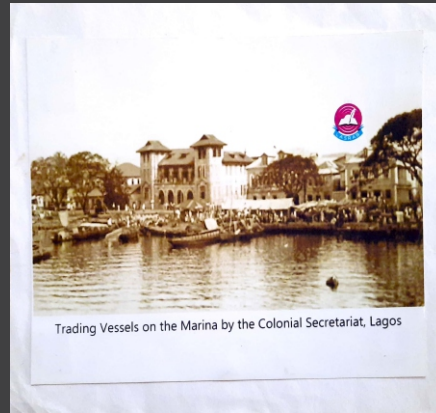
EARLY NATIVE MERCHANTS OF LAGOSS



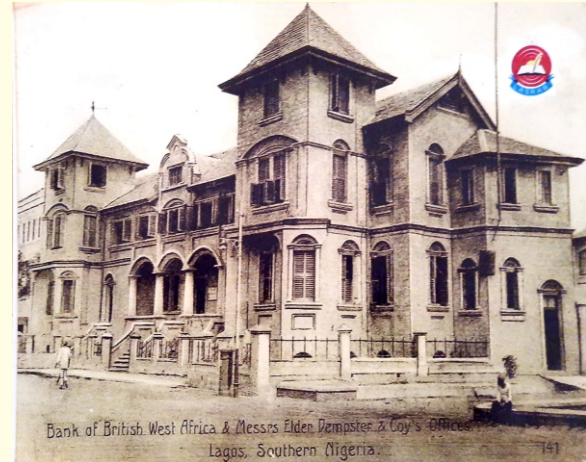
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TRANSPORT



ARCHITECTURE





The Informal Workers Also Fight COVID-19: Narratives of Public Road Transport Workers and Petty Marketers in Lagos; the Lagos Ownership and Identity Context

Akinmayowa Akin-Otiko & Ademola K. Fayemi

Lagos is undoubtedly one of the exponentially growing metropolises in the world with over 23 million people from diverse and vast ethnic, national, regional, and international backgrounds. Recognisably, according to the 2014 United Nations Urbanization Prospects, Lagos is projected as the fastest-growing city in Africa with estimated increase in population of inhabitants to 77 people at every hour between 2010 and 2030. The emerging metropolitan nature of Lagos opens some challenges and opportunities that deserve serious attention. Often ignored in the macro-urban studies analysis of Lagos is the composition, power, and roles of the informal sector in the making or de-making of Lagos. As the formal sector gains more prominence in the analysis of economic opportunities and mobilities structuring of Lagos, the intersection and dependence of the formal sector on the informal is silenced in a holistic analysis of Lagos, its fortunes, challenges, and futures. It is in recognition of these important but easily ignored realities of Lagos that a survey was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic around five markets and five bus terminals in Lagos metropolis to highlight the reality of the informal sector during the fight against the spread of COVID-19 in Lagos State.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the world and it is most feared in highly populated settlements. With a growing population of over 23 million on 1,171 km² area out of which 907 km² constitutes the urban areas, Lagos became a melting-spot that requires attention and effective monitor of compliance to the established formal protocols of physical distancing, use of face masks and regular handwashing and sanitising; the promoted ideals and practices accepted by the World Health Organization in containing COVID-19. Although the first reported case of COVID-19 in Nigeria was not found in Lagos, Lagos soon after became the epicentre for the highest COVID-19 cases in Nigeria. In early containing measures of preventing an impending public health crisis, Lagos was among the first states in Nigeria to implement the total lockdown protocol in March 2020.

During the lockdown in Lagos, people in the informal sector emphasised the need for them to return to work and be active, as that was supposedly the only means of survival in the absence of egalitarian palliatives among the divergent inhabitants of Lagos along social and economic identities. Returning to work in the midst of partial and full lockdown was seen as a survival strategy to provide means of livelihood for members of their families and to provide support services to many others, including those working in the formal sector. The lack of emphasis or provision of infrastructure that will ensure the protection of the people working in the informal sector against COVID-19 conspicuously stood out in the push to return to work among the informal workers in Lagos State.

With serious pressure and agitations on the inability of sustaining the lockdown between a few days of proclamation by the Lagos State Government, the informal sector was open to activities when the whole world was still scrambling for what to do with rampaging COVID-19. The informal sector of Lagos returned to the motor parks and markets as soon as the Lockdown was partially lifted to make ends meet. Beyond that, the formal sector needed the informal sector for transportation and food. Amidst the quest for survival, the belief and knowledge of the informal sector towards public health and personal wellbeing defined the attitude towards COVID-19 and its protective protocols. Believing largely in the efficacy of traditional herbal medicines, and the affordability of herbal remedies that could

protect and even relieve them of COVID-19 symptoms, many of the workers in the informal sector showed disregard for the established protocols of the Lagos State Government. Many of the photoshoots taken across selected bus terminals and markets in Lagos State established this finding.

In this workshop on Lagos Ownership and Identity, the reality, and beliefs of the players in the informal sector of Lagos State are showcased and exhibited phenomenologically. The exhibition fundamentally relates to the broad theme of the workshop as it raises the question - how much of Lagos is owned and controlled by the informal sector? Does the informal sector play significant roles in sustaining health in Lagos? These concerns are important because the way the owners and significant economic players in the formal sector are recognised and treated shows that they are stakeholders in Lagos. But is this the case with the informal sector even, when they play significant roles in the life of Lagos? What lessons can be gained from the beliefs and patronages of traditional herbal medicines by many workers in the informal sector regarding the efforts towards reconfiguring the health sector in Lagos State? The exhibition implicitly tells more provocative answers to the foregoing posers.

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Essays

WHO IS LAGOS?

Baba Oladeji

The biggest danger to Lagos is a man who is well travelled and has capital or power. He will look at London and want to re-create London, another will love the lure of Dubai and wish to re-create Dubai. Another will discover Gangnam, that smart city in Seoul and shove the images of his sojourn down the throat of his 'poor' architect to reproduce. Oh! And when they bandy this homogenising 'Resilient Cities' thing around, he will also rush to be a part of it. These people want Lagos to be everything it is not. These people are the problem of Lagos!

Because of these people, Lagos is being tuned to a variety of frequencies. Once tuned to the West, we are gradually being tuned to the East: The Chinese behemoth CCECC (China Civil Engineering Construction Corp) is building our rail, the Lekki Free Trade Zone and importing swathes of labour to follow suit, mandarin is being taught in some Lagos schools, China town and Chinese restaurants continue to thrive and a portion of our foreign reserves is backed up in the Chinese Yuan



LAGOS LIGHT RAIL PROJECT BY CCECC

The 50's aspiration of the LEDB (Lagos Executive Development Board) for Lagos to be ultimately a small London has given way to the 2014 Governor Babatunde Fashola aspiration for Eko Atlantic to be the Dubai of Africa. We have entrusted the growth of a city to politicians who famously switched from the British parliamentary system of government of 1960 – 66 to the American presidential system in 1979. They woo the electorate with change even when the agenda of change is ostensibly for Lagos to look like London.



EKO ATLANTIC CITY, LAGOS

for “world-class” and who has not had a look at some of the excellent student work in his backyard Unilag School of Architecture – travels to Dubai to inspect some 3D models to explore partnerships in the hope of importing Dubai here. Infact, Oba Saheed Elegushi has concluded plans with his foreign partners **to build the \$300 million Imperial smart city on reclaimed land in Lekki.** It makes me ask: what does Lagos want to be? Does it want to be



THE PROPOSED IMPERIAL SMART CITY

London, New York, Beijing, Dubai or a combination of all? When will Lagos stop following fads blindly and when will Lagos discover Lagos?

Governor Ambode forgets that the “world-class” he is seeking is already within the city. So they abandon Lagos Island to move to Victoria Island, from Victoria Island to Lekki, from Lekki to Banana Island, from Banana Island to Eko Atlantic and from Eko Atlantic to Imperial Smart City.

Now I am not arguing for a total resistance of West or East, I am only arguing for criticality of thought. I am arguing for a bit more intellectual rigour in “taking the things we need from London” and “rejecting the things that do not sit with our cultural core”. For urban form to work, it must follow culture. I can talk about the complexity of that term called culture, and how unstable it is to design from this premise especially if we look at hybridity as explained by Homi Bhabha but I am more interested in how we can begin to test things: like how we can create Owambe Housing by lifting Lagos Island houses by one floor to enjoy free unhindered ground level space for our Owambes and parking, or how we could have had a unique kinetic market that contracts and expands once trains approach the rail track along Tejuosho in Yaba.

I am more interested in how **Kunle Adeyemi’s Makoko Floating School** allows “collective, psychological archetypes” such as the view to the third mainland bridge, the perpetuating of an amphibious life for a community already based on water and the use of familiar timber and a familiar skillset – “to remain constant in the flux of urban change”.



MAKOKO FLOATING SCHOOL

There is also James George’s 8 Bridge with layers of occupancy for living, commerce and energy production, then Nkiru Mokwe’s MTA Market where she weaves hawking with vehicular traffic. It is these little possibilities, these little tests that will make Lagos Lagos and like no other city in the world.

Isn’t it a shame that it took **Rem Koolhaas to hand us a theory of optimism:** of how Lagos works despite the absence of systems that make the Western cities work?



NKIRU MOKWE’S MTA MARKET

So if we keep looking to London, we will arrive at that day where our London dreams come true, where all our roads are on fleek but littered with hawkers who may break your windscreen, where we now have fresh red buses yet they are stuck in traffic, where behind our five-star hotels will be dotting shacks,

ALIEN ADMITTANCE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN LAGOS; A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

Due to the brevity of this article, no space shall be spared for a detailed background of any nature, but suffice to say that generally, scholars of early Lagos agree that a small group of Awori emigrants were the earliest to occupy the beach-lands of Iseri. They will later relocate to Iddo and consequently spread to Eko, now Lagos Island. There is also consensus that by the end of the sixteenth century, the foci area of Lagos Island was well occupied.

In Duarte Pereira's 1505 *Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis*, the Portuguese mariner and cartographer, referring to Lagos, writes, 'in the region of the river Laguna, apart from slaves, there is no trade...nor anything from which one can make a profit'.¹ How fundamentally wrong Duarte was in his assertion. By trade of all kinds, was Lagos to forge itself into a formidable location of power and influence in the coast of West Africa. And it was on account of trade, that the early royals became so reprehensibly influenced to such an extent that the culture of admittance to anyone who presents a promise of commerce or influence was established.

This article aims to establish these antecedents of admittance for nothing but a measured land fee, tributes, and in many other instances, strategic positioning of the Island for political and commercial influence. This act, perhaps subliminally engendered by the royal class, has far reaching influence on the character and identity of the Island (later state) and more so, the nature of ownership of the idea called Lagos.

Considering the impact trade has had on the land, it is difficult to argue that the offering of valuable lands in exchange for commerce, was altogether a cretinous idea. The sandy soils of Lagos Island made agriculture difficult in the early days and Lagos was forced to depend on neighbouring towns for most of

its agro-supplies except for marine harvests and crops that naturally thrived in its soil, like pepper which formed the initial impetus and one of the earliest produce for trade. Trade, will go on to present the small Island of *Ichoo* [eko] to the world, and will significantly influence the content and character of Coastal settlement.

A history of admittance and quasi-citizenship

The negotiations of commerce for occupier-ownership started well during the Eko Awori era and persisted all through to the mid-20th century. Some instances will be cited here in brief. Oba Akinsemoyin is famed to be responsible for the first European settlers in Lagos. As early as 1740s, on Akinsemoyin's invitation, Portuguese slavers had entered and settled in Lagos to facilitate the then growing trade in slaves. This would mark the beginnings of the admittance of aliens in return for royal profits in modern Lagos. By the late eighteenth century, strings of itinerant Muslim scholars started entering Lagos and in the reign of Oba Adele, Islam was established on the Island through settled aliens who got land and in return gave tribute and promised influence for the king. The end of the eighteenth century, saw Lagos becoming a major centre for Atlantic slave trade as well as other commodities in exchange for gun powder, tobacco and several other items of European origin. Gun powder became an essential good for barter of favours and slaves in the mid-nineteenth century and was a tightly controlled substance among the military and ruling class of Lagos. In 1841, Oba Oluwole would meet his end in an unfortunate and mysterious accident when a keg of gun powder stored in his royal chambers was ignited by lightning and it exploded. The king was thoroughly dismembered and was only to be recognised by the royal beads he had on at the time of the accident.

