



**LAGOS CONFERENCE 2025**  
**INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN AND DIASPORA STUDIES**  
**UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS**

**BOOK OF ABSTRACT**

**LC01**

**Lagos Between Roots and Realities: Autochthony, Identity, Politics and Power Dynamics in  
Nigeria's 2023 Election**

**Convener: Ibukun Akinola**

**Panel Abstract**

Lagos, often referred to as Nigeria's commercial capital, is a microcosm of broader national identity struggles. Autochthonous -indigenous- divisions were heavily harnessed during the 2023 election campaign, influencing voter behaviour, political allegiances, and contestations over who has the right to wield political power in Lagos. This panel explores the interaction of identity, power and politics in Lagos, focusing on the 2023 elections. The panel seeks to interrogate how socio-political and ethnic groups used narratives of indigeneity to assert claims to Lagos; the role of political violence, voter suppression and thuggery in reinforcing ethnic tensions and shaping electoral outcomes; the role of social media in forming public ideas of autochthony and identity politics; and the long-term implications of this type of politics for Lagos as a metropolitan and economic centre in Nigeria. The panel will analyse the influence of regionalism and ethnic loyalties in shaping political strategies, especially in relation to key electoral outcomes, such as the gubernatorial and presidential races. Additionally, the panel will look at how identity politics intersected with broader national issues such as migration, citizenship, and political representation and how youth activism, religious identity and economic divides influenced the 2023 elections. Through an interdisciplinary lens, this panel seeks to offer insights into how the politics of autochthony continue to shape contemporary Nigerian elections and their impact on national unity and democratic practices. Thus, this panel welcomes contributions from scholars, postgraduate students, civil society organisations, and practitioners on these subthemes and others, that may relate to them. **Keywords: Autochthony, Identity politics, Lagos, Ethnic tensions, 2023 elections.**

## **Presentations**

### **The Socio-Cultural Dynamics of Politics, Ethnicity and Commerce: The Complexities in the Ownership of Lagos**

**John Uwa** – Mountain Top University, (uwa.jmo@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

The complex interplay of politics, ethnicity, and commerce in Lagos poses questions about identity, culture, belonging and ownership. And while there are existing scholarships attributing the ownership of Lagos to the Awori people, the combined arrival of the Portuguese and the British colonizers, the Binis, and then the Saros and Agudas (returnee slaves), to established Lagos as a major commercial center in sub-Saharan Africa, and further opening Lagos to droves of immigrants and migrants from 'Igbo' extractions, Hausas and cross-border nationalities, established a new cultural dynamics in commerce, ethnicity and politics that would fertilize grounds for complex questions and answers about belonging and ownership in Lagos to sprout. To that extent, this essay explores the socio-cultural dynamics underlying the contentious question of "who owns Lagos?", by examining how historical, cultural, and economic factors have shaped the city's politics, ethnicity, and commerce, and how these factors continue to influence the city's development, identity and ownership in 21st century. Using Appadurai's theory of global ethnoscape, Barth's theory of ethnic boundaries and Annelies & Vertovec's theory of superdiversity to analyze the complex power dynamics and interests at play in critical literatures, interviews and commentaries in local newspapers, this essay aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the "ownership" debate in Lagos and its implications for the city's future.

### **The Concept of 'Omo Eko' and 'Ara Eko' in Lagos During Nigeria's 2023 Election**

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#### **Abstract**

Lagos, characterized by its identity as a metropolitan city, has a rich history that fuels debates about its true ownership. This discussion often centers around the distinction between 'Omo Eko' (the children of Lagos) and 'Ara Eko' (those from other regions). Such debates frequently resurface during electoral periods when electoral tensions rooted in various ethnic and religious identities become particularly pronounced. This study comprehensively analyzes the interplay between indigenous identity and contemporary political power dynamics in Lagos during the 2023 elections. By contextualizing current political discussions within historical narratives of autochthony, this paper examines how political elites and grassroots organizations utilize claims of belonging and

indigeneity. A mixed-methods approach is employed, integrating discourse analysis of political speeches, media content, and policy documents with qualitative interviews conducted with voters, party officials, and community leaders. The findings suggest that, while Lagos continues to present itself as a cosmopolitan hub, underlying tensions between “roots” and “realities” significantly influence voter behavior and electoral outcomes. This paper explores how identity politics and power dynamics influence elections and governance in growing African cities.

**Keywords:** Lagos, autochthony, identity politics, power dynamics, 2023 election, urban governance, political mobilization.

## **Who Owns Lagos? Autochthony, Power, And The 2023 Electoral Reckoning**

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### **Abstract**

Lagos has never just been a city—it is a battleground of belonging. The 2023 elections ripped open long-buried tensions, exposing the fractures between "sons of the soil" and those deemed outsiders. Who truly owns Lagos? The political elite weaponized autochthony, turning indigeneship into a tool of exclusion, while millions who built their lives in the city were told they were mere tenants in a home they helped create. Ballots became battlefields, and democracy was tested against the raw force of identity politics, street-level power struggles, and elite interests desperate to retain control.

This paper examines how the 2023 elections in Lagos reignited old questions of indigeneity, migration, and political dominance. Why did a supposedly cosmopolitan city descend into rhetoric of "us vs. them"? How did political actors manipulate ethnic and regional sentiments to shape electoral outcomes? And in the aftermath, what does this mean for the future of Lagos as both a global city and a contested homeland?

