

ALTERNATIVE URBANISMS?

How Religion is redefining Planning and development in Lagos, Nigeria.

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Source: <https://guardian.ng/property/how-deeper-lifes-30000-capacity-hqtrs-was-built-by-officials/>



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<https://rua-project.ac.uk>



OUTLINE

- Introduction: Why Study Religious Urbanization?
- Alternative Urbanisms: A Conceptual Framing

What is the pattern of land use appropriation by religious organizations in Lagos?

- Colonial practices
- Contemporary practices
 - Top down (permanent)
 - Bottom up (transient)

How do these practices affect urban patterns and processes?

- Changing Land use Dynamics
- Changing Urban Management practices

What are the urban planning responses?

- Religion Planning interface
- The planning administrative framework
- Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

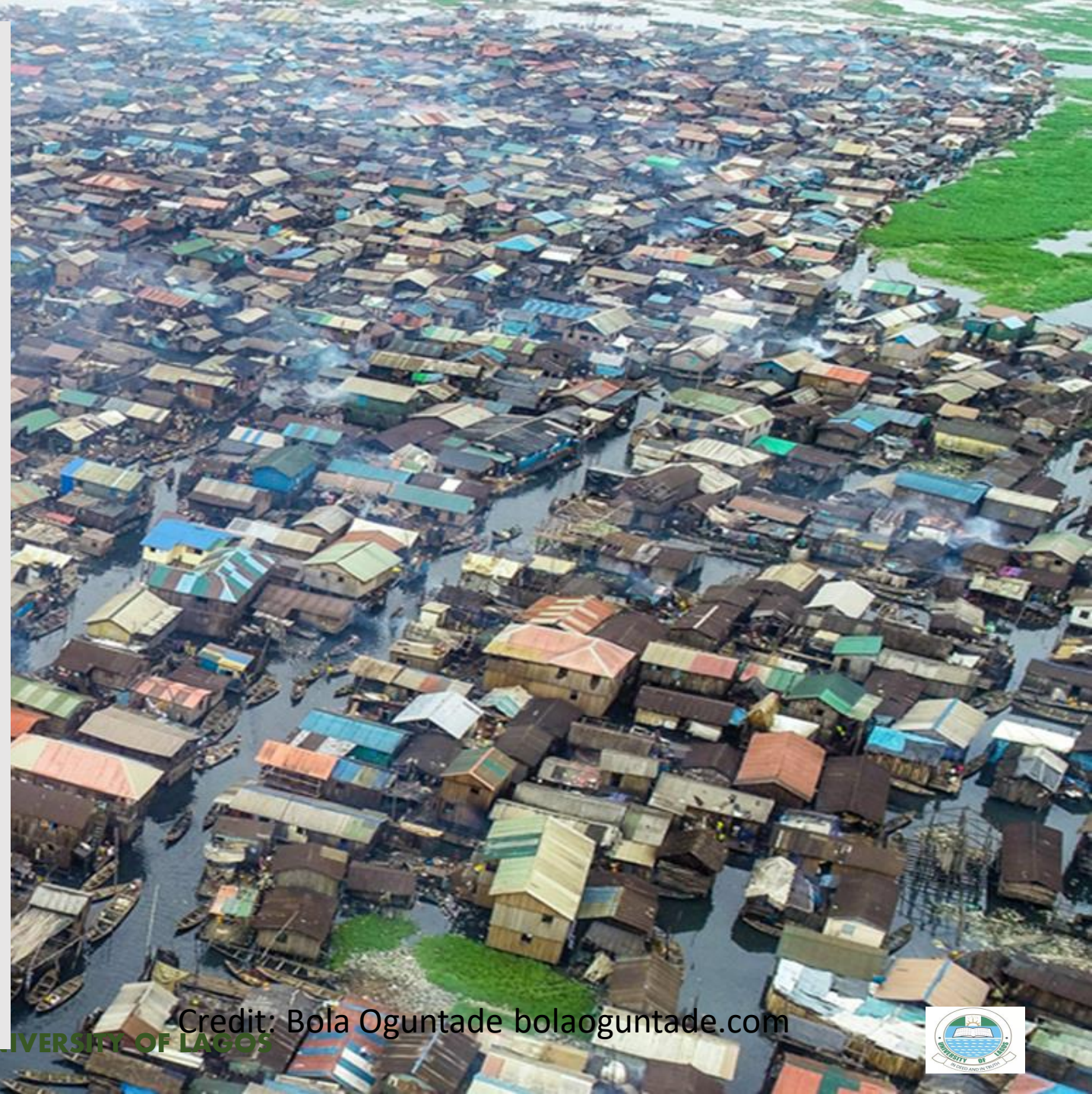
Why study Religious Urbanisation?



- Having established not only places of worship but also networks of educational and health facilities, **religious actors and institutions have radically reconfigured the urban and infrastructural landscape of many cities** of the Global South, in particular in African countries (Garbin et al, 2017).
- In Nigeria, and perhaps even in sub-Saharan Africa, the most recent, dramatic, and ambitious transformation of the urban landscape has been driven by religion, with **Pentecostalism spawning new urban practices of visibility and space** making (Ukah 2008, 2006, 2012).
- There is no disaggregated statistics on the numerous Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations in Nigeria, but they are believed to make up about 42.25% of the Christian population. (Johnstone and Mandryk, 2001)
- Around Lagos and its environs, the intensification of new Pentecostal practices, economic networks, and allegiances are breeding **new forms of exclusionary and parochial spatial practice**.
- Pentecostal camps and the emergent cities spawning from them serve as **multifunctional environments** that defines a new form of urban practice and spatial configuration, **creating a new form of challenge to planners**.

LAGOS

- **Unprecedented urban growth**, resulting in massive sprawl and the urbanization of poverty
- Challenges of **urban planning and management**, including paucity of data on spatial patterns and factors influencing such, as well as administrative framework for effective interventions
- In a society of endemic poverty, **religious organizations are meeting some societal needs**
- The **rise of the *theocra-city*** - manifesting as the complex dysfunctional system in which religious organizations are bridging significant urban service gaps. An alternative urbanism of sorts
- This interface of religion and urban development is not given attention by researchers and practitioners, despite expansion of mega-religious infrastructure



Credit: Bola Oguntade bolaoguntade.com

LAGOS: Government vs FBOs (pentecostal)

*"...In Lagos, the authorities are caught in the struggles of managing population growth, urban expansion, **development challenges**, and **provision of infrastructure facilities**, urban services and **livelihood opportunities**., (Olajide, 2018)*

*....The church also has a role to play in terms of **urbanization** (RCCG Pastor, 2018)*

*The overall development of the country is the role of the state. I can say that the **churches have realized that the state has failed**. That is why there is this support from the churches. It is not the role of the church, but the churches have to step in (Interview, 2018)*

*..... in their own sites, they are involved in some **infrastructure development** (Interview, 2018).*

*..... Winners, for instance, the people the organization **pays every month is more than what some state government pay**. (Interview, 2018).*

ALTERNATIVE URBANISMS: A Conceptual framing

‘Alternative urbanism’ is a production of urbanization **independent** from conventional, mainstream models of land use classification, administration and utilization (moural, 2009)

These alternative approaches to urban development are usually self-organised, initiated from the bottom-up, led by informal groups and managed commonly, communally or in collaboration with users.