¹Pereira, D. (1505) *Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis* (tr. ed. G. H. T. Kimble) London, 1937. 123-4.

²Smith, R. (1974) The Lagos Consulate, 1851-1861: An outline. *The Journal of African History*, 1974, vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 393-416

³One of the earliest mention of Lagos on European map was on Blaeu's map of 1659. On it, Lagos was called Ichoo (Eko)

The birth of the nineteenth century came with noticeable disturbances to the native routine of the people of Lagos. In 1839, the first batch of returnees began to arrive Lagos from Sierra Leone. This became a regular occurrence well into the 1850s. One must note that these returnees are traditionally not Lagos natives, rather mostly from the hinterland countries of the Egba, Oyo, Bariba and beyond. Yet, characteristically of Lagos, the reinstated Oba Akitoye, in a bid to further strengthen his position with the British, allotted quarters to these aliens giving them the rights to own, build and trade in produce but cannot fish from Lagos waters

In early 1852, the Italian, Giambattista Scala arrived the shores of Lagos on a Sardinian vessel seeking trade with the city still wriggling from the British bombardment of the previous year. Scala was received by Oba Akitoye on board the English brig *Harlequin* and he will go on to be the first Italian ever to step ashore Lagos. Akitoye admitted and promised Scala royal protection and harbour in return for trade and Island prosperity. Also in the same year, the German born missionary, Rev. C. Gollmer, on an earlier invitation by Captain John Glover, arrived Lagos Island to expand the Christian enterprise in what was then referred to as the Island of iniquity and barbarity⁸. Gollmer will go on to corner a coveted waterfront parcel of land for the Church Mission Society, something that put him at loggerheads with many European merchants and later with Louis Frazer, the British consul to Lagos⁹.

The in-pouring of immigrants and western merchants continued well into the century. By 1880, there were buildings erected and owned in Lagos by merchants from every corner of commercial Europe. The lands will continue in the control and quasi-ownership of the home countries for many years. The openness, ease of acquisition in early Lagos to aliens and the commercial pull of the Island saw a great increase in the population from an estimated

5,000 in 1780s to about 20,000 in the early 1800s¹⁰. This complex admixture and historical background motivated a culture of exchange of space and quasi-citizenship for the collective energy of commerce and trade which forms the character of Lagos.

This flexibility and open system will further become institutionalised in the wake of Nigeria's Independence where all became citizens of one country allowing for the freedom of settlement in any part of the Nation. The tensions then arise when only a few locations in the nation-Lagos being the principal--possesses the commercial integrity and strength which in turn generates a heavy pull to all and sundry. The impact of this on the underlining native cultural system is significant. Gradually, the purist identity of Lagos has eroded and morphed into a new dynamic character. While this in itself is not a bad phenomenon, the tension generated by the innate desire to self-preserve and to maintain certain cultural uniqueness, becomes a fundamental challenge in a place like Lagos that has a long history of Alien admittance.

The structure of Identity in Lagos

In the physical sciences, the character and identity of a substance is directly correlated with the constituent of substance. As the constituent changes, the character and identity morphs to reflected the variations. This is the structural theory of the identity of Lagos. The character continues to change in response to the effect of inter and intra trading which directly determines the peopling of the state. Thus, Lagos' identity is fluid and adaptable. In the centre of this dynamism though, is the complex mechanism of land ownership. Land, is in the core of the idea of ownership. It is the finite variable that acts as a platform for the many contorted discussions of who owns what.

Conclusion

Needless to say, the identity of Lagos must remain fluid in many aspects for it to continue to operate optimally. Lagos consistently markets itself as a place that offers unending opportunities. The tensions that will arise from this positioning must be anticipated and met with the same dynamism the State offers. These tensions are an inevitable part of the development of the idea of identity.

⁴Kotun, B. (1997) *History of Eko Dynasty*. Allentown, Lagos; Akinsemoyin, K and Vaughan-Richards, A. (1977) *Building Lagos, F&A Services Limited*, Lagos.

⁵Different dates are given for this. For the list and date of reign of Lagos Obas, see Law, R. C. (1968) 'The Dynastic Chronology of Lagos', *Lagos Notes and Records*, ii.

⁶Echeruo, M. (1977) *Victorian Lagos*, Macmillan Ltd.

⁷Kotun, B. (1997) *History of Lagos Dynasty*.

⁸Akinsemoyin, K. and Vaughan-Richards, A. (1977) *Building Lagos, F&A Services Limited*, Lagos

⁹Smith, R. (1974) *The Lagos Consulate*.

¹⁰Law, R. (1978) The career of Adele at Lagos and Badagry, c. 1807 - c. 1837. The journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, vol. 9, No. 2. Pp. 35-59

DISCOURSE ON THE BENIN/AWORI TUSSLE (INTERVIEW)

Chief Adekunle Alli

Interviewer: What is your perception of Identities in Lagos? How are Lagosians identified?
Who are the people referred to as Lagosians?

Chief Alli: Lagos makes his own citizens, not by having your parents building houses there, not even by being resident there temporarily, but it's the attitude of mind and the characters. I would like to make a comparison with the US. In the US, you have African-Americans. You have Chinese Americans. You have Malay Americans. All of them are categories of Americans by contemporary definition of the American citizenship.

Our contemporary definition here will be found in (I think) section 14 of our constitution, which says, an indigene of a place is a man whose parents or grandparents belong to a community indigenous to that place. Indigenship is derived by virtue of your parents or grandparents, but not only this, they must belong to communities which is indigenous to that area. It is a two or three-fold definitions. We are in part of what is known as Brazilian Quarters or in the old Map, the Portuguese town. The place began to be settled about 1835, when you have the African slaves who participated in Revolt in Bahia. They called it the malê Revolt, so the Brazilian authority decided to repatriate those who wanted to. When they got here, they were given this part of the town. But the gift was not rationalised until the time of Oba Dosunmu when the British have totally overran Lagos. Many of the returnees, although may have changed their names now to Yoruba names, mostly bear Brazilian names to the extent that they spoke Portuguese language which has now died out. Contemporaneously, we have people who were stopped from being shipped to Brazil, as the new Americans, by the British Navy through activities of the British Navy after the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, many of them were offloaded at a place now known as Freetown (that was how that place acquired its name). Schools were built for them and they spoke a kind of a crypto-English language, known as Creoles. After the British installed Oba Akintoye, the returnees abandoned, in their exodus to Epe, the area we now call Olowogbowo. I am also aware of those whose

began to come in little by little and they were given quarters from where the followers of Oba Kosoko had abandoned, in their exodus to Epe, the area we now call Olowogbowo. I am also aware of those whose parents in contemporary times have come from a place like Ilorin who speak a modern Eko Yoruba dialect. So, you now have a situation where somebody died here, though Born here, are carried to Ilorin for burial, people like that still identify with that place. You cannot claim two indigenship or the indigenship of two places, its only one is either here or not, people like me cannot claim anywhere even do I know my parents or grandparents come from some places, but I choose to identify that is the factor of identity in Lagos citizenship.

Interviewer: Who are the Aworis?

Chief Alli: The Aworis are the hybrid groups which came in the wake of subsequent series of waves of migration to this part of the country starting from pre-recorded times. At that time, the Atlantic Coastline was inhabited by the Benin people. It is not easy to define who a Lagosian but I know Lagos creates her own citizens or indigenes. But in modern terms, the laws made it easier for us by telling us an indigene or person is an indigene of place either of whose parents or grandparents belong to a community indigenous to that area.

Interviewer: When Lagos was being formed, were there people called the Aworis?

Chief Alli: The easiest and most and easy easily defensible explanation is Lagos emerged from the word Oko, you see which depicts the use for which the early the so-called early Aworis were used to using that place Oko and when you call out Oko, you see early maps of this area. Early maps identified area of Lagos as Kuramo. My father research tells me that Kuramo means Oko o romi (Oko ori omi). Lagos was first used as a farmland before the rise of slave trade. The Awori spoke a

slurred form of Yoruba language. Their speech form is not as Straight forward as Oyo Yoruba. The Aworis have imparted on the development of Lagos and the history of Lagos. You cannot phase their presence. We have been influenced by our acquisition of Western knowledge, English language in particular, once you reduce Yoruba language into writing, then you create a form of language in itself, and that is what we are not speaking here. Lagos belong to the people of Lagos

Interviewer: Can we make use of the traditional institutions to decide the earliest settlers of Lagos?

Chief Alli: Our identity with institutions can be used as a yardstick for measuring our Indigeneship. Obaship and chieftaincy are not the only yardstick that can be used. There are others like the cults and trade connections. In the time of Oba Akisemoyin, trade between the Ijebu and Lagos was encouraged. Many Ijebu people settled here and brought their culture along.

Interviewer: Do you think any implication can arise from the historical tension around Lagos?

Chief Alli: Exploitations by politicians is a factor influencing the growth of a place. All these tensions were being raised for political reasons. What good does it make to me that I am the owner of Lagos or that the Awori are the owners? It is because some want advantage over others.

Primordial Claims Versus Citizenship Rights: The logic, politics and dynamics of the struggle for land and space in Lagos.

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Lagos is an interesting city because of the economic status, the huge heterogeneous population, and their struggle for land and political space. The cultural interpretation of the geographical location of Lagos makes it logical to assert that Lagos belongs to the Yoruba. This was the reason Lagos was merged with Western Region between 1951 and 1954 before it was proclaimed a federal territory to promote the unity of Nigerians. In the 1950s, the Awori sub-group of the Yoruba began to emphasize their exclusive claim as the founder of Lagos. While the Awori population of Lagos was estimated at between 33% and 35%, that of the other Yoruba was about 40%. The Awori expressed their resentment against the presence of these other Yoruba by calling them 'Ara Oke' and other derogatory names. The resentment formed the theme of the popular song, 'Àwóri ló l'Èkó', that is 'Awori owns Lagos'. The counter narrative was popularized in another song that says 'má pè wá lájòjì, àwa yín la l'Èkó,' translated as 'Don't call us strangers or sojourners, we are co-owners of Lagos.' The controversy was revived in 1967. Lagos State was created in 1967 by merging the former Lagos Colony with the Ikorodu, Epe, Badagry and Ikeja Divisions of the Western Region. This altered the demographic profile of Lagos and the patterns of inter-group relations. The bulk of the civil servants were inherited from the West, where the Egba and Ijebu controlled the civil service. In response, the Lagos elite converted the existing welfare and improvement associations, such as Awori Resource Group, Awori Welfare Association and Eko Foundation, into platforms to advance the career of indigenous Lagosians in the state civil service. The agenda was vigorously executed under Alhaja Latefah Okunnu, Deputy Governor of Lagos from 1988 to 1991. She massively promoted Lagosians on Grade Level 14 to 16 to become Permanent Secretaries and Director-Generals, to edge out other Yoruba and Igbo, who constitute a sizeable percentage of the population of Lagos. The same primordial claim is extended to political appointments at the state and national levels. This is the logical outcome of ethnicity and politics of resource

control, reinforced by the Principle of Federal Character introduced in 1977. Before 1954, any Nigerian could aspire to any political office in his place of residence. For instance, only five of the twenty four members elected into the Lagos Town Council in 1951 were Lagosians. The election produced Dr. Ibiyinka Olorunninbe as the first Mayor of Lagos, with Dr. Mbonu Ojike, an Igbo man, as his deputy. Umoru Altine from Sokoto emerged as the first Mayor of Enugu while Dr. Kola Balogun, a Yoruba, emerged as the first Mayor of Port Harcourt in 1952. The ethnic politics of the closing decade of the colonial era introduced the factor of the 'son of the soil' into the political equation. The Principle of Federal Character that emphasizes the allocation of the national resources on state basis promoted the exclusivist claims of primordialism above the citizenship rights enshrined in the Nigerian constitution. The liberal politics of the Unity Party of Nigeria under Alhaji Lateef Jakande the first Executive Governor of Lagos State, 1979-1983, emphasized competence and party loyalty above indigeneity in the distribution of political offices. Consequently, Yoruba from other states found accommodation in the political space. The situation became alarming with the return to democracy in 1999. The Governor of Lagos from 1999 to 2007, Bola Tinubu, was an 'outsider' from Iragbiji in Osun State. The non-Lagosians in his cabinet included Ben Akhabueze, Commissioner for Budget and Planning from Anambra State; Dele Alake, Commissioner for Special Duties from Ekiti State; Rauf Aregbe who was in charge of Ministry of Works later became Governor of Osun State; Kunle Adeoti, Commissioner for Finance later contested the Gubernatorial election in Oyo State while Femi Lanlehin the Special Adviser to the Governor also contested as a Senator in Oyo. The situation was the same under his successor, Babatunde Raji Fashola.