Lagos has always thrived on contradiction —hyper-modern yet deeply traditional, welcoming yet exclusionary. But the 2023 elections forced the city to confront itself. As the dust settles, one question lingers: Was this just another election, or did Lagos witness a shift that will redefine power in Nigeria for decades to come?

## **Resisting The Aggression Of Late Arrivals: Indigeneity And Electoral Contestations In The 2023 Lagos Governorship Elections**

**Samuel Afolabi** – University of Lagos, (afolabidharmy32@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

The 2023 Lagos governorship elections underscored the historical identity, sense of belonging, and political power conflicts inside Nigeria's commercial hub. The election depended on the resistance of

indigenous Lagosians to the perceived political aggressiveness of late arrivals, especially the non-indigenous groups who had historically controlled the city's economics and population. It raised doubts about native political influence, and myths of indigeneity were strategically employed as a countermeasure. This study examines how political leaders and mass organizations employed autochthony discourse to contest the perceived dominance of non-indigenes in Lagos politics and interrogates the impact of these processes on voter turnout and election outcomes, while analyzing how political rhetoric, ethnic mobilization, and voter suppression reinforced claims of indigeneity. The resistance was seen as a struggle for political dominance and a proclamation of identity, as demographic shifts and economic influences transformed Lagos into a global cultural hub. This study examines campaign strategies, election day occurrences, and post-election narrative transformations to contextualize the Lagos election within metropolitan migration, citizenship, and political allegiance. The impact of such opposition on Lagos' cosmopolitan future and Nigeria's democratic identity politics is also analyzed.

Keywords: Autochthony, Indigeneity, Political Resistance, Identity Politics

## **The Chinese In Lagos: The Power Of Trade, Investment, And Cultural Influence**

**Adetoro Olaniyi Banwo**– University of Lagos, (abanwo@unilag.edu.ng)

### **Abstract**

The presence of the Chinese community in Lagos has introduced multiple dimensions to the city's trade, investment, and cultural dynamics. This research examines the impacts of these engagements on Lagos and its populace. It employs a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative analyses of trade and investment data with qualitative interviews involving policymakers, business leaders, and civil society actors. It adopts the World Systems Theory as its framework and it posits that economically advanced states invest in developing economies due to their capital and technological advantage. This research investigates the cultural influence exerted by the Chinese through the activities of the Embassy, Consulate, and Confucius Institutes, including Chinese language promotion, festivals, celebrations, conferences, and dialogues. The study assesses China's contributions to Lagos' development and its achievement of the sustainable development goals. It reveals that Chinese investments have facilitated technology transfer, skills development, job creation, and infrastructural growth within Lagos State. However, it interrogates the multidimensional implications of these engagements, including emerging narratives of cultural erosion, dominance, and neo-colonialism. The study observes tensions arising from Chinese business practices, cultural dominance, work ethics, and investment models, which differ markedly from Western approaches. This research reveals that Chinese investments in Lagos often operate under a 'win-win' framework aimed at fostering mutual economic and cultural benefits. The study concludes by recommending that Lagos formulates investment-friendly policies and strategic action plans to attract further Chinese investments, while also encouraging Lagosians to embrace Chinese skills, techniques, and knowledge to enhance their global competitiveness.

## **Beyond Ethnic Crises: Rethinking Ownership Of Lagos Through Political Representations**

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### **Abstract**

For decades, Lagos, the commercial hub of Nigeria, has been at the center of discourse, particularly on the issue of ownership, taking a new dimension since the beginning of the fourth republic. Central to this argument is the claim that Lagos is “No Man’s Land” with the narrative fueling tensions between indigenous and non-indigenous settlers. While several studies have provided explanations to support or challenge this claim, none have examined Lagos’ ownership through political representations. As a result, this study uses political representation as an entry point to interrogate Lagos ownership beyond ethnic crises. The study has three fundamental objectives. First, it identifies the factors that fuel Lagos ownership debate. Second, it investigates the pattern of political representation in Lagos, especially from the beginning of Nigeria’s fourth republic. Finally, it suggests an alternative way to rethink Lagos’ ownership beyond ethnic crises for National cohesion. This study adopts a qualitative approach as a method of data collection, involving interviews with selected stakeholders in Lagos politics and historians. The study concludes that political representation in Lagos since the beginning of the fourth republic has challenged the authentic ownership of Lagos through the lens of political offices dominated by non-Lagosians.

**Keywords:** Ethnic Crises, Debate, Lagos, Ownership, Representations

## **LC03**

### **Exploring The Dynamics Of Land Policy And Politics In Lagos**

**Convener:** Maryam Quadri

#### **Panel Abstract**

**The intersection of land policy and politics in Lagos is generating interest among diverse stakeholders. The nature and character of land policy and politics in Lagos demonstrate intricate interactions between power, identity, and autochthony. With policy being the intentionality of governments to address societal issues, it becomes imperative to unfreeze social actions on land policy and politics in Lagos. As the economic nerve center of the nation, the conurbation’s socioeconomic reality brings conflict and contestation for land**

among actors to the fore. To grapple with this situation, the government has brought about a retinue of land policies and reforms. This begs the question, how are the different land policies and reforms by the Lagos State Government able to address the contestation for power between conflicting social actors? and to what extent have they been able to ameliorate the conditions of those with feelings of perceived injustice and powerlessness within the state? In this panel, we will discuss our respective explanations of land policy and politics in Lagos and their implications for the development of the city.