Alternative Urbanisms often has

- a focus on **counter-hegemonic forms of urban** living and practices that are alternative in relation to mainstream models and trends.
- a focus on how urban spaces are configured as **experimental fields** for the development of new practices in response to imperatives to restructure and reconfigure economic, social and technological infrastructures.
- a concern to **broaden the scope of intellectual reference points through which urban practices** can be conceptualised and investigated methodologically.

- DIY Urbanism
- New Urbanism
- Informal Urbanism
- Tactical Urbanism
- Hands-on Urbanism
- Urban Acupuncture
- Sharing Cities

(Lawanson, 2017; Derickson 2015, Baiyeri, 2013, UNHABITAT, 2016, Buckley and Strauss 2016, Peterlin, 2015, Parnell and Robinson 2012).

What is the pattern of land use appropriation by religious organisations in Lagos?



UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS

Historical



- The first attempts to christianize Nigeria were in the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries when Portuguese commercial boats sailed to Warri with Roman Catholic missionaries. The attempts were short-lived and largely unsuccessful (Ojo, 1998)
- The first wave was between 1841-91, an era preceding the establishment of British rule in Nigeria, when five principal missionary societies worked in Nigeria: **Church of England, Church Missionary Societies (CMS)**, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society; the foreign Mission Committee of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland; the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention of the United States; and **the Catholic Society of African Missions** (Societe des Missions Africaines, S.M.A) of France (Ajayi, 1999; Peel, 2000).
- By the 1920s, the second wave of independent churches, often seen as the local appropriation of Christianity, emerged through **the Aladura movement** in Yorubaland (Mitchell 1970).
- The third wave of local appropriation of Christianity, according to Kalu (1998; 2000), occurred in the 1930s and 1940s when, through a dynamic process of increased understanding of Christianity as well as interaction with external forces (foreign pentecostal groups and their tracts, magazines, books) and cultural demands, **an indigenous form of pentecostalism emerged**.
- These churches soon proliferated, further diversifying the religious landscape of the country.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

- Grew from a growing Brazilian returnee population and competition with the Protestant congregation
 - Land appropriation based on political influence
 - Focus on infrastructure often caused distraction from the primary spiritual calling
 - Early missionaries strong links to business interests
 - Planning, design and construction based on foreign standards
- <http://www.hccInng.org/history.html>
- Delegations came to him, begging Fr Borghero to open a station in Lagos. They argued that Lagos with a big influx of traders, was becoming the most important point on the coast; and **that Protestants were growing stronger**;
 - Fr Borghero visited the English Governor Mr Henry Stanhope Freeman, who received him courteously and **gave him a plot of land for dwelling on his first visit**. This is where Saint Mary's School now stands.
 - Before he left Lagos sick on 1st October 1863, **he succeeded in getting another plot of land free of charge from the same Governor**. This is at Itolo-Elegbata.
 - After Fr. Borghero left Lagos, a committee of five prominent Brazilians visited Governor Freeman with some money, so as to purchase a large land suitable for a large church and a mission house. The governor said that **he thought that land for mission and church should not be bought, but should be granted**.
 - After Fr Borghero, Fr. Bouche and Fr. Elias would go to Lagos and **lodge in the French (C.F.A.O) while they were having a bamboo house erected at Oke Ite Popo-Aguda, based on design standards and plans shipped from France**.
 - Fr. Bouche spoke boldly and enthusiastically to the superior Fr. Courdious that they must not wait to start in a big way in Lagos that **they will get help from people including the Governor Henry Stanhope Freeman**.
 - Fr. Francis Cloud had once criticized the idea of his superior while they were in Port-Novo for **spending too much money on the infrastructures instead of caring for the sick and the catechumens**.



HOLY CROSS CATHEDRAL

- As the population of the church increased, **the congregation looked on Rev Fr Chausee for a larger church**, who invited Rev. Fr. Chambraud a **French architect** to build the church
- Before then the church was sharing border with the Nigerian prison yard. The officials of the prison wanted part of the church land for extension, this created a big problem.
- In 1877, the land was retrieved after some members approached **the governor A.C.Moloney a Catholic who assisted the church in signing of the document for the takeover of the church land, and also supported fund raising for the church**
- In 1878, the foundation of the pro- cathedral was laid, the first tower with the bell was completed in 1881 while the second tower was completed in 1883.
- In his sermon, Fr. Monroe said **"The people's generosity has been richly rewarded', in the past mass was offered in an open room, then in a large compound and now in a beautiful building.**
- As time on, the population of the Catholics increased. This called for the building of another bigger and more ornate and of **gothic design** and as such the cathedral was demolished in 1934. The foundation of the new cathedral was laid on the 6th of august, 1934 by Bishop Francis O'oruke.

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

- Grew from a growing Sierra Leonean returnee population and linkages to the Church Missionary Society
 - Strong linkages to business interests of the colonialists
 - Strong linkages to political and traditional authorities
 - Land appropriation based on political influence, crowd funding and sand-filling
 - Planning based on foreign standards
- The seed of the Anglican Church in Lagos was planted by the activities of liberated Africans in Sierra Leone and the Church Missionary Society
 - After the fall of Lagos to British colonists, **the British consul felt cooperation with missionaries and legitimate goods traders was important to protect their interests in the protectorate.**
 - By July 1852, the mission at Badagry moved to Lagos which was considered an important location to spread the gospel; with **Rev Gollmer and Ajayi Crowther leading**.
 - Gollmer obtained **land rights to five sites from Oba Akitoye** and chose Ebute Ero post as the first site of a CMS station.
 - In 1852, Gollmer completed a **mission house at Ehin Igbeti, Marina**, and later chose a site **at Oko-Faji close to Marina** as a new mission post
 - Between 1852 and 1854, the Lagos mission led by Gollmer and Crowther created out-stations including **one at an old slave barracoon**, and **another post at Oko Faji**, which **moved to Marina** at a new building called Christ Church
 - Many of the earliest Churches built by the Anglican community under Rev. Gollmer **introduced Gothic architecture to Lagos.**
 - A building that later became a school was constructed in 1878. In 1926, the congregation **contributed funds** to erect a new church building.
 - St John's Aroloya was located in a **sand filled area** of Lagos.