Only 8 of the 19 commissioners and 6 of the 17 Special Advisers were Lagosians. The development inspired the formation of the Association of Lagos State Indigenes [ALSI] in 2000, under the Late Justice Ishola Oluwa to curtail the marginalization of Lagosians. The agenda provoked a press war. The first shot was fired by L.O.T. Adams the Secretary of Eko Pioneers in the Guardian Newspaper of 25th March 2002, in an article captioned 'No Vacancy for Igbo in Lagos Politic.' In his rejoinder Joe Igbokwe, argued that the economic contribution of other groups to the development of Lagos was sufficient for them to contest for elective posts in Lagos. Critics argue that this logic contradicts the spirit of the Federal Character Principle and the observable practice in the Igbo states of Southeastern Nigeria. The discourse resulted in the birth of the Committee of Indigenous Associations of Lagos [CIALS] in 2002. The Committee aggressively opposed the selection of non-Lagosians to represent the State as Ministers or Ambassadors, as in the case of Dr. Olusegun Aganga, who was born and bred in Lagos but hails from Akoko Edo in Edo State. The subject was made a campaign issue in 2011. The Mayor of non-indigenes in Lagos stated that his followers would only support the re-election of Governor Fashola on the condition that he would give them more slots in his cabinet. The opposition Peoples Democratic Party [PDP] also dangled the carrot of juicy political appointments before the non-indigenes. Fashola won but nothing changed. In 2015, the PDP candidate, Jimi Agbaje promised the Igbo several positions. Consequently, the ruling All Progressive Party [APC] lost six seats in the House of Assembly election. The fear that the Igbo could determine the outcome of the gubernatorial election of 11 April made the Oba of Lagos to issue a death threat to any foreigner that would vote against the APC candidate, Akinwumi Ambode. Although the

threat was widely condemned, the intimidation achieved its goal. The sporadic shootings and disruption of voting during the Senatorial and Presidential election of March 2019, in Oshodi/ Isolo, Ojo and Badagry areas, were also designed to clip the political wings of the Igbo in Lagos. The situation will remain the same for as long as state of origin remains an important reference point in our constitution. Finally, most residents of Lagos have come to recognize the true owner of Lagos through the 'Omo Onile' These are children of the founders of Lagos who surface at every stage of land development to demand for ground rent, money for foundation, money for roofing or even renovation of existing structures. They often employ brute force to dispossess the owners of their land or enforce these other payments. The Lagos State Properties Protection Law of 2018 which stipulates 21 years jail term for convicts has reduced but cannot eliminate the problem. The various issues associated with land acquisition, management and use are explored in a new book on Land and Development in Lagos, published by the Centre for Housing and Sustainable Development, University of Lagos. This landmark publication contains chapters on the nature and dynamics of the Omo Onile crisis in Lagos, challenges of systematic land titling and registration, history of property and land tax in Lagos, as well as sustainable land use planning and infrastructure for land development in Lagos. The book also examines how land ownership generally shapes identity, defines power relations and enhances our understanding of the political, economic and social processes.

HISTORICAL CONTEXTS OF LAGOS DEVELOPMENT (INTERVIEW)

Prince Tajudeen Olusi

Interviewer: Can you give a description of the historical pattern of Lagos?

Prince Olusi: Lagos, like all other cities was founded by migrants from other part of the area that is now called Nigeria. Having read various histories, even the history of Britain, people moved from France and from other parts of Europe to the present day Britain. There used to be the Anglos and the Saxons, who at one time occupied the area that is now known as England. Lagos is not an exception, there were movements from Benin. There were substantial migrations from that empire to Lagos. It is important to also take note of Oyo Empire. There were also migrations from Oyo Empire, at the time when the Empire was broken by various wars, people moved from one part, particularly towards the lagoon and the ocean, people moved to Lagos. For instance, when we talk about Eyo, an important festival in Lagos, mention is made of Oyo as the place where one of the deities was brought from. I remember my father used to say that the place called Oyo is not the original Oyo, but rather, it is Agodoyo, before they moved to the present Oyo, Lagos had been in existence. So, if those people could call Oyo their home, then we that have been here for like 500 years can also call this place our own home. This is the same with Abeokuta. Concerning the history of Awori, we heard that some people disagreed with their brethren in Ife and had cause to leave and pass through Iseyin to the Ogun River, which they followed to a place called Isheri where they settled. Isheri is coined from the expression 'Ibi ise erin' (a place where elephants parts are being traded). History has it that the Benins were the first to get to this area. I have outlined three sources of migrations to Lagos namely Benin, Oyo and Ife.

We also had other migrants to Lagos at a point in time. For example, there were a number of migrants from the Ijesha land. The most important is the story of Olosogba Ogboolu, called Alagbigba, a prince of Ilesha who came to Lagos, and married Princess Erelu Kutu, the daughter of Ado and they gave birth to Oba Ologun Kutere. Another

important migration to Lagos is that of the Nupes. We have many notable persons and families in Lagos who are of Nupe descent. We also have Hausas. They have been integrated into the family system of Lagos. Furthermore, on the mainland of Lagos; there is an area called Oko-Baba. In the past, it used to be the site where the Oloris of the Obas were buried and that is why it is called Oko-Baba. Close to Oko-Baba, we have Ago Egba. The Egbas were moved from Abeokuta during the colonial period, when it was alleged that the Christians were being persecuted, and in order to protect them, (I think) it was Governor Glover who moved them. That was how the Egbas were integrated into the Lagos society. The earliest migrants to Lagos were the Benins, and the Ifes now called the Aworis, who have spread all over Lagos state today. At Obalende, the earliest settlers were Hausa and Kannikes, infact we have those whose surname are Kannike.

Interviewer: Can we refer to all these groups as Lagosians?

Prince Olusi: As far as I am concerned, all of them are Lagosians because either permanently or temporarily, Lagos is their home. But there are the aborigines of Lagos. I am an aborigine of Lagos, because I was born here over 80 years ago. My father was born in Lagos in 1885. My grandfather, Fagbayi Ige Olusi, was born and died here in Lagos, and was buried at Ikoyi Cemetery in 1920. His own father was Prince Olusi, son of Ologun Kutere, he was buried at Idumota. Will I be wrong to refer myself as an indigene of Lagos? Nevertheless, we have other people who have two homes, for example if the father moved from Ibadan to Lagos 100 years ago, and the descendants still travel back home to Ibadan,

such families have two homes and they cannot be called indigenes of Lagos. If you look at the earliest beginning, the Benins formed a pattern of administration. It was said that Oba Gabaro was the one who established the four classes of chiefs that we have in Lagos. There are those who are spiritualists; they are referred to as Ogalaade, they take care of the kingdom spiritual matters. The Warlords are called Abagbon, their task is to defend the kingdom. Then, we have those who are originally chiefs from Benin, they are the Oba's advisers and are called Akarigbere. The Idejo chieftaincy class was also created, they are ground officers, chiefs that are appointed as temporary head or as the first person who moved to a particular place. These four classes of chiefs gather at the palace every 17th day for the Ose, for the meeting of the administration of the Kingdom.

Interviewer: On the question of identity, how can the different groups of Lagosians be described?

Prince Olusi: Let us look at the pattern of settlement at the Island of Lagos. There is an area on the Island of Lagos called Isale-Eko. Isale means the source. It is at the source that we have the meaning well established. So, Isale-Eko is the source of Lagos, and it is the place that we have the palace of the Oba. It is there that we have the palace of all Benin chiefs, if you move from Idumagbo, you will get to Idunngaran where we have the Oba's palace, and you will get to Idumoyinbo, up to Idumota, they are dominated by the Benin immigrants. Also, Igi-Olobun, a tree that was brought from Benin is at Isale-Eko. This shows that Isale-Eko is the source of Lagos. Then we have the Brazilian quarters; where the returnees from Brazil were domiciled. What I am trying to make clear is that the history of these locations on Lagos Island have established the

facts. They know how they followed each other, whether you go to Ebute-Meta, Apapa or Mushin. For instance, the Olu of Mushin is from Benin. Anyone who is from Mushin will submit himself to the palace of Idunganran. No area around Lagos will distance itself from the Island of Lagos.

Interviewer: What is the implication of having different people coming together in Lagos?

Prince Olusi: The diversity has helped Lagos tremendously. The earliest rulers of Lagos took advantage of this diversity. Among the returnees, we had people who had connection with the Western world, people who had education; our father respected them and allowed them to lead. People like Herbert Macaulay, Sapara Williams, Moore family and Jones family. In fact, it is at the Brazilian Quarters that we have people who built Architectural structure of Lagos. The churches and Mosques of today were built by them; the knowledge and the expertise that they brought from Brazil was of immense advantage to Lagos.

ON THE CONTROVERSIAL ORIGIN OF LAGOS

Patrick Cole

There are several conflicting myths on the origins of Lagos. However Payne, Mabogunje, Forde, Akinsemoyin, Losi, Fadairo and the Idejo chiefs all agree that the Aworis of Isheri were the first inhabitants.

In recounting briefly some of the variations in these myths, I make no attempt to present them as 'a kind of history', but as an indication of the structural ambiguities of Lagos. All versions agree that Olofin, a legendary Yoruba, whose descendants are the Idejo land-owning White Cap Chiefs, founded Lagos or at least was present before the Benin warriors of Oba Orhogbua arrived there. The Idejos claim that Olofin was the son of Oduduwa, the ancestral father of all Yorubas. The Idejos further claim that their ancestor, Olofin, made Ashipa, another Yoruba man who had a Benin wife, mediator between Olofin's quarrelling children. When Ashipa died Olofin invited Addo, the son of Ashipa, to return from Benin and take up his father's role, after the quarrel between Olofin and the Oba of Benin had been resolved. Addo was a good mediator and very rich; he was also 'a peaceful envoy from Benin'. The Idejos gave him land, a disused pepper farm on which he built his house (Iga Idunganran – palace at the pepper farm). When the first Europeans arrived they mistook the wealthy mediator for the king.

The Benin version of the myth is simply one of conquest. Oba Orhogbua had established a camp (Eko, which, incidentally, is the Yoruba name for Lagos) as a base for raids against Dahomey. He placed a viceroy, Aisikahienbore (we shall not desert this place) over Lagos. When the latter died, Edo, his son, succeeded to the viceroyalty. Olofin who had meanwhile been imprisoned in Benin was released after he promised to obey the viceroy. The Yorubas corrupted both Benin names to Ashipa and Addo. At Addo's appointment several nobles – war, spiritual and administrative chiefs – were sent out from Benin to help the new viceroy. They brought with them the royal symbols of office of the Obaship.

One of the spiritual chiefs, the Obanikoro, claimed to

have been a 'king' in his own right at Idole who had been sent along merely 'to look after the Ologun or Oloriogun' (head war chief), which is, strictly speaking, the title of the Oba of Lagos. Another non-Idejo version tells of how, in gratitude for the return of the body of a Bini nobleman, the Oba of Benin made Ashipa the Oba of Lagos. This version denies that Olofin, who had no children, was the founder of Lagos, although agrees that the Olofin also made Ashipa 'a sort of governor' in Lagos.