## **Presentations**

### **Land Governance In Lagos State: Political Dynamics And Their Impact On Urban Development And Climate Resilience**

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#### **Abstract**

Lagos state, a rapidly growing city is facing significant challenges in land use and management. These challenges stem from political interests, regulatory frameworks, and the influence of various stakeholders on land policies. This has exposed the power imbalances and bureaucratic inefficiencies often resulting in inequitable and ineffective land management. This paper seeks to investigate how land policies are formulated and implemented amid competing demands and limited resources in Lagos state, Nigeria. Using qualitative research methods, the paper is expected to identify key players involved in land decisions and investigate how these groups shape land governance. Additionally, it will give insight into how political dynamics impact land distribution, urban planning, and housing development and also uncover the tensions between formal regulations and informal practices thus examining their implications for urban growth and climate resilience. This paper will contribute to broader discussions on urban governance, sustainable development, and climate resilience in fast-expanding cities.

Keywords: Land Governance, Political Dynamics, Political interest.

### **Land, Power, And Urbanization: The Evolution Of Land Ownership And Political Indigeneity In Lagos**

**Opeyemi Balogun and Roland Akpe** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos. ([opebalo7@gmail.com](mailto:opebalo7@gmail.com))

#### **Abstract**

Urban development in Lagos has been deeply shaped by historical land policies, colonial tenure systems, and post-colonial governance structures. The introduction of English land tenure laws

during British rule, notably the Public Lands Ordinance of 1876 and the Land and Native Rights Ordinance of 1910, marked a transition from indigenous communal ownership to formalized land registration, favouring commercial interests and dispossessing many indigenous groups.

The Land Use Act of 1978 further centralized land control under the state government, leading to bureaucratic inefficiencies, tenure insecurity, and the rise of informal settlements.

As Lagos rapidly urbanized, areas once considered less inhabitable, such as Ajao Estate, Okota, Cele, and Ago Palace Way, witnessed significant residential expansion, largely driven by non-indigenous populations, particularly the Igbo. The constitutional ambiguity of indigeneship has fuelled political gatekeeping, resource allocation biases, and electoral strategies that privilege indigenous Yoruba elites. Yet, the economic contributions of non-indigenes in trade, real estate, and industrial development have redefined urbanism in Lagos, transforming formerly peripheral zones into thriving urban centres. The interplay of land tenure regulations, urban expansion, and ethnic politics will be examined to see how they shape Lagos' trajectory as a megacity, and why policy reforms that balance state control with inclusive land access are crucial.

## **Land Contestation, Money Ritual And Ritual Money. a Lagos Heritage?**

**Hamed Olanrewaju, Isiah Olayode, Abiodun Adejumo and Kayode Eesuola –**

Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos.

### **Abstract**

The issue of land contestation, autochthony, and power in Lagos is fluid and highly contested. While several studies have explored the multi-causal reasons behind disputes over land, power, and autochthony, little to no research has examined the role of money rituals and ritual money in fueling these conflicts. This study investigates whether ritual money constitutes a part of Lagos's heritage and how economic resources gained through both conventional and ritual means as a form of power and influence. Ultimately, access to wealth provides individuals and groups with the authority needed to assert their inclusion in the autochthonous calculus of Lagos. Against this background, the study employs Occult Economies Theory (Jean & John Comaroff), which explores how mystical, supernatural, and ritual practices intersect with capitalism, wealth accumulation, and power structures in modern African societies. This theory is highly relevant to the study of land contestation, autochthony, and money rituals in Lagos.

The study will adopt a qualitative research methodology, grounded in ethnographic fieldwork and in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including four family heads in Lagos, two historians, two urban planners, and four traditional rulers. Additionally, the research will analyze archival documents (colonial and post-colonial records, court cases), media discourse, and oral literature related to money rituals and land ownership. The collected data will be thematically analyzed, and the findings will form the basis for the research conclusions.

**Keywords:** Ritual Money, Money Ritual, Land Contestation, Occult Economy, Autochthony, Lagos Heritage.

## **LC04**

### **Contemporary Connections, Indigeneity And Identity For Stakeholders' Call To Action On Preserving In Preserving Indigenous Heritage Assets In Lagos**

**Convener: Mogbolahan Ajala**

#### **Panel Abstract**

**This panel explores the dynamic role of Lagos's heritage assets in shaping contemporary connections, strengthening indigenous identity, and fostering evolving identities amidst rapid urbanization and cultural globalization. These assets face mounting pressure, necessitating immediate and sustained stakeholder engagement. Preservation efforts, however, are hindered by significant challenges, notably custodians' struggles with managing rapid urban development and changes, and government support. This abstract emphasizes the critical need for collaborative action to protect and revitalize Lagos cultural heritage, recognizing the state role in fostering community resilience and the multitude of opportunities that can arise from effective preservation efforts across other Nigeria states. It highlights the urgency of stakeholder involvement in safeguarding Lagos heritage assets amidst the evolving dynamics of contemporary connections, indigeneity, and the formation of identities. As Lagos continues to evolve into a dynamic cultural hub, the preservation of indigenous heritage is increasingly threatened by urbanization, socio-economic pressures, and the city's growing cosmopolitan character. The state is Nigeria's most populous and dense city, and home to a rich variety of tangible and intangible cultural components, from festivals that happen all year round to heritage sites that reflect the deep-rooted histories of its indigenous communities. These cultural expressions range from traditional music, dance, and oral storytelling to arts, royal palaces, and crafts that form the backbone of local identity and community cohesion. The call to action for stakeholders, governments, cultural institutions, community leaders, and the private sector must be rooted in a contemporary understanding of identity, indigeneity, and the dynamic connections between past and present. This abstract explores the urgent need to preserve indigenous heritage assets in Lagos by examining the role of cultural continuity, identity formation, and inclusive development in safeguarding the city's intangible and tangible heritage.**