www.anglicancommunion.org



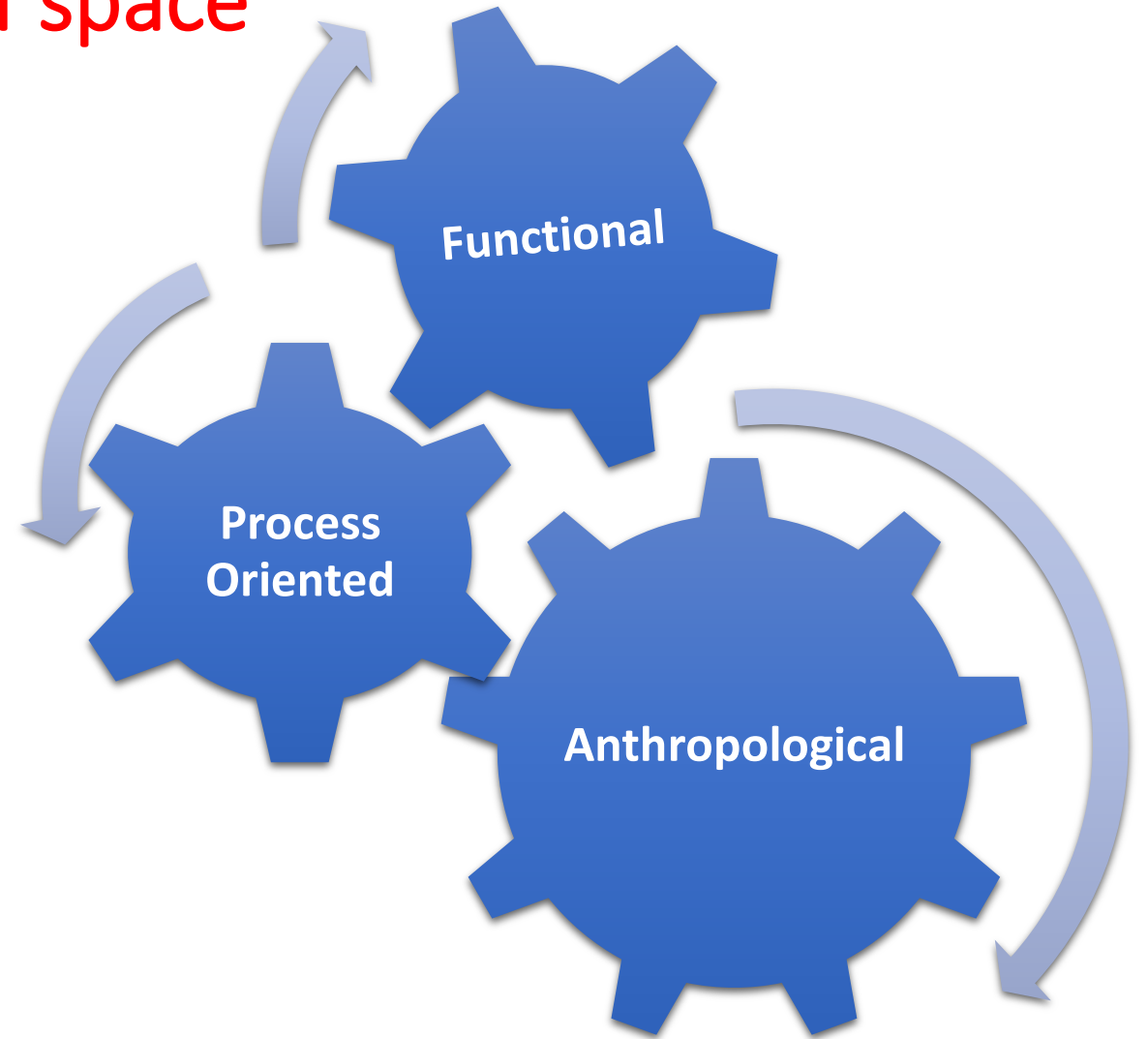
Contemporary

Production and appropriation of space

Functional: includes studies about **spatial arrangement**, form and the concept of order ie an **architectural framing**

Process oriented focuses on **spatial formation and evolution**, including **planning processes and legal developments**

Anthropological investigates **everyday practices of land occupation** emphasising the characteristics of **temporality in the configuration and use of urban space**.



Theoretical approaches to spatial production

Source: Cardosi, 2014

TOP DOWN (permanent):

This points to an urban regeneration strategy of centripetal, concentrated land use change (using the existing city as the medium for 'expansion') as well as the centrifugal and dispersed approach of the religious camps (building the alter-city) that have been the subject of more intellectual inquiry.

Peri-urban Axis

City Core

Enclave Urbanism

- Enclaving is when an entire system of urban life in its economic, political, and symbolic-cultural forms **being imposed upon already existing towns and cities** that have been organized on quite different bases’ (Gilsenan, 1982)
- This phenomenon results in a situation where **religious organizations materially and symbolically anchor their significance** in the urban landscape, and reorchestrate these places in particular ways, often at variance with extant planning regulations (Coleman and Elsner 1995).
- Enclaving is the tendency towards the **fragmentation of cities** by class, race, gender and other social dividers.”(Angotti, 2013).
- Within the **peri-urban axis is the development of new ‘prayer cities’**, while in the **city core is the gradual infiltration** of residential neighborhoods and industrial estates with religious land uses; varying forms of ‘sacred urbanism’ (Lawanson and Millington, forthcoming)