The significant points of difference are: (a) whether Lagos was conquered or peacefully infiltrated; (b) who were the first inhabitants of Lagos; (c) was the Oba's lineage Benin or Yoruba; (d) what was the relative position of those chiefs who had accompanied Addo or Ashipa from Benin. Early occupation gives the Idejos their most authentic claims to nobility. By insisting that the Obaship was Yoruba, granted to the present royal lineage by one of the princes of Oduduwa, they were reaffirming their own consent to subordination. The Idejo version asserts that the Obaship is symbolically separate from the people. Ashipa marries a Bini woman whose son Addo actually lives in Benin and is invited back to rule. Exotic royalty had to be indigenised just as the Benins had indigenised the dynasty established by another Ife prince Oranmiyan. The myth reinforces the right of the Obaship as mediator and the right of non-involvement of the Idejos in disputes among the other classes of chiefs whose presence in Lagos was based on their proximity to the king. It is said that the Idejos retired into the hinterland when the other Lagos chiefs fight among themselves. Although the Oba and his chiefs owned no land, the Idejos could not refuse him land if and when he asked for it: but he had to ask for it, thereby reinforcing the Idejos' ownership and the element of consent in the

whole relationship. On the face of it the arrangement seemed similar to the institutionalised opposition between Benin royal and town chiefs described by Bradbury. One would suppose that a good deal of the stuff of politics would be generated by the dynamics of the binary opposition. The available evidence is too scanty to support or reject such a hypothesis. What remains true is that the structural relationship of the Idejos to the other chiefs and the Oba was ambiguous.

It is possible to agree with Balandier when he states that 'myths integrate the contradictions that man must confront... their function is to attenuate these contradictions and make them bearable...(yet) far from resolving the contradictions, the confusion of the different versions serves to mask it'. But this is not all that the myth does. It can also be a mechanism, as Leach says, of disintegration, because the myths of Lagos all have the ingredients of a secessionist ideology. This is why they are important for our purpose. What is surprising is that they have not been invoked more often; only twice have protagonists used one version or the other to support a claim.

The Benin connection confused rather than simplified the custom regarding succession in Lagos: what developed in Lagos was a grafting of the Benin and Yoruba customs – an unsuccessful operation. In strict Yoruba law the eldest surviving brother succeeded to the title of Oba, or chieftaincy. In Benin law the primogeniture principle operated. In Lagos both principles were applied. Addo succeeded his father, Ashipa. Addo's children were Akinsemoyin, Gabaro and Erelu (a woman). Gabaro succeeded Addo. Although Gabaro had a son of his own – Eletu Omo, Akinsemoyin succeeded his brother

Gabaro. Akinsemoyin himself had four sons – Onisiwo, Oniru, Akogun and Sadeko, none of whom succeeded their father. The next succession after Akinsemoyin introduced the most bizarre element into Lagos. Erelu, the sister of Akinsemoyin, had married a slave Laogba, and it was the issue of this marriage, Ologun Kutere, who became Oba in 1849, Erelu having presumably waived her right to succession in favour of her son. The Obaship has remained in the Ologun Kutere branch of the family up till now.

Being excerpts from Patrick Cole, *Modern and Traditional Elite in the Politics of Lagos* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 11-13.

MONARCHY AND CONTEMPORARY REALITIES IN LAGOS (INTERVIEW)

Erelu Abiola Dosunmu
Erelu of Lagos

Interviewer: 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 a closely knit family. We all lived happily together. There was originally no conflict between those who came from Ife and Benin, because we understood what it meant. Some people came directly from Ife as Hunters and Farmers, but we were able to find a medium by which we co-existed. So for some people to be saying some people are Benin, it is not true, in Lagos Island we don't have the Aworis, what we have is the Idejos. Because Awori incident happens in Isheri, Ogun state. Ogunfunmilere Olofin came from there and he is the one who came towards the Lagos Island with his children. His children are the Idejos, and they don't call themselves Awori. If we go back to our history, up till today, the Oba sits in council with the Idejos, regardless of 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: 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. Anybody who lives in Lagos can claim to be a 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. Just because our ancestors have laid down culture of magnanimity, hospitality, peaceful co-existence; that does not mean our right should be trampled upon. Don't forget, Lagos was not the first capital of Nigeria, we were in Calabar, Lokoja and between the stripes of Sango-Kata, it was not conducive until the seat of government was brought back to Lagos. This is our village, Isale-Eko is our village.

Interviewer: What can you say about the different groups in Lagos?

Erelu: Lagos was the crucible in which Nigeria was formed. 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. They all formed a beautiful state called Lagos; they are all living peacefully, they are not alienated in anyway, and that is the strength of Lagos. We have Aworis in Lagos state who were cut from the Aworis who went to Ogun state. The clamour for the recognition of Awori is just like the clamour of people who were cut from Ijebu to form part of Lagos. 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, I know states/kingdoms of Nigeria that are younger than the kingdom of Lagos, and they have strong cultures and 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 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: 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 is bound 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. The head of the market is still Erelu Kuti, and under that umbrella will champion the cause of women. In Lagos, we do not discriminate between boys and girls, when it comes to education. In Lagos, no family will cart away the property of their daughter in-law, just because their son died.

Interviewer: What do you have to say about some people saying Lagos is a no man's land?

Erelu: Lagos belongs to some people, although they are welcoming and accommodating, people came here, and when they came, we accepted, and we recognized their 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 riverine 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. For instance, Port of Lagos has always been in existence, it was not a creation of the amalgamation of the federal republic of Nigeria. A Portuguese trader, in his report, claimed to have 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. If you say that you are a Lagosian, nobody is disputing that, but there are indigenous people, just like you have indigenous people where you are coming from, and their rights are recognized. Lagos state is made up of about five divisions, we have Epe, Badagry, Ikorodu, Greater Lagos and we have Ikeja. We have greater Lagos and we have Lagos state, let us not confused the two. In Lagos, the Aworis are from Ikeja. In Lagos proper, as far as we are concerned, just like Obaship, we can either say we are from Ife or Benin. The idejos can also say they are from Ife, and they are the product of the incident of Awori in Isheri. Ogunfunminire came from Ife, the incident of drowning awo was in Isheri, they all found different directions and they came to Lagos. When he came, the Benins got them to be paying royalty, which was being sent to Oba of Benin. Maybe they did not even form a community, but they were already trading. After a while, Ogunfunminire decided not to pay royalty to anybody. Hence, expedition was set for the Benin to calve them in and their father was captured, and incarcerated in Benin. Asipa was sent here to create a community and start administering Lagos. By the time Ogunfunminire was released from prision in Benin, we already had Obaship in place. 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. So, there is a whole lot of discussion, because I am sure, if history are being taught, people will know the real story of our ancestors. Lagos is full of rich history. It is a beautiful heritage we have, but we are not telling our stories enough, and we should.

NO CONDITION IS PERMANENT

Jumoke Sanwo

Daily at 5:30am, the muezzin's melodic voice streams through the loudspeaker from the Ganiyi Inasa Mosque, calling all muslims in the Bolade/Oshodi community to the Morning Prayer. Adeniran Baderin begins his day as soon as he hears this call. He has been a Molue driver for the last 20 years, starting his morning routine by walking through the narrow path, which leads him from his house, to where the Molue is parked. Baba Ola, who has been his conductor in the last 10 years, joins him. As the morning rush begins, Baba Ola's voice calling passengers dominates the soundscape. Aji, a member of the NURTW, making his way to Iyana-Ipaja bus stop was the first to board. He is an 'agbero' and collects toll for the NURTW, Aji whispers, 'Chairman owo polowo mi to Adeniran who signals for him to sit down, while he continues to call out for passengers.

Adeniran considers the daily interaction with passengers one of the advantages of the Molue, unlike the near automated Lagos bus rapid transit (BRT) buses, he allows commuters who are unable to afford the N50 bus fare, 'to stand' without paying. He believes one day they would be able to pay, or maybe even reward him in other ways like Aji does. The likes of Aji rule 'the streets', generally often perceived as misfits, up until the political season kicks in, and the ambitions of the ruling class is funneled through him and his likes. He is serving a purpose, keeping the workings of the local transportation system organised.

In the ongoing drive to urbanise the city's transportation system, the Molue is gradually pushed to the periphery; the nostalgic experiences Fela eulogised in his popular hit song Shuffering and Shmiling, is fast becoming a figment of imagination. Adeniran's thoughts lingers on the sense of camaraderie on the Molue, he feels it is only a matter of time before the Molue is taken off the Lagos roads

for good. For Adeniran, BRT buses implies a drastic reduction in the number of trips he makes between the Bolade-Iyana Ipaja route.

On the Island, the sounds of African grey parrots, pigeons and some early morning chattering from LAWMA street cleaners, heralds the day for Juliet. She goes for an early morning jog from about 6:30 am along the Lekki-Ikoyi Bridge, she lives at the Ikoyi end of the bridge, and meets up with her friend Lola, who lives in Lekki Phase 1. The one-hour daily workout on the bridge is very important for her mental and physical health, and to kick-start the rest of her activities for the day. Oftentimes, when she returns from her morning run, she settles on her balcony and takes in her view of Lagos, which overlooks what is left of the Ikoyi flora.

In recent times, the landscape around her neighbourhood began to change, as a result of recent felling of over a century-old trees on Lateef Jakande Street, in a bid to expand the road. She just joined the 'greener environment advocacy group' in her community, just as she did while she lived in New York and she hopes to put pressure on the local authorities to preserve what is left of the flora in her neighbourhood.

There are many entry points into the complexities and realities of living in the city of Lagos. Inherently, the social-hierarchies across the city threaten to widen the 11.8KM gap between the island and the mainland. The unbreakable dynamic link across social strata ensures the island like a massive lung, breathes in and exhales daily the commuting mass of humanity that keeps it working. Many start on the periphery and gradually move till they find themselves at the center.

We have on the one hand, those who cross the bridge daily towards the island to earn a living, they are usually on the bridge as early as 4:30 am, and those who only cross the bridge towards the

mainland, when they are heading to the airport. Both groups harness the benefits the city provides. Lagos with its estimated population of over 21 million, spread across 20 local government areas, and 57 local council development areas all on 171km² of island and mainland dichotomies.

The myth of opportunity, inherent in the commuting cycle of Lagos, exerts an almost irresistible pattern on the rural-urban migration statistics in Nigeria. Many come in, holding all their belongings in their 'Ghana must-go', starting small, often with menial jobs, from 'Alabaru', to apprenticeships, and selling all kinds of snack and merchandise in traffic, until some eventually become major players across the markets, from Yaba, to Alaba, to Computer Village. The night buses arrive daily, full of these anxious dreamers, those who have come to Lagos 'not to count bridges' but counting on the sheer number of its populace. As the buses make their stop, Ojota, Yaba, Ojuelegba, Iddo, Mile 2 and Ahoyaya, passengers are seen alighting from the luxurious buses. The Johnny's Just Come (JJC's) are often seen making frantic attempts over the phone to connect with their relatives, the 'uncles and aunties' who have come to Lagos before them and have now somehow 'made it big'. Their ambitions are further fueled by the portrayals they see daily on Nollywood flicks, characters who come about 'sudden riches' within 6 months of arrival in Lagos. The JJC's are determined to 'blow' and attain their version of the Nigerian dream by any means necessary.

Lagos is emblematic of aspirations, exploitation, and dislocations from the arrival of the Portuguese slave-traders in 1760, expanding the existing local slave trade beyond the West coast, to the British annexation in 1861 which brought about the disruption and growth in terms of commerce and urbanisation in 2020, the current influx of Chinese nationals purportedly to reverse the infrastructural deficit plaguing the city indicates the welcome change in time and power.

As the big agbalumo of the country, the city keeps many spellbound, serving wonderment in huge doses, with unbridled kinetic energy, that keeps the city lit amidst the unpredictability of power supply and governance. Now that a bridge is shut for repairs, opening only at intervals, the city's breath is even more laboured, allowing only those initiated into the inner workings of its socio-political hierarchy to thrive.

are coming up with. The governor asked us to identify them and talk to them which we are already doing. If we can take care of that, I think we would get something good for Lagos Island.

Interviewer: What are the things that are in place for land tenure security and sustainable development, giving the challenge of unending migration into the city?