## **Presentations**

### **Gender Dynamism In Àyínlá Ọmọwúrà And Halimot Ọmọwúrà's Àpàlà Music**

**Owolabi Akegbeyale** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos,  
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#### **Abstract**

This paper explores the evolving gender dynamics in Àpàlà music, focusing on Àyínlá Ọmọwúrà and Queen Halimot Ọmọwúrà's contributions, through the lenses of Sociology of Literature and Post-structural feminist theory. Àpàlà, a traditional Yorùbá musical genre, has historically been male-dominated with performers often reinforcing patriarchal structures. However, the works of Àyínlá Ọmọwúrà and his daughter Halimot, offer a critical rethinking of gender roles within the genre. While Àyínlá Ọmọwúrà music largely reflected the traditional patriarchal perspectives dominant in his era, Halimot Ọmọwúrà's contributions challenge and redefine these narratives, signalling a shift in gender representation. Their works collectively illustrate how Àpàlà music serves as both a reinforcement of traditional gender roles and a platform for transformation. Ultimately, this study underscores the fluidity of gender roles in Yorùbá music, revealing how socio-cultural changes continue to influence artistic expression in Àpàlà genre. The study employs qualitative content analysis of Àyínlá Ọmọwúrà's 'Ìṣe-ilé', 'È Gbó Tuntun' and '25x40', alongside Halimot Ọmọwúrà's 'Àpàlà Gbòde', 'Like Father, like daughter' and 'Àpàlà Extraordinary' to explore themes of gender representations. The paper reveals that Àpàlà music is a flexible medium where gender roles can be negotiated and redefined overtime.

**Keywords:** Gender Dynamism, Àpàlà music, Àyínlá Ọmọwúrà, Queen Halimot Ọmọwúrà

### **Mapping Lagos Through Literature: Cultural Identity, Heritage Contestation, And Digital Preservation**

**John Chukwudi** – Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain. Centre for Digital Humanities, University of Lagos, Nigeria. Lead Digital Library Services, African Leadership University, Kigali, Rwanda. (hjohn1@uoc.edu)

#### **Abstract**

Lagos, Nigeria's cultural and economic epicentre, is a city of rich history and transformation. This study explores how Nigerian authors—Achebe, Okri, Adichie, and Atta—depict Lagos's migration, urbanization, and identity shifts. Their works capture the city's evolution from a colonial hub to a dynamic metropolis.

LitScape, a digital platform, maps literary landmarks like Bar Beach, now lost to Eko Atlantic City, and Ilojo Bar, demolished despite its heritage value. It also highlights the Eyo Festival and Freedom Park, linking literature with cultural memory through GIS tools and StoryMapJS. This research preserves Lagos's past by visualizing how urban development impacts cultural identity, fostering engagement with its layered narratives.

Keywords: Lagos, Nigerian Literature, Digital Humanities, Bar Beach, Ilojo Bar, Eyo Festival, Freedom Park, Urbanization, Cultural Heritage, LitScape.

## **Keep Walking Nigeria: Space Colonization And Space Transformation In The Lagos Independence Tunnel**

**Shina Alimi and Stephen Adewale** – Department of History, Obafemi Awolowo University  
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### **Abstract**

The project “Keep Walking Nigeria” in Lagos Nigeria sponsored by “Johnnie Walker” is a cultural and political reawakening programme with a view to promoting the spirit of nationalism, freedom and independence of Nigerian state. The project communicates the idea of nationalism and patriotism through social slogans, and wall paintings of Nigerian nationalists and Johnnie Walker’s logo. However, a close reading of the paintings reveals some subtle contradictions locked in the project. This study therefore seeks to understand how the process of beautifying Lagos city transformed a public space into a neo-colonial space. The second object of the study is to understand how the intersection of the aesthetic ideology of the murals and social slogan of the project “Keep Walking Nigeria” painted in the Maryland Independence Tunnel provides a useful entry into decolonization and decoloniality discourses. The data for this study are derived from the murals painted at the Maryland Independence Tunnel in Lagos and oral interviews of the painters.

**LC05**

### **Lagos And Its Diaspora**

**Convener:** Shupo Shasore, SAN

### **Panel Abstract**

**This panel speaks to the discourse on Lagos and her diaspora, the diverse diasporic engagements from the locations such as Freetown, Bahia, USA, UK, and other African and European nationalities.**

### **Presentations**

**The Left Behind: Interrogating Social Media Mediation In Extalgia Relations In Lagos, Nigeria**

**Deborah Jayeoba** – University of Lagos, (debbiejayeoba@gmail.com)

## **Abstract**

Extalgia is an emerging concept from the interaction and dynamics of diaspora and nostalgia, focusing on the emotional and psychological experiences of the left-behind. Extalgia, introduced by Senayon Olaoluwa, describes the suffering and creativity of the stay-at-homes after the migration of their relative (s). While diaspora and nostalgia have been extensively studied, extalgia remains underexplored, particularly in how the left-behind express, manage, and resolve the state of being “left behind”. This research addresses this gap by examining the mediating role of social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and X, in the expression and management of 'extalgic' feelings among the inhabitants of Lagos who are in the category of the “left behinds”.