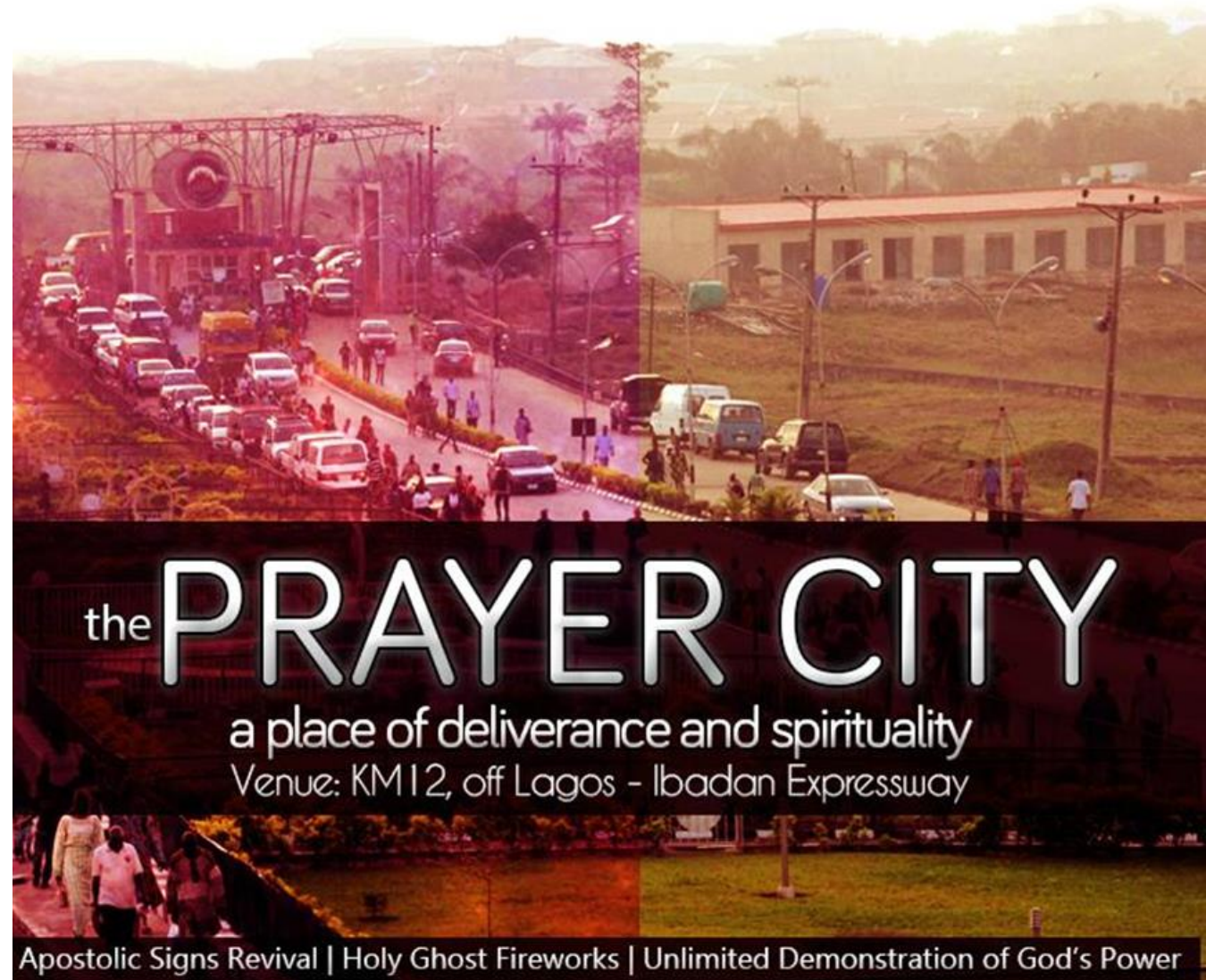
The Holy Highway

- Lagos has grown beyond its boundaries and the northern growth is primarily along the Lagos Ibadan expressway

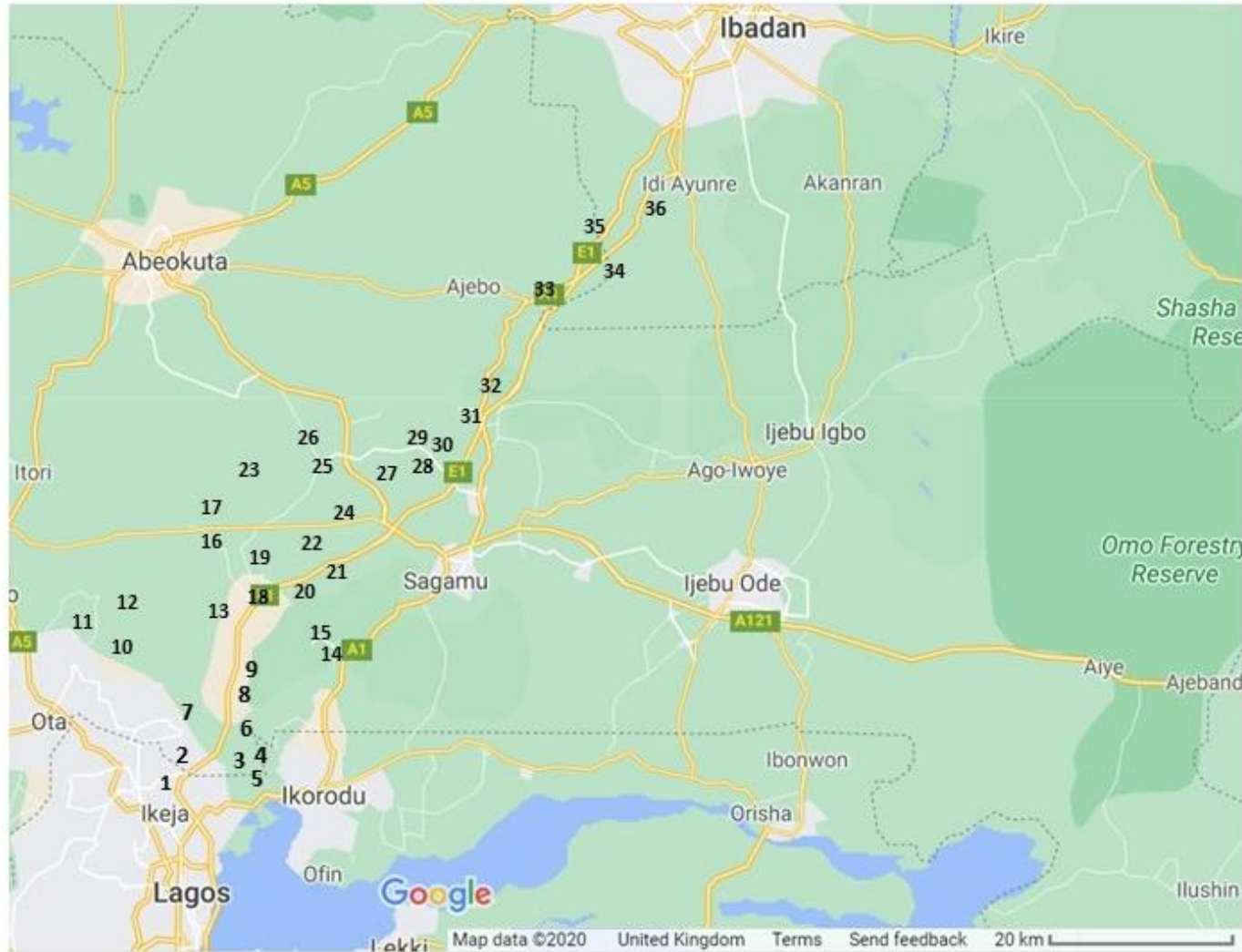
(Lawanson, Yadua and Salako, 2012)