Dr. Salako: The role of Lagos as a sub-national is very critical to the development of this country. You will agree with me that Lagos has one of the biggest economies in the whole of Africa, as a result of this there are bound to be pressures, there are bound to be movements into Lagos, people will want to come in and see what they can do. Most of them end up being homeless, because they don't know anybody and don't have anywhere to stay. One thing we noticed is that, there are people who already have a means of livelihood, who are there with the notion that Lagos is a no man's land, that are coming in with investments. However there is a disturbing issue, these people are taking over our shorelines, they are buying into the shorelines and they are eating big into the lagoon. There is a problem around Banana Island. The ministry is envisaging a problem in the future because at the back end of Banana Island, there is proposal to have a Lagoon highway in the future. I can tell you that when the government is ready to construct that road; there will be no land to construct that lagoon highway. People have reclaimed Banana Island so much that, they are almost touching the high tension wire that divides Banana Island and Lekki phase 1. This is a real concern for us. This is unlawful, because most of them claimed to have their clearances from the National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA), and by the law setting up the activities of NIWA vis a vis shorelines in every states, NIWA does not have the power to grant such approvals. On the issue of tenure land system, we still know there are indigenous land owners in the state, but the problem here is the rate which indigenes are giving out their lands. I remember when the blast happened at Abule-Ado, and we did an inventory of all land owners at Abule-Ado, about 95% are non-indigenes. The question is where are the indigenes? What is happening to the land? And that is what is happening virtually everywhere, especially along the shorelines in Lagos.

CHALLENGES OF LAND GOVERNANCE, URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND HERITAGE CONSERVATION (INTERVIEW)

Dr. Idris Salako

Commissioner for Physical Planning and Urban Development

Interviewer: Is Lagos a no Man's land or not?

Dr. Salako: Lagos belongs to some people. I think it is a very wrong assumption for some people to have the notion that Lagos is a no man's land. If you go back in history to the development of Lagos, Lagos developed from an organic place and it grew away from the Lagoon. And you know there are original settlers in these organic units, but due to urbanization and the rapid growth of Lagos, I think Lagos has developed into a cosmopolitan city that embraces all that comes in. Lagos has the capacity to provide for whatever you want, and as a result of this, we have various indigenes coming in and settling in some particular areas of the state. If you go to Ajegunle area, you have mostly those from the Eastern part of the country. If you go to Shomolu, Bariga areas, you have the Ijebus who predominates there. There are some areas too where you have the Egbas. If you go to our water ways, the Ijaws and the Ilajes predominate there. The way Lagos has grown has allowed everybody to have a sense of belonging, which has now given us the impression of a no man's land. There are original settlers of Lagos, and Lagos belongs to those people.

Interviewer: How do your various agencies go about the works of preserving the historical heritage of Lagos while also working towards the mega city plan of Lagos?

Dr. Salako: About the issue of preservation of monument, it is not all about the monument or those areas that needed to be preserved; there are other things outside historic artifact. We have our wetlands to protect, we have all our infrastructures to protect, and the urban and regional planning law is all encompassing. The Lagos state urban and regional planning law empowers the Lagos state building agency to identify the stress buildings in the state, and you will agree with me that most of these areas to be preserved are old buildings, and

smartly several generations in the 18th century and some of them are still standing but some of them are gradually giving way and there is a subsiding edit that say we should preserve them. As time goes on, we would form a good synergy with Tourism. We have met with the Commissioner for Tourism, we have spoken about some of these things, identify tourist sites and major areas of interest; cultural and traditional heritage of the state. We have set up a committee from both parties. The committee has started work, they have been going around identifying some of those areas and when they submit their report, we should be able to sit down and look at those monuments and fashion out the strategies to preserve them.

Interviewer: Can you tell us a bit about some of the regeneration and redevelopment plans that you have for Lagos Island area being the bedrock of Lagos historical monuments.

Dr. Salako: On our part in the ministry, we have prepared several proposals towards achieving the ends of government concerning the regeneration of Lagos Island. Some few days ago, I was asked to come with the General Manager Lagos State Urban Renewal Agency (LASURA) to see what we can do about it. The governor has also graciously approved the preparation of a model city plan for Lagos Island. In that preparation, the key issue in that model city plan is not only about preparing a development guide for Lagos Island, the key issue is the regeneration of Lagos Island, and we need to revitalise that economy. We are also talking to fusion city of Nigeria, and the British government is doing an urban regeneration guideline for LASURA. The regeneration of Lagos Island is a very critical factor in some of the things we asked them to do for us. One of the major issues we are envisaging is the indigenous land ownership of that area of the state. We all know LASURA has a lot of properties, and some of us believe almost a quarter of the properties in that axis belong to the government, but within that also there are several families who own land, and they are very mindful of their rights to these lands. This could be an impediment to whatever the regeneration plan we

ONOMASTICS AND IDENTITY IN LAGOS

Bisoye Eleshin

The debate over the identity and ownership of social and material institutions in Lagos has been ongoing for some decades. Apart from the two major groups laying claim to Lagos, i.e. people of Benin descent, and the Aworis (made up of Ife and Oyo migrants), there are many other groups that trickled in from different locations in Nigeria such as the Ij bus, gbas, Ekitis, Il rins, Igbominas and Nupes. There are other groups from the neighbouring West African countries such as the Ogwus, Ajas s, Togolese and Ghanaians. There are also the returnees from Brazil and Freetown.

The integration of these different groups can be considered as one of the factors for the evolution and the cosmopolitan status of Lagos. One of the resulting effects of the integration is contained in the identity model in the lexicalization process of personal, chieftaincy and place names in Lagos.

This report considers these three naming aspects in order to examine how societal identity could be traced through onomastics. Naming processes must have played an important role in the very first moments of the history of individualisation¹. Naming plays a very concise role in identity expression, especially in a multi-ethnic society like Lagos.

These different groups arrived Lagos with their social and material culture, language inclusive. Although, Yoruba is the lingua franca in most part of Lagos, other linguistic codes, in form of lexical items are evident. This report investigates some lexical items that have been integrated into the lexicon of the variant of Yoruba spoken in Lagos.

The earliest group of lexical items that were integrated into the lexicon of the Lagos Yoruba is the group of words with Benin origin. This is evident in the label and titles of various cultural institutions including chieftaincies. It is established that names such as *Bajula ye*, *Basua* and *Bajulu*, have their etymologies as Bazuaye, Bazua and Bazulu respectively. These words have gone through the process of loaning, observing all lexicalist rules of Yoruba before they could

fit into the lexicon of the language. The /z/, which is not found in the speech sound system of the Yoruba is changed to phonetically similar sounds /d /, / /, although with different voicing.

Also, one of the four classes of chiefs in Lagos is the Akarigbere. Olorogun and Eletuu are two prominent names among the Akarigbere Chieftaincy class. These titles are remarkable in that there are six separate Olorogun and Eletuu chiefs. The morphological breakdown of Olorogun is *olori-ogun* (captain of the army), perfected through vowel assimilation. The Yoruba variant of this chieftaincy title could be Balogun. Further, the etymology of *Eletuu* is traced to Edo language, it is written as *Olotuu*, which translates to leader in Edo language. It is pertinent to note that *Eletuu* is prefixed to a base, which explains the function the chief is expected to carry out. Thus, we have *Eletuu odibo*, *Eletuu Iwa*, *Eletuu omo*. The identity of these titles explains the level of the presence of the Benin institution in Lagos at a time in history.

Another set of Lagos names with distinctive identity is the set of popular place names that have *idun* as prefix. There are seven different locations that have their place names on the island of Lagos with this particular morphological composition, namely *Idunganran*, *Idumagbo*, *Iduntafa*, *Idumoyinbo*, *Idumota*, *Idunsagbe* and *Idumoba*.² The etymology of the word is *Idumwun*, it means street/area/place in Edo language.³

The word formation process employed to derive the place names as listed above is compounding. The derivation of the names are categorized into two, the first category contains those that are derived through clipping of the first noun, four of the names are derived through this process:

Idum(wun).agbo	-	Idumagbo
Idum(wun).oyinbo	-	Idumoyinbo

¹ Watzlawik, Pizarroso, Guimarães, Doria, Han, Ma, Jung (2012) report submitted to the Gauteng Regional commission.

Idum(wun).ota	-	Idumota
Idum(wun).oba	-	Idumoba

The second category contains the remaining three place as shown below

Idum(wun).iganran	-	Idunganran
Idum(wun).sagbe	-	Idunsagbe
Idum(wun).tafa	-	Iduntafa

For the other three place names, after the clipping of the first noun, there is a phonological interference with the alteration of /m/ for /n/ which is conditioned by the articulatory status of the adjoining consonant sounds /g/, /t/ and /s/ respectively. As such, /n/ is phonetically derived as the homorganic nasal of the consonants.

Note also that the word Idunganran, literally translated as (pepper place) displays the identity of both Benin and Ijebu - *idumwun* is an Edo word and *iganran* means pepper in Ijebu dialect. It is important to state that *iga* which translates to palace in Lagos parlance is the corrupt form of Eguae, Edo word for palace. Note that Iga is used to describe the palace of both the Oba and his chiefs on Lagos Island. This suggests that the Obaship and chieftaincy ideology is structured towards traditional Benin system.

Another conspicuous onomastic effect that displays identity in Lagos is that which is found in such names as Akisemoyin, E ilokun, Akiolu and Akitoye. These names are said to be characterized with the absence of nasality in the phonology of the Awori dialect. In the standard variant of Yoruba, these names would have been written as Akinsemoyin, Esinlokun, Akinolu and Akintoye.

Also, the etymological derivation of the popular Lagos family names, *Danmole* and *Danmola*, shows that they are structured according to the Fulani onomastic composition. This is likened to the name of the famous Fulani jihadist, Usman Dan Fodio which literally means *Usman the son of Fodio*. The term Imole is the Yoruba parlance used for Muhammadans while Mola is a loan word from Arabic - Malam. So, the names, Danmole and Danmola could be translated as son of (I)mole and son of Mola respectively. This shows that Lagosians have had some form of relationship with the Fulanis at a point in their history.

The presence of the Ijebus in Lagos is further evident in the morpho-semantic of place names like Mushin and Makoko. The derivation of these names are Imu-Ishin (under Akee Apple tree) and Imu-Ako ko (under *Newboldia Laevis*) respectively. Ishin and Akoko trees are parts of the popular trees among the Yoruba people, as such, importance is attached to them for the various functions that they can provide. The word mu is an Ijebu dialect. Infact, *Mushin* and *Idi-Ishin* (A popular location in Ibadan) are semantically similar, just so as their syntax. However, it could not be ascertained if the Ijebus are the first settlers of these two locations in Lagos, but this observation surely exhibits some form of identity of the Ijebu people in Lagos.

Many more identity of ethnic and sub-ethnic nationals can be confirmed in Lagos through onomastic interrogation. And this could be used to illuminate the identity pattern, not so as ownership, of contemporary

²Thanks to Chief Adekunle Alli for this information

³I would like to acknowledge Dr. Kessington Aigbovia for providing this information

LAGOS: YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

Prof. H.O. Danmole

EARLY YEARS

Lagos is regarded as one of the oldest kingdom and early recipient of European traders and travelers on West Africa coast. Lagos owes its etymology to Portuguese Merchant who gave the Island its name. This is as a result of its geographical location on the lagoon.

The origin of Eko, which is an indigenous name for Lagos is told in two controversial accounts. One version is related to the advent of the Aworis while the other is connected to the Benin adventures. Written records insist that Olofin the leaders of the Aworis divided Lagos among his sons and these sons established various settlements within the island and beyond thereby making up the clan of chiefs known as Idejo till date.

The Benin account is fundamental to the evolution and eventual administration of the emergent settlement. The contact with the Benin is of great significance to the Obaship of Lagos till date. Undoubtedly, Benin established a monarchical system of administration which borrowed considerably from the Yoruba system of Kingship. Thus, making the Obaship in Lagos a centralized one akin to the system of government in Benin.

THE BRITISH IN LAGOS AFFAIRS

The history and development of Lagos can never be complete without making reference to the British interference. Before the beginning of the 19th century, Lagos was one of the centers of Trans-Atlantic Slave trade in West Africa.

An attempt by the British to abolish slave trade tremendously aided the growth and development of Lagos. In the sense that, the arrival of freed slaves by the British from the European continent who are bound to settle in Freetown decided to resettle in Lagos instead. It was noted that these returnees were of Yoruba descent. Many of the returnees had acquired western

education and skills, thereby contributing not only to the population growth but also to the infrastructural growth. And this was obvious in terms of physical development, landscape and struggles against obnoxious ordinances of the British. Thus, their contributions added value to the quality of life of the people of Lagos.

During the half of the 19th century, the importance of Lagos Island was rapidly increasing and this led to the growing interest of the British in the affairs of Lagos with the intention of having a larger share of the trade, thereby pushing aside other European rivals like the German and the French.