This study is guided by Attachment Theory, which explains emotional bonds and the impacts of separation, and the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which explores how individuals use media to fulfil needs, the study employs a mixed-methods approach. Data is collected through structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews with approximately 200 respondents from Lagos, Nigeria, who have access to the specified social media platforms.

The research examines the emotional states of the left-behind, investigates how social media enables the expression and management of 'extalgic' feelings, and highlights the cultural specificity of extalgia among Lagos inhabitants in connection to the diaspora.

## **Levinas, Lagos And The Ethics Of Becoming**

**Abiodun Afolabi** – Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba-Akoko, (abiodunafoo@gmail.com)

## **Abstract**

I aim to explore the philosophical underpinnings of identity formation in Lagos and its diaspora through the lens of Emmanuel Levinas’ ethics of responsibility. As Lagos rapidly evolves into a hyper-urbanized, globalized, and culturally hybrid megacity, identity is no longer a fixed construct but one shaped by movement, memory, digital mediation, and social tension. Within this fragmented and fast-paced context, the paper interrogates how Lagosians navigate the ethical imperative of coexistence and recognition of the Other. Drawing from Levinas, identity is reimagined not as an autonomous self in pursuit of personal advancement but as a relational self that is constituted through responsibility to others in a city marked by structural inequality, economic precarity, and fierce ambition. The Lagosian self, both at home and in the diaspora, is thus caught in a moral dialectic between self-assertion and ethical responsiveness. The argument I pursue is that the future of identity in Lagos lies in a reorientation toward an ethics of becoming—one that affirms plurality, vulnerability, and care in the face of modern pressures. Ultimately, Lagos becomes a philosophical space where the question of how to live with others is not merely theoretical but existential, political, and urgent. This is an invitation to rethink urban identity not only as a sociocultural construct but as an ethical practice grounded in interdependence with the Other.

## **People Of Caribbean Heritage And Their Contribution To The Landscape Of Lagos— Historical Legacies And Impact (19th, 20th, And 21st Centuries)**

**Feyi Raimi-Abraham** – London Metropolitan University, (fer0077@my.londonmet.ac.uk)

### **Abstract**

The contribution made by people of Caribbean heritage to the landscape of Lagos spans the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries. Their input is evident in the shaping of the city's historical, political, economic, social, and cultural landscape. During the 19th Century, freed slaves from the Caribbean settled in Lagos – mostly having first journeyed to other West African cities such as Freetown and Monrovia. People of Caribbean heritage brought their Western education, Christian missionary influence, professional skills, and commercial expertise to Lagos. In the 20th Century, Caribbean intellectuals, educators, and activists contributed to the development of Lagos by fostering Pan-Africanism and political consciousness. Figures such as Trinidadian-born George Padmore through advocacy contributed to the conversations about decolonization and economic self-sufficiency. Additionally, Caribbean professionals in fields such as medicine, engineering, and academia bolstered the post-independence growth of Lagos. The 21st Century has witnessed continued engagement through cultural exchanges, trade, and diplomatic relations. The Caribbean diaspora in Lagos has also played a role in fostering cultural synergy and contributing to the identity of Lagos as a global African metropolis and its evolution as a dynamic economic and cultural hub. This paper will discuss these and other influences by Caribbean people in the spheres of business, entertainment, and the modern culture of Lagos.

## **Migrations And Integrations In Lagos: Migrants Intelligence Gathering In Lagos Under Governor Babatunde Fashola**

**Titilayo Alade** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos,  
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### **Abstract**

The influence of cross-cultural nature of Lagos has often been felt in its economic and integrative enterprise, but not as much in its security development. This paper critically reviews the informal role of ethnic communities and Northern ethnic community leadership roles as local agents of intelligence in the sustenance (architecture) of peace and security operations in Lagos state, under the administration of Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola (2003-2011). The large wins from migrant intelligence gathering and response initiative in Lagos suburbs comes under special review during a period of increased terrorism threats to peace, security and extremist infiltrations around the world, and locally from Northern extremist groups such as Boko Haram and Islamic terrorist sects from the Sahel region in Africa. This paper analyses how Lagos Government's tactical response and understanding through strategic teamwork with migrants leadership contributed to intelligence gathering and tactical-pre-emptive security policies and plan of action to keep Lagos safe at a time when fear and suspicion of visitors from other tribes gripped the nation, and the world.