- Lagos- Ibadan Expressway has more than 20 prayer camps/ cities between Lagos toll gate and Sagamu Interchange as at 2015, which have grown to 36 in 2020

(Janson and Akinleye, 2015, Lawanson, forthcoming)



Prayer Camps/Cities along Lagos-Ibadan Expressway



Legend

1. Daystar Magboro Experience centre (left)
2. MFM Prayer city (left)
3. RCCG House of Jacob (right)
4. Christ apostolic church, Land of Beulah (right)
5. RCCG (right)
6. St. Paul Catholic Church, Ibafo (right)
7. Deeper life Bible church (left)
8. Christ Embassy New Camp Ground (right)
9. CCC Camp (right)
10. The Scepter Christian church of God (left)
11. Flame gospel church (left)
12. Faith Revival Baptist Church Aseese (left)
13. Fountain of Salvation prayer ministry (left)
14. Christ Mount Zion Bethel Healing Ministry (right)
15. Mount Zion soul touching ministry (right)
16. Labourers for Christ Ministry international (left)
17. Four square gospel church (left)
18. Nasfat Islamic center (left)
19. Upper room Camp (left)
20. Deeper life camp ground (right)
21. RCCG (right)
22. Four square gospel church (left)
23. Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses (left)
24. CCC (left)
25. Apostolic faith church (left)
26. CAC Fountain of life head quarters (left)
27. Assemblies of God Bethel Camp (left)
28. Pentecostal City Camp Ground (left)
29. Baptist international conference centre (left)
30. CFT Jesus city (left)
31. The Church of the Lord (Aladura) (left)
32. Gilgal camp (left)
33. Foursquare camp (left)
34. Gofamint Gospel City (right)
35. Celestial church Golden city (left)
36. Christian Church International Beulah (right)



REDEMPTION CAMP

- International headquarters of RCCG, opened in 1983 - expanded to over 2500 hectares, and still growing
- Membership spans all socio-economic classes with the national political and economic elite active in the church leadership (Obadare, 2018)
- Global replication agenda
- Triggered peri-urban expansion and land speculation activities in the area
- Growth of small scale and informal activities.
- Periodic traffic congestion and noise pollution.

“Redemption Camp is still expanding, until the Lord comes, until Jesus comes. The type of vision God gave him (our leader) is a city without boundaries,,

‘We are trying to do the same thing in Britain now. We have Redemption Camp in Floyd, Texas already. If you go to some other African countries like South Africa, you can see us trying to have similar things

URBAN PLANNING AT THE REDEMPTION CAMP

- Mostly outside the city planning control as there is **no comprehensive approved development plan** by any statutory authority.
- Urban planning and management are subject to “**self and internal regulations**”.
- Property purchase is **open to members of the church only** and reverts to the church on members demise.
- 12,000 residents in 15 gated communities of over 5,000 houses
- Facilities include roads, police station, hospital, supermarkets, banks, fun fair, post office, schools, printing press, and an independent power plant all functioning optimally.

Outright Purchase
Pay at least 50% of the purchase price for an immediate allocation
Pay up balance within 90 days before taking possession

HOUSES FOR SALE





Available for Sale:

3 Bedroom Detached Bungalow

- Purchase price is #20m
- Maintenance fee of #300,000 for 2 years
- 3 bathrooms and 4 toilets

Mortgage

- Open an account with Haggai Mortgage bank
- Pay at least 50% of the purchase price
- Mortgage is available @ 15% per annum for 50 months

3 Bedroom Detached Bungalow with BQ

- Purchase price is #22m
- Maintenance fee of #300,000 for 2 years
- 4 bathrooms and 5 toilets

Features Include:

- Tiled Living Areas
- 2 Car park space(per house)
- Bathroom water heater
- All Rooms en-suite
- Kitchen cabinet
- Wardrobe
- Water treatment plant
- Waste disposal facility
- 24 Hours Security

ALL HOUSES WILL BE READY FOR DELIVERY IN NOV. 2019

Only RCCG members are eligible to subscribe | This project built by OPHEAV Developers and financed by Haggai Mortgage Bank Ltd.

For more enquiries, Call- 234 809 540 2559 or 234 802 305 6403 or visit www.haggaimortgagebank.com



MOUNTAIN OF FIRE AND MIRACLES MINISTRIES

- International Headquarters of MFM, opened in 1994 on one plot, expanded to 2.75ha (36.4%) of community, and still growing
- Deliberate land acquisition agenda - using various means from offering above market rate, purchasing dilapidated buildings to more hostile mechanisms
- Activities trigger land speculation, higher land value and rental prices in the area
- Driver of gentrification in the community - with shifting land use from 82.5% residential to predominantly mixed use.
- Growth of small scale and informal activities.
- Periodic traffic congestion and noise pollution,

“It is the people they (MFM) send to scout that pressure people. Their people came to meet the baba that owns this place and the other house to sell, but they both refused,, - resident

“I know of someone who bought a plot of land about two years ago and now wants to resell. She knew that because of this church here that the price would go up, she bought it 32 million, now she wants to sell it for 42 million..... The church has already approached her,, – Estate surveyor



LAND USE CHANGE IN ONIKE

- OVER 70% of properties purchased by MFM since 2010
- Changing land use pattern from core religious functions such as church auditorium and children church before 2000 to more general/commercial land use functions including event centre, guest houses, children playground and book shop
- Change of use often done without planning approval

'They bought this land for car park, but later decided not to use it for carpark. They now use it for (commercial) playground/event centre'

URBAN PLANNING IN ONIKE

‘Many of the churches start the approval process, when we ask them to bring a particular documentation, they usually abandon the process’ – DO, Mainland LASPPA