The tremendous growth of Lagos island also created ambitious squabble among the princes for the throne which aided the British infiltration into the affairs of Lagos. A peculiar case is that of Akitoye-kosoko struggle for the throne which provided the ground for the bombardment of 1851. This bombardment led Lagos to being declared a British consulate, a status which was imposed on the island for almost a decade. This prepared the ground for the treaty of cession that was obtained under duress from Oba Dosunmu in 1861, thus, making the island a British colony.

The British usurped the power held by the Oba, while leaving him the title "king" only in its "African signification". The Oba was also regarded as the employee of the British being paid a paltry sum of one thousand pounds as his annual pension and any Oba who goes against their order is punished by condemnation and suspension as king and his salary stopped. A notable case was that of Oba Esugbayi Eleko who was made Oba in 1900 and suspended in 1919.

LAGOS AS A FEDERAL CAPITAL

The emergence of Nigeria as a country in 1914 necessitated the Question of where the capital would be located. Nigeria as at then was divided into three regions under the Richard's constitution, thus, merging Lagos colony with the Western Region.

Many suburb that were part of the colony received population growth that posed serious challenges to the service provided by Lagos. This was as a result of workers' migration into Lagos who work in the Federal Capital and other parastatals.

The issues of Lagos as the capital of Nigeria again became an issue of importance when the new military administration took over after the end of the Civil war. At the same time, there was increasing demand for the creation of more state which birthed the New Federal capital Territory named Abuja. Thus, Lagos seized to be the Capital of Federal Republic of Nigeria from 1976. It is important to note that the movement of the capital from Lagos to Abuja did not reduce the political and economic importance of the place.

LAGOS AS A STATE: CREATION AND GOVERNANCE

The agitation for Lagos to be separated from Western Region became incessant by Lagosians (indigenes) and this request was granted on the 27th May, 1967 with the task of administering the state fell on Brigadier (the Colonel) Mobolaji Johnson. Governor Mobolaji began work by establishing an advisory committee to formulate administrative functions for the state. He also set management team made up of technocrats in running the state. Mobolaji administration issued an edict in 1968 which divided the state into five divisions namely

Ikeja, Badagry, Ikorodu, Lagos and Epe. These administrative divisions represent the old Lagos colony and province. This was perhaps why the acronym IBILE being the first letter of the names of the five administrative division emanated.

Between 1967 when Lagos state was created till date. It has experienced both ministry and civilian administration. In 1979, the first civilian administration in Lagos state was headed by Alhaji Lateef Jakande who was democratically elected as governor of the state. Jakande's achievement includes: Changing the face of education in Lagos by abolishing the shift system which had bedeviled primary school system in Lagos; provision of lower and medium housing unit in many parts of the state. He also confronted challenges posed by transportation in the state which could have been his major contribution to transportation but was put on hold when the Lagos metroline which was conceived in 1982 by his administration was truncated by the military who terminated the Second Republic of Nigeria.

During Nigeria's fourth Republic, a governor whose administration can best be described as revolutionary and raised the bar of governance is Bola Ahmed Tinubu. More revolutionary was the introduction of politics with parameters. There were demarcations between being a politicians and having a duty to person in the administration. Lagos State being regarded as the 'Center of Excellence' became more outstanding with the innovation introduced by Tinubu. Agencies such as LAMATA, LASTMSA, LASWA, etc., along with other parastatals were established.

Being a highly visionary and imaginative leader, imbues with the spirit and zest to bring succor into the hope of the populace at large, he always plan for the present and the future this was evident in the revolution performance of his successors. Successive government in Lagos have proved to represent the legacy of continuity with diverse innovations that have developed the state tremendously.

Chairman: Through the letter of attestation that I mentioned earlier, we make sure that they are well recognized and well taken care of. Although, there are allegations of some traditional rulers “selling” indigenship to non-indigenes. In that case, there is nothing we can do about that, unless there is an official complaint from a part of the Family House. We believe that the traditional and chieftaincy institution are the custodian of the culture and the indigenization of Lagos, and that is why we demand a letter from traditional ruler attesting to the indigenship and narration of how that particular person is related to a Lagos family. There are interesting cases where the mother is an indigene and the father, a non-indigene. In that case, it is the wish of the family to decide if the person is one of them through the father and if they can get the Oba or the chief in chief of the house to attest to the indigenship of the person. We should also note that the government govern on both indigene and non-indigene. So, to us, we have to play down the issue of indigenisation and at the same time, we find a tactical way to provide better recognition to the indigenes over the non-indigenes. For instance, in cases of employment opportunities that concerns the Local Government, we use our prerogative to give some leeway to the indigenes. Aside from this, we make sure to collectively bring all our people together whether residents and indigenes.

GOVERNING A HISTORICAL CITY IN A CONTEMPORARY PERIOD (INTERVIEW)

Adetoyese Olusi

Chairman, Lagos Island Local Government.

Interviewer: How do you see the concept of the Lagos Ownership and Identities? Who do you consider as a Lagosian?

Chairman: Lagos was founded by two predominant interests, we have the Awori interest in Lagos, those are the first set of settlers on the Island of Lagos. Then we have the Benins who are also early settlers in Lagos. Anything Lagos is connected to Lagos Island in those days. The four classes of chiefs in Lagos are predominantly Aworis and Benins. As a matter of fact, the Oba of Lagos is grouped into one of the classes, the Akarigbere. The Akarigberes are of Benin origin. Another class is called Idejo, they are tagged landowners. But historically, it is now a subject of dispute because you have some titles within the Idejo group that are not indigenous to the traditional Lagos. We also have the Ogalades, those are priests; priests of different cults. Lastly, we have the Abagbon class. This class consists of the warlords. Members include the Egbe of Lagos; Jakande of Lagos and the Ashogbon of Lagos. They have a cap different from the others in that they wear hats. That is the situation surrounding the organisation of the early settlers in Lagos. In 1861, around the time that the white men took control of Lagos, traditional Lagosians were actually identified by law. They were referred to as the Aborigines of Lagos; they were those that the white men met as at 1861, the core indigenes. Between 1861 and now, we have over 150 years. That means your family should have been around in Lagos before you could claim to be a core indigene. So, we can say there are three classes of indigenes. First, the original predominant indigenes, i.e. the Aworis and the Benins, and also part of those who came from Ile-Ife. Second, the set of people that the white men met as at 1861, including the Brazilian and Saro returnees. They have names such as Da Costa, Da Rocha, Da Silva, Jones, Martins among others. The third class are those that came into Lagos after the white men had taken over, those that their families have been around for about 100 years, they can also be classified

as indigenes. However, the Nigerian Constitution states that if you are in a place for twelve calendar months, you have become a resident, not an indigene. If you are in that location for up to 8 consecutive years, then you have a right. We have an attestation card that can be used to this effect. When we are making recommendation to anybody or organisation, as an arm of Government, we will confirm on the card whether such person is an indigene or a resident. Before the Local Government could confirm, we will request for a letter of attestation of indigenship from the person, which should be brought from the Oba of Lagos or head of a Chieftaincy House. It is then that we can issue the letter that the particular person is an Indigene. So, that is the clear position of the law about Indigenship here in Lagos.

Interviewer: What is the relationship between the Council and the traditional institutions in Lagos?

Chairman: The government recognises them by law. The Nigerian Constitution has provision for traditional institutions, by extension the State and ditto, the local government. In the Constitution, five percent of our annual earnings and allocation combined should be dedicated to the traditional institution, this include salaries and maintenance. For instance, it is the local government that pays the salary of the Oba of Lagos and his chiefs. We also recognise customary institution and this is based on the recommendation of the Oba of Lagos. The Oba of Lagos is the custodian of the culture, so he gives approval and writes to us that this person has been given a customary chieftaincy.

Interviewer: Sir, so considering the diversity, ethnic diversity, economic diversity on the island of Lagos. How has the council been able to protect the interest of the indigenes of Lagos?

exceeded 250,000 and doubled within two decades, at the end of the Nigerian civil war. By the 1990s, Lagos had become a megacity of over 10 million inhabitants, grappling with planning, security, housing and cost of living challenges. Though no longer the federal capital since 1991, it remains a magnet for enterprising migrants seeking a fortune in the maritime and commercial hub of West Africa

Lagos was the birthplace of Nigerian nationalism. From the late nineteenth century, the African educated elite faced racial discrimination in churches, the colonial civil service and social clubs. Consequently, they resorted to cultural nationalism by studying and writing about African history, religion and culture, establishing “African Churches” and indigenous Masonic lodges, and adopting indigenous names, religious and social practices. They promoted anti-colonial nationalism through their newspapers (Lagos Observer, Lagos Weekly Record, etc.) and churches. The nationalists formed political parties: the Peoples Union (1908), and the Nigerian National Democratic Party and the Lagos Youth Movement in the inter-war decades. The Great Depression of 1929-33 and the attendant socio-economic dislocations, the Cocoa Pool Crisis of 1937/38, and the Second World War and its aftermath created conditions for the radicalization of anti-colonial nationalism, culminating in the General Strike led by Michael Imoudu and Railway workers in 1945. The post-World War II history of Nigeria and the march to Independence in 1960 owed much to the activities of Lagos-based nationalists, such as Herbert Macaulay, Ernest Ikoli, Adeyemo Alakija and Nnamdi Azikiwe, and Lagos-based newspapers, Nigerian Daily Times, Daily Service and West African Pilot.

Lagos was the stabilizing centre as Nigeria tottered through political crisis during the First Republic (1960-66), military rule and a civil war (1966-1970), prolonged military rule and the disastrous Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of the 1980s and 1990s, and two transitions to civil rule in 1979 and 1999. The relocation of the federal capital to Abuja in 1991 has left Lagos with a population, housing and infrastructure crisis without commensurate federal government assistance. The Lagos seaports, the country’s main maritime outlet, lack complementary rail services. In the absence of commuter train services, the Lagos traffic chaos has been compounded by port-bound articulated vehicles and trucks parked on the highways.

Lagos has evolved from a modest lagoon fishing port on the margins of the Benin Empire and the Yoruba hinterland in the sixteenth century to a cosmopolitan commercial centre by the late nineteenth century, and a megacity by the late twentieth century. Currently ranked the fifth largest economy in Africa, it is well on its way to becoming the “Singapore of Africa.”

LAGOS: SLAVE PORT, CAPITAL CITY, MARITIME HUB AND MEGACITY

Prof. Ayodeji Olukoju

The nineteenth century was a turning point in the history of Lagos, until then a major slaving port. A protracted dynastic crisis in the first half of the century culminated in the imposition of British rule. The Abolition of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in 1807 provided the pretext for Britain to support and supplant the so-called Anti-Slavery faction by 1851 and declare Lagos a British Colony in 1861. The British introduced the trappings of modern government: a colonial civil service, courts, municipal services, police and armed forces, and social amenities.

The establishment of colonial rule dovetailed into other developments: the spread of Christianity, the introduction of formal education and the consequent rise of a literate elite, the return of liberated slaves and their descendants mainly from Sierra Leone (the Saro) and Brazil (the Aguda), and the establishment of newspapers. The Saro were dominant in the professions of journalism, law and medicine, while the Aguda excelled masons, carpenters and printers.

A major dynamic in the development of Lagos was the transition from the Atlantic slave trade to “legitimate” trade in forest produce. Both had coexisted in the heyday of the overseas slave trade but, following the suppression of the overseas traffic, the external trade of Lagos shifted to palm oil, palm kernel and rubber. Lagos imports and exports rose steadily, punctuated by commercial slumps in the late 1880s and early 1890s. By 1880, Lagos was nicknamed ‘the “Liverpool” of West Africa’ because of its regional commercial pre-eminence.

Lagos trade was facilitated by the introduction of metal coins alongside cowries and other pre-colonial currencies, and railway, road and seaport development between 1892 and 1914. The currency revolution in Lagos, especially the displacement of cowries, proceeded faster than elsewhere in Nigeria. The rail line from the Iddo terminus reached Abeokuta in 1901 and

Jebba on the Niger by 1912. However, until 1914, the railway did not carry a significant proportion of Lagos port traffic. Produce for the port and foodstuff for the city came from Abeokuta via the Ogun River and from the lagoon ports of Ejinrin, Epe and Atijere. Lagos port finally received oceangoing shipping in 1914 following the deepening of the harbour entrance and removal of the sand bar that had impeded ocean shipping for centuries.