**Objective:** Promoting migrant intelligence gathering and response initiative for peace and security.

## **LC06**

### **Lagos As a Linguistic Melting Pot: Exploring Multilingualism In An Urban Metropolis**

**Convener:** Dr. Feyi Ademola-Adeoye

#### **Panel Abstract**

**Lagos, Nigeria's economic and cultural hub, is one of the most linguistically diverse cities in Africa. A center of migration, trade, and globalization, the city hosts a rich linguistic landscape where English, Nigerian Pidgin, Yoruba, and numerous indigenous and foreign languages coexist and interact. This panel seeks to examine how multilingualism shapes social interactions, identity, and power dynamics in Lagos, influencing key sectors such as education, business, media, and everyday communication.**

**We invite interdisciplinary contributions that explore the complexities of multilingualism in Lagos, addressing topics such as:**

**The Linguistic Landscape of Lagos: Patterns of language distribution and usage across different spaces.**

**Drivers of Linguistic Diversity: The historical, economic, and migratory forces shaping language use in Lagos.**

**Multilingualism in Social Interactions: Code-switching, code-mixing, and linguistic adaptation in daily life.**

**Language, Identity, and Social Relations: Language as a marker of belonging, inclusion, and exclusion.**

**Language in Key Sectors: The role of language in education, media, commerce, and governance.**

**Challenges and Opportunities: Language barriers, indigenous language preservation, and policy frameworks for inclusive multilingual governance.**

**This panel encourages discussions from linguistic, sociological, cultural, and policy perspectives to deepen our understanding of how language functions in Lagos' dynamic urban environment.**

## **Presentations**

### **Sonic Aggression”: Exploring Linguistic Harassment Of Passengers By Bus Conductors In Lagos**

**Kenneth Obiorah** – University of Lagos, Nigeria, (Kenobiora@unilag.edu.ng)

#### **Abstract**

This study investigates linguistic harassment of passengers by Danfo bus conductors in Lagos, employing sound walk methodology to capture the sonic dynamics of these interactions. By integrating sensory ethnography, acoustic analysis, and discourse analysis, this research provides an innovative perspective on the linguistic forms, strategies, and impacts of harassment in this context. Through sound walks, interviews, and passenger surveys, this study collects and analyzes data on the verbal aggression, intimidation, and humiliation faced by passengers. The sound walk methodology enables a nuanced exploration of the sonic landscape of Lagos's buses, revealing how language is used to assert power, establish dominance, and create a culture of fear. This research contributes to the methodological advancement of sound walk methodology in linguistics, demonstrating its potential for examining the intersections of language, space, and power. The study's findings aim to raise awareness about linguistic harassment in public transportation, inform policy initiatives, and promote more respectful communication practices among bus commuters in Lagos.

### **Language Use In An Era Of Ni Hao—Informal Translators And Linguistic Adaptation In Everyday Sino-Nigerian Interactions**

**Maryam Owodunni** – University of Toronto, (maryam.owodunni@mail.utoronto.ca)

#### **Abstract**

As China's economic and cultural presence deepens across Africa, Lagos has emerged as a key site for exploring the linguistic dynamics of grassroots globalization. While much scholarship focuses on state-led infrastructure and macroeconomic ties, this study shifts attention to the informal economies where language becomes central to negotiation and adaptation. It examines the rise of “layabout translators”—self-taught individuals without formal training in Mandarin who facilitate communication between Chinese migrants and Nigerian traders.

These informal interpreters, often learning through street-level interactions, occupy a critical yet overlooked space in Lagos's multilingual urban fabric. Unlike Confucius Institute graduates or returnees from China, layabout translators represent a subaltern form of linguistic agency, enabling trade and trust-building across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

Drawing on ethnographic research in Lagos markets, this paper explores how code-mixing, improvised translation, and informal language learning shape daily interactions. It asks how linguistic adaptation functions when formal education is inaccessible, and how language use mediates access to economic life. The study contributes to broader debates on urban multilingualism, language politics,

and social inclusion, highlighting Lagos as a linguistic melting pot and a site of creative linguistic negotiation in an era of shifting global power.

### **Family Language Policy Among Igbo Migrants In Lagos State, Nigeria**

**Flora Achumie** –University of Lagos, (floraazuka@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

Migration, internal or external exposes migrants to new ethnolinguistic groups which has effect on the maintenance of their heritage language. Several studies on migration in Nigeria have mainly focused on social and political issues with inadequate attention paid to linguistic challenges. As a result, this study aims to examine the family language policy among Igbo internal migrants in Lagos state Nigeria. This is with a view to ascertaining the ideologies that influence language policy in selected families, actual language practices among parents and children, language management practices adopted by parents, and society- based strategies adopted by parents. Spolsky's Family Language Policy (FLP) theory will be used to guide the research. A mixed methodology incorporating qualitative and quantitative approaches will be used. As a result, interviews, Participant Observations and the questionnaire will be used to collect data. The findings will show the cultural ideologies that underpin language policy among the selected families, how parents actually use languages in their homes and the various strategies adopted by parents to boost the heritage language in their homes. It is hoped that the outcome of this research will raise awareness about family language policy in Nigeria which is an area that has not attracted much interest from scholars. Keywords: Migrants, Spolsky, Family language policy, Igbo, ethnolinguistics.

### **Open City, Open Mic: Inward Migration And Its Implications For Radio Broadcast Language Distribution In Lagos**

**Adedoyinsola Eleshin** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos, (deleshin@unilag.edu.ng)

#### **Abstract**

The diverse/cosmopolitan nature of Lagos is traceable to the historical openness and hospitality of its indigenous inhabitants, the Yorùbás. This openness, as well as its attendant diversity, is evident in the multiplicity of adopted speech codes among radio stations in Lagos, especially as compared to those of other states where a level of undiluted speech is still maintained. But has the diversity of adopted speech codes by the Lagos radio broadcasting community kept adequately with the linguistic identities that they wish to represent? This paper interrogates the language of broadcast on radio in parallel with the demography of the inhabitants of this multi-ethnic city. It co-opts the metaphors of an open city and an open mic (everyone is permitted to sing/speak) to ask a broader question about the adequacy of linguistic representations in Lagos beyond the recognised lingua franca. I find that a comparison of the demography of settlers in Lagos against the ratio of stations that broadcast in the

languages of the said settlers reveals a lacuna in information dissemination. I argue for a fairer representation of indigenous languages in the Lagos radio broadcast ecosystem. In other words, if, by the welcoming and hospitable nature of its ownership, Lagos is functionally declared as an open city, then it behoves on its machinery of information dissemination to reflect the dynamism of an open mic.