: Planning permit applications involving Mountain of Fire and Miracles

YEAR OF APPLICATION	ADDRESS	NO OF FLOORS	APPLIED USE	Status of Application	Current use of property
2012	Remi – Abuah Crescent, Onike Yaba	2	Institutional	Abandoned	Main auditorium
2012	Prof. Ayodele, Awgijobi Avenue, Onike	4	Institutional	Under Processing	Teenage Church
2016	Remi Abuah Crescent, Onike	2	Institutional	Under Processing	Main auditorium
2016	Muyideen Bello Street, Onike	3	Residential	Approved	
2016	3, Remi Abuah Crescent Street, Onike	4	Residential	Approved	Music school
2018	1, Olu – Osifeso Street, Onike	4	Institutional	Under Processing	Church / Event Centre

BOTTOM UP (transient)

This points to the largely unnoticed and more nuanced strategy of appropriating and transitioning between religious and other land uses in a fluid and dynamic manner

Public Space Use

Conversion Of Use Of Religious Buildings

Appropriation of Public Spaces

- Pentecostal congregations spatially **remap the city** through active **appropriation of secular spaces** (classrooms, civic halls, hotels, warehouses, restaurants and nightclubs, cinemas, motor parks, sports stadia and racecourses) as sites for prayer meetings, healing and deliverance services, and Sunday worship (Gaiya, 2002, Adeboye, 2012).



THE EXPERIENCE

- Annual event since 2006 on first Friday of December
- Arguably biggest music concert in the world
- Grown from 70,000 participants in 2006 to 700,000 participants in 2018
- Often attracts political elite





Traffic Updates + Useful Info @trafficbutter · Dec 6, 2019

VIA @sly_gift: Traffic today was hell #experience14



GIDITRAFFIC @Gidi_Traffic · Dec 6, 2019

"@yunusade: @Gidi_Traffic The queues at Oshodi going to TBS is crazy @LbsIng should tell his ticketer to either stoo selling tickets or inform passengers of the heavy queue before buying the ticket @followlasg 5.40pm #GIDITRAFFIC

"In the morning, Uber rides cost more than eyeballs on the open market. Food became hot commodity and people had to be careful as they left (to avoid being robbed or assaulted),, – Participant, 2019



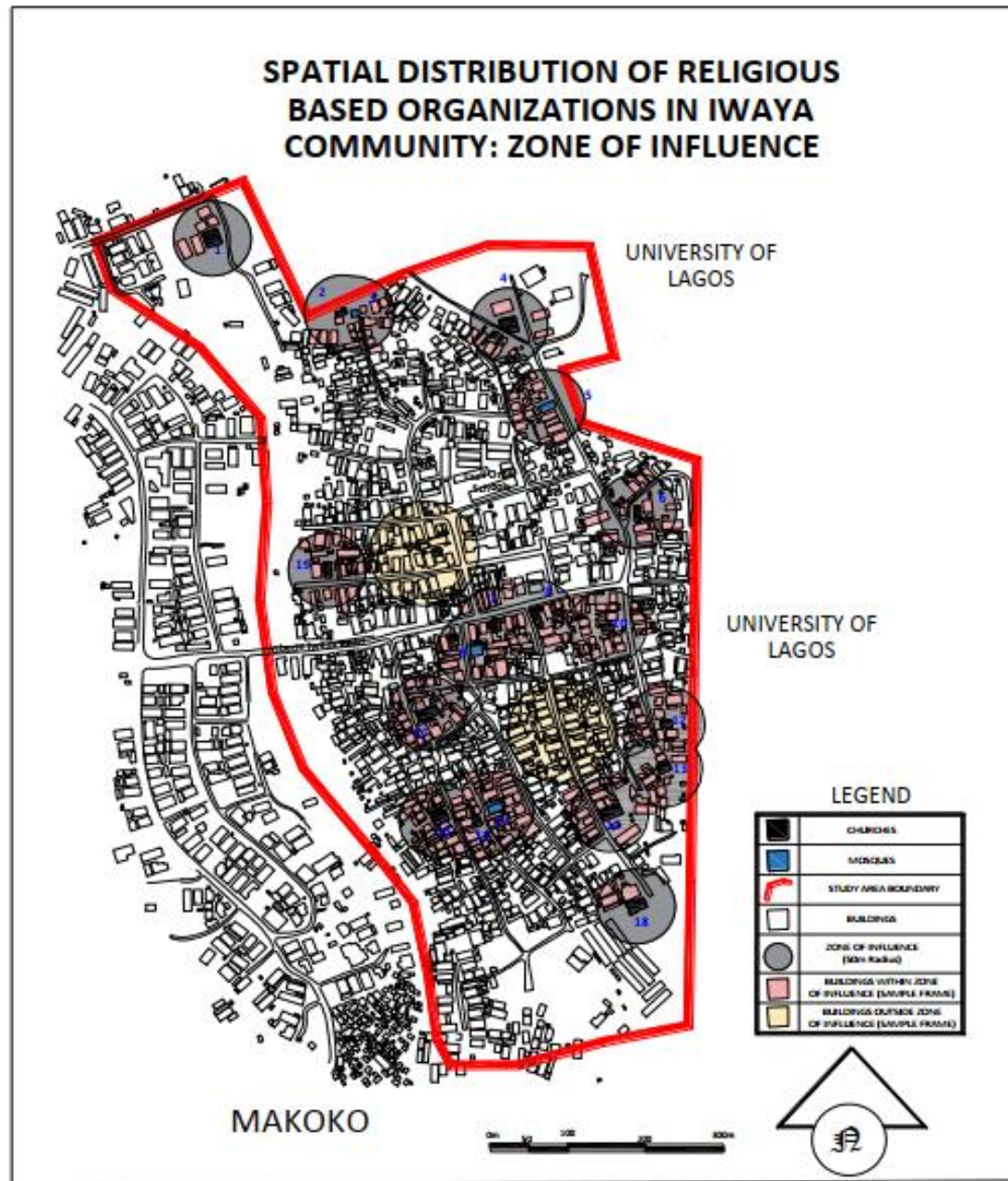
Photo by Oghenelego Ofili



Credit: Akintunde akinleye www.nsibidiinsitute.org

Appropriation of Religious Spaces for other uses

- In this context, we explore **uses that are transient in nature** that come into play as substitute land uses as against the regularized and recognized use of space.
- This can be observed in the use of a building for a Church during the weekend and a school during the week. It can also be a church by day and a sanctuary (residential) by night.
- This type of temporality is common in informal communities



IWAYA

- 19 religious sites were identified, 12 of them were found to practice alternative uses.
- 67% of the religious buildings are also used as residential spaces.
- 33% are used for institutional purposes – educational
- Only one was used for commercial purposes
- 70% of these sites allow non-members to benefit from the alternative use of the religious spaces.