The business community was cosmopolitan, comprising British, German, Dutch, French, Austrian, Levantine and African merchants. African – indigenous Lagosians, Saro and Aguda – and Levantines were “middlemen” traders between expatriate traders and hinterland producers. The merchants established Nigeria’s first Chamber of Commerce in Lagos in 1888.

The city of Lagos emerged in the course of the colonial period as a cosmopolitan centre inhabited by different races, religious and occupational groups. The slave trade had brought Yoruba, Nupe and “Hausa” peoples from the hinterland. The returnees from the Atlantic Diaspora spiced the mix. It was only in the post-First World War years that Nigerians from the mid-western and eastern regions migrated to Lagos in significant numbers. This was because Lagos was the national capital after the Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Nigeria in 1914. However, the rising population and overcrowding in the face of limited space on Lagos Island set the stage for outbreaks of plagues – the Influenza Pandemic of 1918/19 and the bubonic plague of 1924-30. The latter led to loss of lives, reclamation and rehousing on the Island, and resettlement at Yaba and Ebute Metta on the Mainland. Still, Lagos continued to receive a steady influx of migrants from the hinterland. By 1950, its population

MY LAGOS

Prof. Folashade Ogunshola

My Lagos is a bustling city, a melting pot of races and ethnic groups. A truly cosmopolitan city that everyone can call home. Though the smallest state in Nigeria, it has the largest heart, accommodating everyone with their peculiarities without raising an eyebrow. My Lagos mirrors Nigeria stretching from the rural to the urban from highbrow Banana Island to “Lowbrow” Ajegunle. No matter who you are, you will find your crowd and do your thing.

In Lagos, going to Lagos means going to the Island, which houses the “Old city” with its crumbling structures criss-crossed by narrow roads and overflowing gutters. A city of narrow storey buildings and many shops. It is the real Lagos, Eko which is the “real” name of this beautiful vibrant city that I have called home for 38 years. My Lagos is the city of traffic, of hustlers. You can buy anything from cufflinks to Christmas turkey in its famous “go slows”, as my Lagos is a city of entrepreneurs and innovation. You need to visit Yaba - the Silicon Valley of Nigeria and Freedom Park to spend an evening with the creatives. Lagos is a city of culture, of tradition, of shops, of sprawling markets and fine cuisine. It is the Heart of Nollywood where movies are made on a shoestring budget.

What do you want that you cannot get? Is it Gucci or Gunci? Fendi or Findi? There is something for everyone, everyone is beautifully clothed! If you cannot go to London, you can get to Osapa-London. My Lagos has something for everyone.

Over and above all these, are the people. Lagosians are exuberant, extravagant, loud and in constant motion. They are a beauty to watch. You have to wonder how anyone can live in this “chaotic” place! But there is a rhythm in the chaos, you just need to listen and soon you will soon be dancing to its music and I should know!

I grew up in Ibadan, a city that is laid back and gentle, but I found that in Lagos I could find my own quiet space, my own Oasis, from which I could venture out to gyrate to the beat of the city and to which I return to rest and recharge. I have found the many quiet spots in Lagos that soothe my soul: the beautiful beaches, the conservation centre, the golf courses, gated estates, the many theatres and the islands that dot the sea around Lagos.

My Lagos is a beautiful city with a large heart and a place for everyone and I found my place.

ILU EKO - ADVOCACY AND CONSERVATION IN A CONTEMPORARY CITY

Kofo Adeleke¹

Once upon a time, Lagos Island was so full of buildings with Brazilian style architecture that around the 1970s, serious considerations were made for a large part of Lagos Island to be designated as a World Heritage Site. This was because at one point Lagos had the largest concentration of Brazilian style architecture outside of Brazil. This leads one to imagine what Lagos would have looked like if this had happened. On one hand, for those who are trying to conserve as many heritage buildings as possible, it would have been wonderful to have this important heritage saved and the global attention it would have attracted. On the other hand, for Lagos Island, it would have meant a definite curtailment of certain types of development with possible economic consequences, which would have affected commercial activities there, and the growth in population that has occurred in recent decades.

Old Havana in Cuba was designated as a World Heritage Site in 1982 because of its uniqueness in having such an enormous number and variety of architectural styles dating back to the 17th century. Although there are socio-political differences in the way in which Havana has developed, both Lagos and Havana today have some very similar challenges. It would be interesting to see an analysis of how Havana has managed with the restrictions imposed on it, in terms of having to conserve its architectural landscape, and what it has meant for the residents of the city. Quite recently, we had to examine the fallout from the tragic demolition of Ilojo Bar also known as Casa Fernandez, which was a beautiful 19th century Brazilian style building on Tinubu Square, in the heart of Lagos,

and designated as a national monument. This devastating loss opened the debate about how Nigeria and other developing countries need to address the management of historic buildings and the needs of the owners, and wider community.

Lagos State, has many important buildings in need of preservation, identified both at the state and federal levels, and not limited to Lagos Island, as Yaba and Ebute Metta still have many buildings of historical significance. It is important to recognise that structures, such as Iga Idunganran, Water House, Vaughan House, Doherty Villa, The Old Secretariat, Shitta Bey Mosque, Cathedral Church of Christ, The Printing Press, and Kings College are associated with important intangible heritage such as the stories of the people who built them, the people who used them and what the buildings came to represent. These all provide potentials for educational activities, sustainable tourism and overall increased value of the localities.

To move closer to increasing awareness and achieving such goals, knowledge sharing, which builds capacity and coherence for effective actions, is required across a broad spectrum, to include policy makers, urban planners, architects, heritage and culture specialists, owners of heritage buildings and the general public. Heritage laws and urban planning laws, at all levels, should not conflict but rather uphold, reinforce and support the other, with very clear presentations of roles and responsibilities. Crucially, Nigeria needs heritage laws that really reflect the culture and society.

In the 21st century attempts to attract funding for heritage conservation anywhere in the world, developing countries must be innovative. This starts with establishing new methods of engagement that cover a much broader view of cultural heritage and interpretations, approaches and

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LAGOS'S LOVE HATE RELATIONSHIP WITH WATER

Olamide Udoma-Ejorh

Over the years we have seen Lagos go from a fishing village to a megacity. In 1965 the built up area, in Lagos, accounted for 7.58% of the State's area, the rest was wetlands or water bodies. By 2014 the built up area had become 80.39% (Adegun, et. al., 2015). This has been termed hyper urbanisation. As the built up areas continue to expand in all directions including into water, our wetlands and water bodies have shrunk but how and why has this happened to our beloved water city?

As a fishing village, there was a respect for the water that surrounded Lagos. It was our source of income and our livelihood. It was an important part of our lives. As Lagos grew north and west from Isa Eko and Ikoyi between the 1940s and 1960s there was still a great appreciation for our waterways and the coast. The Garden City approach was used by the colonial government where European Quarters, later GRAbs (Government Reserved Areas) had spacious and lush greenery and there was an appreciation for the Lagos coast.

In 1969, S. O. Fadahunsi¹, wrote an article titled 'Lagos 2000 A.D.' The article describes the future of Lagos and what Lagos would be like in the year 2000. Fadahunsi dreamt and aspired for the Lagos described in his article. He described the future Lagos as a city where play is as important as work. He also demonstrated the importance of water transportation and the need to keep the water accessible to the population.

'Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the development which should provide the greatest satisfaction to the greatest number of people is the concept which ensures that the

waterfront both along the lagoon and sea are kept open and green in order to make Lagos a bursting capital which provides facilities for relaxation as well as opportunity for gainful employment.'

As the city grew, the railway line and transportation in general was an important influencer. The African quarters were not as well planned as the European quarters and they continued to grow and develop in a haphazard way. The oil boom of the 1970s saw people flock to Lagos as the then capital and home to an established port. Victoria Island was developed during this time as an elite residential area and this paved the way for the development of the Lekki axis which continues to expand rapidly. The building of Third Mainland Bridge (finished in 1994) impacted the development of the mainland. Now Lagos State has satellite cities such as Ikorodu and has surpassed its boundaries while encroaching on Ogun State.

Age-old establishments, in the 80's, 90s and 00's changed from waterfront public spaces to private commercial and residential spaces. The Musical Society of Nigeria (MUSON) was established in 1983 and sits on the former 'Love Garden'. The 'Love Garden' has been described as Lagos's Central Park; a true serene city park on Lagos Island. Park View Estate, a high-end residential gated community, took over Ikoyi Park. Ikoyi Park was another example of a waterfront city park and it dates back to the 1930s. Another example is the J.K.Randle swimming pool, which sits very close to Muson Centre. It was built in 1928 because J.K.Randle understood the need for people to learn to swim due to Lagos being surrounded by water. In its heyday it was where everyone (both rich and poor) learnt to swim. It was very popular. However, it wasn't

¹ Chief Executive Officer, Lagos Executive Development Board (LEDB), (1965-1972)

methodologies for urban conservation, whereby it is not just the physical structures alone that are focused on but the associated history and culture. Within Lagos, there are ever expanding demands on what buildings and spaces should offer, and any interventions must respond to development needs. Factors such as urban regeneration, economic development and improvement must be part of the goals and long-term sustainability of heritage preservation in cities like Lagos with development needs.

Freedom Park, on Lagos Island, represents history past and present. It shows how working with heritage can meet contemporary needs, revive the local community, and become a cultural hub for the expressions and dreams of the young. There are many variations of adaptive reuse of heritage buildings and spaces that can provide economic, social and cultural solutions to urban city needs. These new methods of engagement on heritage management and preservation must be people-centred and inclusive and foster a sense of social integration and 'ownership'.

In almost all cases where there have been shifts in paradigms involving heritage conservation campaigns, they have been led by well-placed networks of highly committed champions who are often nonconformists, innovative and very persistent, with a reverence for the past and with a faith in the future.

managed well and over the years it fell into disrepair. In 2016 it was demolished to make way for a new J. K. Randle Centre for Yoruba Culture and History. Of the three examples, the new J. K. Randle Centre is the only space that stays true to its origin, however, I am unsure if it will be accessible to all Lagosians. From these examples it is clear that waterfronts were not cherished or loved at this point in Lagos's history. Some may say we hated the water because we took things a little further than just changing our waterfronts, we left them empty and disused, well some of us.

With large population growth and uncoordinated development, coastal areas and waterfront areas around the lagoon have been taken up by informal settlements or as some describe, slums. These settlements are located where the tidal waves are not so strong and in swampy areas while usually near a commercial node. The urban poor describe the waterfront as home but also a source of revenue. At the same time formal development led by the private sector and supported by Lagos State Government has not just forgotten about the value of Lagos's natural assets but encroached and taken it over.

As the city has grown on land it has also grown into the sea and lagoon. Land has been scarce for housing provision and therefore land reclamation has become a popular means for housing provision. There has been large scale reclamation of various areas in Lagos such as; Maroko, Iponri, Iganmu, Victoria Garden City, Ilubirin, Ogudu, Lekki Peninsula, Osborne road, Ajah, Amuwo-Odopin, Abule-ola and Herbert Macaulay (Aina et. al., 2004). The latest and most documented reclamation is Eko Atlantic City.

In the last ten to fifteen years this has changed and the commercial viability of waterfront residential and commercial properties as well as recreational spaces has become apparent. This has led to more development but also forced evictions of informal and slum settlements, which should not be the case. I am not sure if this should be described as love but there is an appreciation of our natural

assets because of their recreational and commercial attributes and this should not be at the detriment of those who already understood their value. There is definitely a race to explore and claim waterfronts in Lagos and this can be seen by the increase in the construction of luxurious beach houses, water activities such as kayaking and diving, and lagoon front developments such as Ilubirin.

Our love hate relationship with our surrounding and largest natural asset in Lagos, has seen us disrespect our water bodies and our natural environment but I am hoping with this new appreciation we will love water more and treat it with the respect it deserves, while ensuring everyone has access to it.