Keywords: Lagos; Radio broadcast; indigenous languages; Linguistic representation.

## **Revisiting Distinctions Between Ìsàlẹ̀ Èkó Yorùbá Code And Standard Yorùbá**

**Babatunde Popoola** – University of Lagos, Nigeria, (popoolababatunde17@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

This paper examines the linguistic distinctions between the Èkó dialect of Lagos and Standard Yorùbá. Lagos State is the home to various dialects of Yorùbá, such as Àwòrì, Ìjẹ̀bú, including Èkó, which is predominantly spoken on Ìsàlẹ̀ Èkó. Despite been reported as one of the closest to the standard Yorùbá form, the Èkó dialect has retained some contrasting linguistic features that needed to be revisited.

The study accounts for the linguistics gaps between the Èkó dialect and Standard Yorùbá. The phonetic analysis reveals that the dialect exhibits specific vowel shifts, such as the absence of the nasal vowel an, leading to its replacement with ọn in lexical items. For instance, Ìtàn ‘story’ is realized as Ìtòn, and Èran ‘meat’ becomes Èrọn in the dialect."

Phonological distinctions include the dialect’s tendency to avoid identical vowel sequences. While Standard Yorùbá maintains retain word like Gaàrí ‘cassava flakes’, the Èkó dialect simplifies it to Gárí. Additionally, the uniform vowel deletion pattern in verb-object constructions distinguishes Èkó from the standard form.

The syntactic structure of the Èkó dialect further highlights its uniqueness. One notable feature is the retention of the canonical form of the first-person singular pronoun mi instead of the Standard Yorùbá mo and its unique conjunction dẹ, which is employed in place of the Standard Yorùbá sì.

This study calls for the need for further documentation of regional linguistic diversity.



## **Push 'n' Pressure: a Linguistic, Narrative, And Discursive Exploration Of Lagos Traffic**

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(jomoru@aul.edu.ng; foke2@luc.edu; adesaibu@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

This study, "Push 'n' Pressure," explores Lagos traffic through linguistic, narrative, and discursive perspectives. Lagos, Nigeria, is a city where movement is defined by congestion, struggle, negotiation, and adaptation. From the sharp retorts of bus conductors to the exasperated sighs of commuters and the firm commands of traffic wardens, Lagos traffic is a dynamic communicative scenery packed with diverse narrative and discourse. The study examines language, lived experiences, and discourse within the chaotic world of Lagos roadways. It analyzes linguistic strategies, personal and collective chronicles, and social discourse used by commuters, drivers, traffic officials, and street vendors. It captures firsthand the characters' experiences that reflect broader socio-economic and cultural realities; analyzes the pragmatic and semantic features of Lagos traffic discourse, including linguistic strategies in negotiating movement, space, and control; and how power relations, social hierarchies, survival, cultural norms and identities are constructed, negotiated, and contested. The study utilizes interviews and observation, integrating linguistic analysis, narrative inquiry, and discourse analysis. It presents Lagos traffic as a microcosm of the city's social, economic, and communicative complexities, offering fresh insights into how narrative, language and discourse interconnect to shape urban experience.

Keywords: Discourse, Lagos, Linguistics, Pressure, Traffic, Narrative.

## **Metaphorizing Lagos: Revisiting Urban Imaginaries In Indigenous Poems**

**Nkechi Aguobi** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos,  
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### **Abstract**

Urban spaces serve as dynamic canvases in literary representation, capturing the contradictions, fluidities, and multiplicities of human experience. This is particularly evident in Lagos, Nigeria's urban epicenter, which appears in African literature not just as backdrop but as quasi-character and metaphorical agent embodying hybridity. While Anglo-African texts have richly theorised Lagos, its representation in indigenous African literature, particularly poetry remains significantly underexplored. This paper addresses this critical gap by examining how indigenous poems from the Ìgbò and Yorùbá literary traditions engage with and reimagine urban experience. Focusing on Ikwubuzo's (1992) and Ajíkòbí's (2000) poems, it analyses how these works evoke Lagos and culturally encode the city through descriptive and performative language. Employing a formalist and comparative approach, the paper conducts close readings to illuminate how

metaphor, imagery, and linguistic texture construct Lagos as a multilayered urban phenomenon. Findings reveal that the poets' engagement with the city transcends mere depiction. They actively reconstruct the city in their poetic imagination, embedding its spatial, cultural, and social dimensions within indigenous thought. By elucidating the strategies through which indigenous poetry articulates urban space, this study challenges the linguistic marginalisation of indigenous forms in African literary scholarship.

Keywords: Lagos, indigenous poems, metaphor, urban imaginaries, Ìgbò and Yorùbá culture.