CHURCH BY DAY, HOME BY NIGHT

- **Protection of sacredness of religious space** with clear partitioning of the worship area, which must not be breached.
- **Religious practices must be observed** e.g no footwear within the sanctuary.
- **Open to church members in distress and new migrants to the city.**
- Length of stay ranges **from four days to two years.**
- Those accommodated pay by providing services to the church such as cleaning.

“We currently harbour a family whose house got burnt. For the meantime, we have them staying here in the church where we provide for them till they are able to secure another accommodation”- Shepherd in charge

SCHOOL ON WEEKDAYS, CHURCH AT WEEKENDS



- Used for after school lessons, vocational skills training and holiday lessons and in a more structured mode as elementary school
- Protection of sacredness of religious space with clear partitioning of the worship area, which must not be breached, hence teaching is done with temporary, mobile equipment.
- Open to children of members and the entire community.

“We pay the teacher per day, and the church does not charge, so the school fees is not high,, – Parent, Iwaya



How does this affect urban patterns and processes?

From the past, to the present.....Religious organisations in Lagos have exhibited similar characteristics especially regarding

- Engagements and alliances with political and economic elite
- Expansion agenda dominated by intentional approach to land acquisitions and appropriations
- Deliberate exploration of new urban vistas
- Competition among denominations
- Anchoring on charitable social development interventions



Religion is (re)shaping Lagos

- Lagos is rapidly exhibiting a reconfiguration of urban space, significantly driven by religious activities
- This results in complex interactions between FBO and urban management and urban planning agencies.
- Power dynamics are skewed in favour of the FBOs for political and economic reasons, thus presenting a serious challenge to urban planning and management practices across the city

Religion and urban interface

POSITIVE

- Local economic development
- Enhanced land value
- Enhanced urban aesthetics
- Social support for the vulnerable
- Community Development

“MFM is not disturbing anybody in this area, it developed this area, for example now no thief can disturb this area because MFM pays for the security, and they keep close watch even at night,,

“Look at this road now, MFM tarred it and it is not the first time, no government is worried when it comes to this area because of MFM’s input,,

NEGATIVE

- Gentrification and socio-spatial segregation
- Spaces of Exclusion and conflict
- Disjointed land use patterns
- Urban sprawl
- Land speculation
- Traffic and Public Space nuisance
- Waste management and Noise pollution

“When the tarred road came to be, they did not extend it to our side. They just stopped it over there (by their car park), and then they use it to disturb us,,

“As for the noise, we are used to it, we have seen them as a religious body, and that is what comes with it. We are not disturbed in anyway,,