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AFRO-BRAZILIAN ARCHITECTURE: A LEGACY OF HOPE AND POSSIBILITY

!DUKE 'OMEZ



A view of modern Lagos © Mark Raymond

There is an area on Lagos Island referred to by the residents as the “Brazilian Quarters”. Historically, this area was initially mainly inhabited by the

returnees formerly enslaved persons known as the “Aguda” who had relocated to Lagos primarily from Brazil and Cuba. They constructed buildings in the manner in which they had become accustomed during their enslavement and this replication led to the development of an “Afro-Brazilian” building style which greatly influenced the architecture in Lagos (and other parts of South Western Nigeria) of both individual residences and places of worship.

The perimeter of this area in Lagos has been defined in the Lagos Sites Listed Sites (Preservation Law) 2011 as “That portion of Lagos Island known as Portuguese/Brazilian Quarters including the area bounded on the west by Tinubu Square and the east by Obalende. In the North by Bamgbose Street and in the South by Broad Street.”

Any study of built heritage raises many questions: Who lived there and where did he/she come from? When was it built and what was it used for? In this paper we shall consider the impact of the legacy of the architecture that these returned peoples have left behind.

A Dark History: a Legacy of Despair

Our story begins with the dark history of Lagos as a major exporter of millions of enslaved persons during the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Today, the former Lagos slave market under the huge breadfruit tree on Lagos Island has been eradicated and in 1852 became the site for what eventually became St. Paul’s Church, Breadfruit on Davies Street. However, Badagry – a town just outside Lagos also served as a major slave port. Today, and correctly so, homage and remembrance are made here to the victims of that trade.



The Slave Route at Gberefu, Badagry © Aduke Gomez

But there’s also another story – one of hope and new beginnings that has not been celebrated as much. This story announces its

presence in “foreign” sounding names. It is tasted in Lagos Island food delicacies like frejon, mengao and canjika and has been celebrated in annual carnivals in the Brazilian Quarters since 1895. This is the story of those who returned as members of either the Aguda or the Saro communities after being stolen away.

The Aguda and the Saro communities

We shall meet some individuals from these communities both of which were composed of people who had returned from enslavement and consider how the buildings to which they were affiliated can connect us to our past and provide a guide for the future.

Aguda – was the name given to the Emancipados (“Liberated Ones”) who returned from the Americas – Brazil, Cuba. They tended to live in the Brazilian Quarters as mentioned earlier especially around Campos Square, Kakawa Street, Bamgbose Street and their environs. They were entrepreneurs as well as skilled masons and artisans whose work influenced the development of a unique look for the architecture of the city that came to be identified as “Afro-Brazilian”. Their work was in high demand both within and outside their immediate community and so they built both residential houses - from mundane bungalows to the grandiloquent soaring edifices - as well as places of worship; the Shitta Bey Mosque and the Holy Cross Cathedral are examples of the latter.

Saro – on the other hand was the name given to freed captives often released from aboard captured slave ships who had been repatriated and settled in Freetown, Sierra Leone. They generally lived around the Olowogbowo part of the city and tended to work as teachers, clerks, or traders.

- **Mama Adeola Holloway**

Mama Adeola Holloway was a descendant of Kurunmi, the Are-Ona Kakanfo of new Oyo. She was born in the early 19th century and was a victim of the wars amongst the various splinter groups following the fall of the Oyo empire. She was captured by slave dealers but received assistance from a CMS missionary, Rev Adolphus Mann, who caused the slave ship she was on to be intercepted and redirected to Freetown. She grew up in Freetown and eventually returned to Lagos after marriage and finally became known as the matriarch of the Holloway family.

A former Holloway family home is now known as Onikan House and is the Headquarters of Loving Lagos - a tourism/culture hub.



Onikan House © Loving Lagos

He established the “Lagos Observer” newspaper in 1882 together with Robert Campbell and Dr. V.T. King. The Cathedral Church of Christ, Marina was built from his designs. He built and owned Hephzibah House which is still owned by his descendants and now houses a law practice and other commercial outlets.

- **Benjamin Bagan**

Benjamin Bagan returned from Trinidad as a “liberated African” and settled in Lagos.

- **James Churchill Vaughan**

James Churchill Vaughan was the son of Scipio Vaughan – originally an Omo-Oba from Owu who was captured in 1805, sold through Badagry and then taken to Camden, South Carolina

James C. Vaughan returned from South Carolina, USA in 1852 and first settled in Liberia.



Hephzibah House © Mark Raymond

He became a missionary to Yorubaland in 1854 and after being taken captive in the Ibadan-Ijaye war he escaped and then served in the military in Abeokuta. He eventually settled in Lagos in 1867 and became successful and wealthy merchant and entrepreneur. He was the owner of Vaughan House (now the HQ of a private commercial entity)



Vaughan House © Mark Raymond

- **Candido Da Rocha**

Candido Da Rocha was the son of Jao Esan Da Rocha from Ilesa who was captured at about the age of ten in 1840 and taken to Bahia,

Brazil. Candido was born in Bahia in 1866 and around 1873 returned to Lagos with his family from Brazil as a young boy and attended CMS Grammar School with Herbert Macaulay.

He had many successful business interests including real estate, hotels, a bank, fishing industries, commercial sale of water and became exceedingly wealthy. He was a founding member of the Lagos Auxiliary branch of the Anti-slavery and Aborigines Right Society.

He eventually inherited Water House from his father which is still inhabited by his granddaughter.



Water House © Mark Raymond

Loss of Built Heritage

All modern cities are under pressure to optimise the use of space and the Brazilian Quarters located as it is on

valuable commercial land is suffering a major loss of its built heritage. However, attention must be paid during development projects to the importance of built heritage in reinforcing a people's sense of achievement and purpose and to the role that built heritage plays in rendering historical narratives tangible to modern societies.

Ilojo Bar (also variously known as "Casa da Fernandez" and "Olaiya House") was built in 1855 and was a striking example of the beauty and uniqueness of Afro-Brazilian architecture. Unfortunately, this was demolished in 2016 but photographs such as that below remind us of its beauty and can motivate us to better preserve what is left.

He established the "Lagos Observer" newspaper in 1882 together with Robert Campbell and Dr. V.T. King. The Cathedral Church of Christ, Marina was built from his designs.

He built and owned Hephzibah House which is still owned by his descendants and now houses a law practice and other commercial outlets.

Preservation of Listed Sites Law in 2011: "More honoured in the breach than the observance" – Hamlet, Shakespeare



© Gilliam Hpwood

Lagos State passed a Preservation of Listed Sites Law in 2011 which

provides for properties of sufficient historical, and architectural interest to be preserved and classified.

However, a much stricter enforcement of the stated penalties at application for planning permission and for any subsequent breach is required.

It is suggested that better familiarisation with its provisions can guide owners of such properties in making decisions about conservation, restoration and renovation. Such decisions can guide architects to design innovative methods to preserve and incorporate this built heritage into modern usage.

The Future: A Legacy of Hope and Possibility

The beauty of these buildings ought to be better protected and preserved as tourist attractions to generate revenue and to provide employment for local residents as tour guides. In addition, the stories of the people who lived and worked and loved in these buildings provides a framework to these buildings and makes us realise that they are more than just collections of masonry and timber. They are portals to a tangible testament of the capacity of the human spirit to regenerate and renew and offer pathways to navigate the boundaries of our multi-faceted history. Therefore, the study of these buildings can also provide inspiring educational opportunities for young people and especially students of architecture, policy, history, social and urban planning etc.

The memory of the Emancipados and their bravery and tenacity in overcoming the horrors of their enslavement experience together with their ability to rebuild their lives deserves to be appropriately commemorated. Their re-integration into Lagos society often established trading and even familial links between themselves and the Diaspora.

These links should now be further explored and

cultivated as a means of exploring and building modern day business, education and social connections and the work of the Institute of the African and Diaspora Studies is vital to achieving these aims.

Further Reading

- Slavery and the Birth of an African City – Lagos 1760 – 1900 by Kristin Mann
- Modern and Traditional Elites in the Politics of Lagos by Patrick Cole
- Ladder of Bones by Ellen Thorp

AFRICAN URBANISMS: HISTORIES, TRAJECTORIES AND CHALLENGES

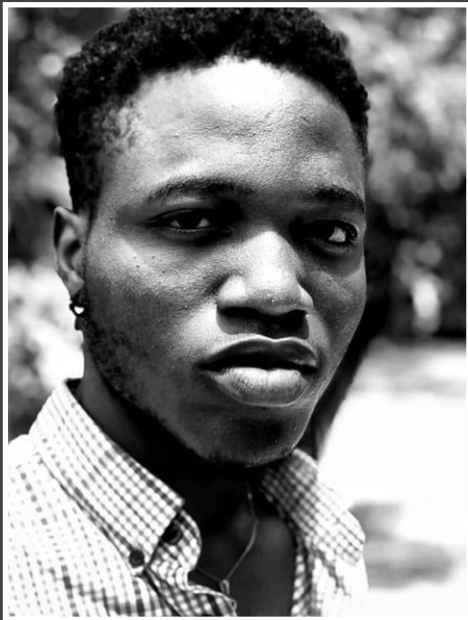
Enocent Msindo,
Rhodes University

Abstract

A cross sectional study of African metropolitan spaces reveals the inherent tensions in our cityscapes - their resilient character and beauty is often juxtaposed with their trash and pollution (apologies, aka their shit). There is often a place in Lagos that looks almost like a portion of Nairobi, Yaoundé, Harare, Ouagadougou, or parts of Johannesburg – where city authorities do not seem to be able to control at all. This inherent tension in the postcolonial is normalised due to the resilience of capitalism as the affluent and the capitalist system that sustains them thrives on trashing the urban poor. Although most of the pollution, the crime, and administrative chaos in the contemporary city are (causally) products of the capitalist system, it is invariably the urban poor who are blamed for these vices. By trying to make the urban poor economically invisible and by marginalising their right to service delivery, the poor become the (social and economic) effluent of the city. The middle class wish them away, yet they are an indispensable urban presence that sustains the city. In many ways, the resilience of the urban poor is barely examined. Apart from them being a reservoir of cheap labour, the poor are central to African urban waste recycling and to reconceptualising electronic waste. The poor also try to escape their effluent status by operating small scale indigenous township industries and backyard or roadside unlicensed businesses that contributes to the city's informal economy. These industries provide cheaper solutions to the problems of the otherwise precarious urban middle class. My opening remarks here points to the many facets of the urban space – the political, economic and sociological character of the African city. However, we would like to understand how we came to have such kinds of contested urban spaces. We take here a long duree approach by examining the deeper histories of African urbanisms, noting how each epoch transformed the city spaces according to the dominant economic and political forces at play.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

To support the artistry of student photographers and encourage them to pursue their passions, we are spotlighting five students across various departments from the University of Lagos. These students were selected from a pool of hundreds who entered into the Lagos:Ownership and Identity photography competition because of their promising talent. Their works are featured in the exhibition and throughout the course of this programme, they will undergo mentorship from our exhibiting photographers and participate in studio visits, to give them more clarity on their chosen path. We are committed to upholding our mandate of supporting and contributing to the growth and development of our students beyond their Academics.



OYEWOLE LAWAL

Lawal Taofeek Oyewole is a native of Shomolu , Lagos, Nigeria. I reside at Ibafo in Ogun state. His photography journey started from a two weeks program in his church after which he attended “Telling a Story” workshop by Aisha Bada. He is an Undergraduate at the University of Lagos studying Sociology which he intends to implement in his photography. Lawal currently practices street photography but Lawal aims to become a Social Documentary Photographer in the near future.





QUADRY AZEEZ OLAWALE

Quadry Azeez was born on June 22, 1999 in Ogun state Nigeria where he completed his primary education before proceeding to Lagos state for his secondary and tertiary education. He attended Oduduwa junior high school and Eletu Odibo senior high school respectively, in his free time Azeez likes to volunteer for humanitarian activities and pursue his passion in photography. Quadry Azeez is currently a penultimate student of the Department of sociology University of Lagos.



OLABODE GBOLAHAN OTINWA

Olabode Otinwa is currently a student in the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Lagos. Prior to advancing his studies, he nurtured this talent by training himself with a special focus on Documentary Photography. In the last three years, he has had the opportunity to express his talent as an intern and volunteer photographer at special events.





HAMZAT OYINDAMOLA

Hamzat Oyindamola is a teenage photographer, a singer, a Christian and a student of the University of Lagos. She loves to express herself with images by capturing the emotions of people. Oyindamola desires to reach out to the world with photo



MUHAMMED ANIFOWOSHE



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