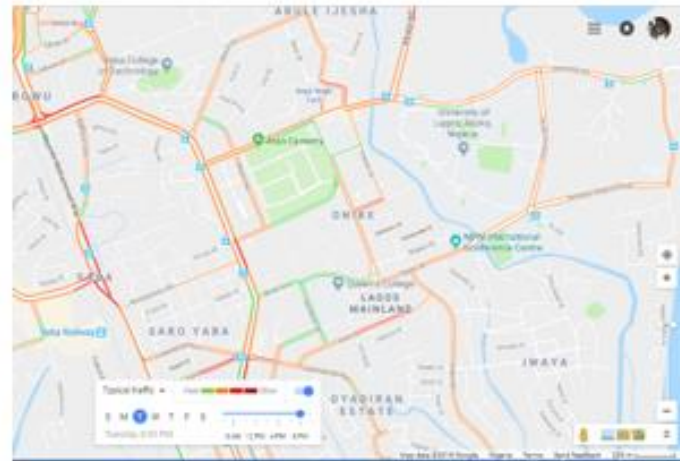
Wednesday 6am



Wednesday 2pm



Wednesday 8pm



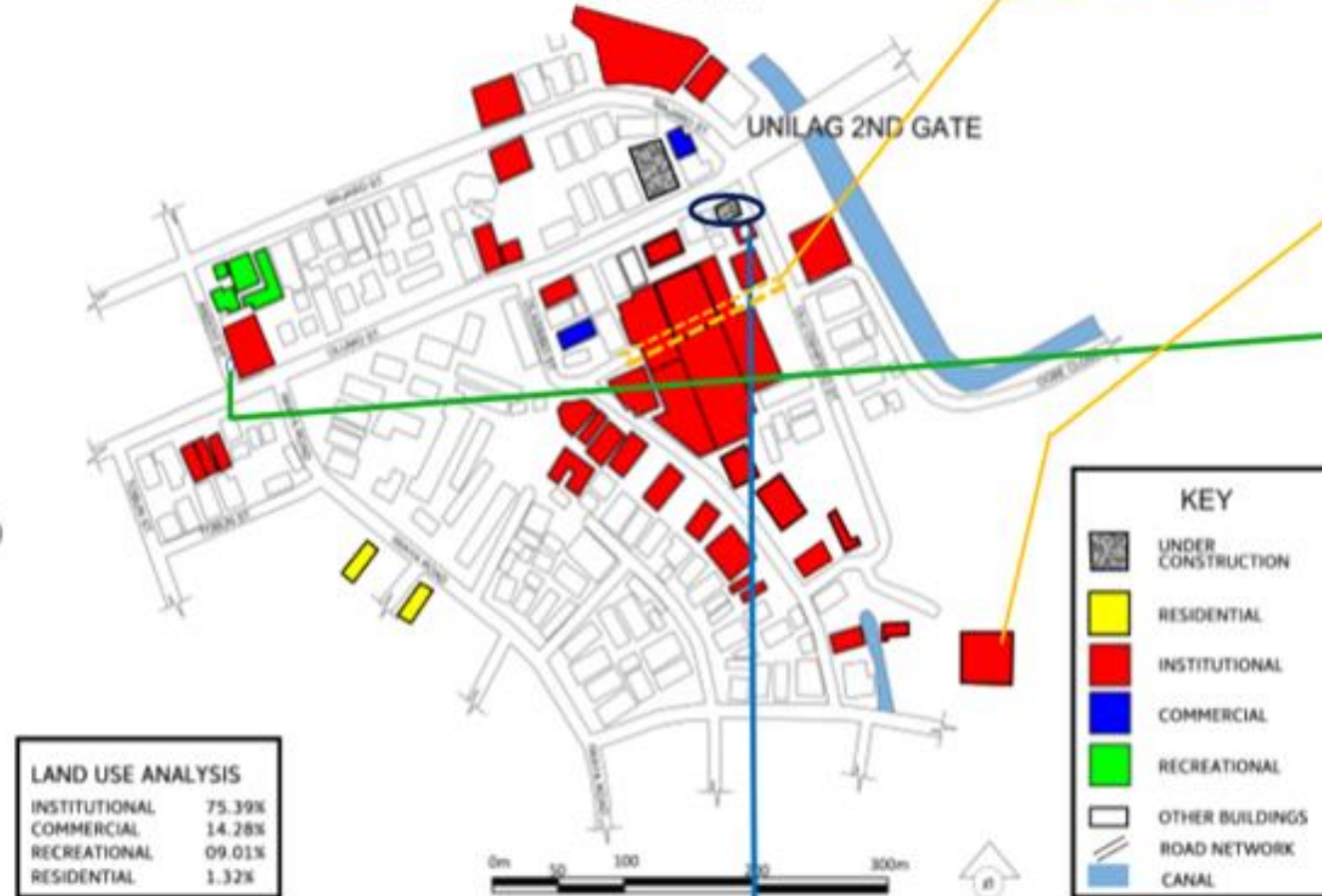
Tuesday 8pm

“The moment they get out, pedestrians would block everywhere and there wouldn’t be movement of vehicles. The church buses and other vehicles can then leave after one hour and that is particular about Wednesday and Sundays” (Resident on Unilag Campus)

“There was a Wednesday I was coming from my church (Yaba Baptist), when we finished I had to rush. Do you know that it took me 2 hours from Iwaya Road to Unilag back gate. I had to tell my family to come down and cross, I had already crossed the Iwaya road, looking at my place. I couldn’t leave my car, I was just looking at my building 5 blocks away – (Resident on Unilag Campus)

MFM PROPERTIES IN IWAYA

LAND USE MAP



Remi Abuah Stree has been completely removed from the map due to the church expansion

Ajanaku street has also been removed from the map due to the recent acquisition of 4plots for the proposed MFM car park towards the tail end of the street. The pedestrian pathway through which residents access their homes has been closed off by the fencing of the property

With the acquisition of this property by MFM for their recreation centre, the local market faces constant threat of eviction. MFM has instructed that only vendors with the church authorized stickers could sell especially during periods of church activities. Many of the market women who had been then prior to 1994 were driven away from the area According to one of them "the only source of income that I have to take care of my grandchildren that are orphan, they want to take it from me, they should please allow us to sell. We cannot disturb them".

There is lingering hostility between MFM and her immediate neighbor – Prosperfunds limited – due to the following unresolved issues.

- This property was acquired by MFM and demolished. In a bid to redevelop, the property was sandfilled. The direct consequence of the sand filling was such that the elevation of the MFM acquired property was raised, causing a breach into the Prosperfunds property. Robbers were able to access the premises through the church premises, carting away Laptop computers, cash and other valuables.
- The reconstruction of the drainage on the MFM property resulted in a situation where drainage slabs removed from the Prosperfund building line were not replaced, thus causing flooding of the premises
- There is indiscriminate parking of vehicles of visitors to the church in front of Prosperfunds building, sometimes impairing ability of staff members from leaving the premises.
- Some neighbours claim Prosperfunds refuses to sell her property to the church in spite of repeated entreaties.

What are the urban planning responses?

Expansion agenda often results in contravention of planning regulations

Religious organisations

Scant regard for planning regulatory frameworks

Weak capacity for effective development control

Planning Administrative structure

Constrained by political influence of religious organizations and public sensitivity to FBO social development programmes

**UNREGULATED LAND USE CHANGE
GENTRIFICATION AND SEGREGATION
URBAN MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES**

Urban Planning Responses

Planning Standards: lack of coherence

- Religion embedded in institutional land use – hence there is no categorical oversight
- Lagos State Physical Planning Permit Authority recommends different space standards from the Lagos Mainland Model city plan.
- Conditions for obtaining approval for institutional (religious) buildings are cumbersome, hence the FBOs usually apply for residential planning permit or building renovation permits whose requirements are easier to comply with.
- *‘Because they know they wouldn’t be able to meet special application regulations and approval order which churches belong to’(GM, LASPPA)*

Development Permits: finding a way around the rules

- *‘Change of use is not allowed in Lagos state, and so many of the churches buy old structures, obtain demolition permit, so that they can apply for new development permit’ (DO, Lagos Mainland)*
- *‘Many of the churches start the approval process, when we ask them to bring a particular documentation, they usually abandon the process and continue building’ (DO, Lagos Mainland)*

Development Control: Capitalizing on the bureaucratic lags caused by Paper communication

- Oftentimes, FBOs go ahead to construct buildings at variance with what was approved by LASPPA, largely because LASPPA’s jurisdiction ends at the point of planning approval. The responsibility for development control and ensuring compliance with approved development permit lies with the Lagos State Building Control agency (LABCA). It takes up to three months to officially communicate between LABCA and LASPPA
- *‘There are many planning institutions, agencies and so on and it is not very clear who is doing what, and it is uncoordinated’ (Urban Activist)*

Conclusion

Policy Recommendations

Urban planning reforms/governance

- Recognize the influence of religious activities in (re)shaping the urban form of Lagos
- Revise Planning Standards to accommodate religious infrastructure specifically rather than current generic institutional categorization
- Intensify regional development and identify religious land use as a major driver of peri-urbanism

Local governance

- Partner with FBOs for targeted basic service provision and community development
- Ensure FBO provided services do not exacerbate social exclusion
- Explore potentials of religious tourism as LED initiative

Co-production of urban knowledge and services

- Generate disaggregated data to understand the impact of FBOs on emerging form and context of the city's development
- Explore co-production initiatives between FBOs and communities on the one hand, and FBOs and Government on the other for inclusive development

Key Reflections

- FBOs are carrying out Alternative Urbanisms, often in **defiance of extant planning regulations**
- FBOs are **bridging government's infrastructure gaps** and stepping to provide social development services especially at the micro scale
- Religion – Urbanisation Interface in Lagos is a **paradoxical and complicated** process that requires further interrogation from multidisciplinary dimensions.
- We must go beyond seeing **Religion 'in' the city, or Religion 'and' the city**, but rather focus on the **entanglements of Religion and Urban Change**, a perspective which sees religion as an active agent '**preparing and pushing**' in processes of urbanisation as well as **reacting and adapting** to changing urban conditions (Rüpke 2018).



THANK YOU