## **LC07**

### **Living In Lagos: Navigating Its Ever-Changing Transportation And Mobility System**

**Conveners: Prof. Oluranti Ojo (University of Abuja),  
Olawale Abiola (Anchor University, Lagos),  
Dr. Saibu Israel (Anchor University Lagos)**

#### **Panel Abstract**

**Lagos, Nigeria's economic and cultural powerhouse, is a city on the move. With a population of over 20 million, its transportation and mobility systems are constantly evolving to meet the demands of its growing population. From the chaotic energy of danfos (the yellow buses) and okadas (motorcycles) to the introduction of modern infrastructure like the Lagos Blue Line Rail, the inland waterways system, and BRT corridors, Lagos offers a unique case study in urban mobility innovation and resilience. As one of the fastest-growing cities in the world, Lagos' transportation system is a critical determinant of its economic viability, social cohesion, and environmental sustainability. This panel will provide a space to discuss practical solutions, foster collaboration, and envision a Lagos where mobility is accessible and sustainable for all. This panel will explore how Lagos's populace navigates the city's ever-changing transportation landscape, the policies shaping its future, and the innovations addressing its challenges.**

**This panel welcomes submissions that address but are not limited to the following themes:**

**The Complexity of Lagos Mobility: Formal vs Informal Systems.**

**Infrastructure Development and Policy**

**Technological Disruption**

## **Environmental and Social Considerations**

### **Community Leaders/Commuters Experiences.**

## **Presentations**

### **Photography Danfo: Visual Aesthetics Of Lagos' Urban Mobility**

**Akintunde Akinleye** –Independent scholar, Photographer, (akintundeee52@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

This article highlights not only the significant contributions of Danfo to Lagos urban culture and everyday mobility, but it also demonstrates—through urban visual aesthetics, observations, interviews, and archival materials—the changing phases of urban transportation and mobility in Lagos. Danfo has attained a celebratory status in Lagos' urban culture, one that is attributed to informal public transportation system, moving people across the city daily in the last forty years. As integral part of Lagos urban culture, danfo became popularized during the late 1970s when these bus-taxis were officially registered in yellow paint with double-black-paint strips which have now constitute a collective key urban signature of Lagos. Danfo collectively serve as one of the vehicles through which Lagos urban stories are produced and circulated.

### **Smart Mobility And Digital Transformation: The Role Of Technology In Enhancing Lagos Transportation System**

**Aleakhue Ayemhoba** – Anchor University, Lagos, (aleakhueudaba@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

Lagos, as a rapidly expanding megacity, faces persistent transportation challenges, including congestion, inefficiency, and inadequate public transit infrastructure. This paper examines how smart mobility and digital transformation are reshaping Lagos' transportation landscape, offering innovative solutions to enhance efficiency, accessibility, and sustainability. The integration of ride-hailing services, intelligent traffic management systems, and digital payment solutions has significantly improved mobility options for residents. Additionally, the adoption of artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and the Internet of Things (IoT) enables real-time traffic monitoring and predictive analytics, optimizing urban transport flow. This study evaluates the impact of these technological advancements, analyzing their effectiveness in reducing traffic congestion, improving commuter experiences, and fostering economic growth. While these innovations present transformative opportunities, challenges such as digital infrastructure limitations, regulatory constraints, and socioeconomic disparities persist. The findings underscore the need for strategic policy frameworks and public-private collaborations to maximize the benefits of smart mobility solutions. Ultimately,

this research advocates for a technology-driven, inclusive, and sustainable transportation future for Lagos.

## **Transportation Technology: Reimagining The Mobility Landscape In An Urbanised Lagos City**

**Israel Saibu and Abiola Olawale** – Anchor University, Lagos, (abiolaosesusi@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

The city of Lagos, Nigeria, stands as a bustling metropolis, symbolic of rapid urbanization in emerging economies. With a population exceeding 20 million, transportation and mobility challenges have become increasingly complex. This paper explores the transformative impact of transportation technology on the mobility landscape in urbanized Lagos. From the emergence of ride-sharing platforms to the integration of smart transportation systems, technological advancements are reshaping the way people navigate the city, addressing longstanding issues, and offering new possibilities for sustainable urban mobility. As the city grapples with environmental concerns and air quality issues, the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) has gained momentum. Analyzing the impact of EVs in the city of Lagos, reveals that EVs not only offer a sustainable solution to air pollution but also contribute to the reduction of dependence on fossil fuels, aligning with global efforts towards a greener future. Mobility as a Service (MaaS) has been instrumental in streamlining the diverse modes of transportation in Lagos. This paper employs literature search and oral interviews in its data collection. Data collected were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods. This paper concludes that the transportation technology landscape in urbanized Lagos is undergoing a profound transformation, redefining the way people move within the city.

Keywords: Lagos, Transportation, Technology, Urbanization.

## **Living In Lagos: Navigating Its Ever-Changing Transportation And Mobility System**

**Olufemi Omotoso** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos,  
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### **Abstract**

The chaotic transport system in Lagos negatively impacts the economy, productivity, quality of life, and environmental sustainability. The city's rapid urbanization has placed pressure on its transport infrastructure, causing congestion, unreliable transit, health challenges, and environmental concerns. Lagos residents spend between two to four hours daily in traffic, leading to revenue loss, depleting household finances, pollution, and family disharmony. Despite various government policies such as road widening, traffic management systems, mobility initiatives, expanded BRT services, and transport restrictions, challenges persist due to weak enforcement, infrastructural deficits, and policy

inconsistencies. Government efforts to complement the informal sector in meeting mobility needs have not resolved the problem. Commuters continue to lose valuable hours due to traffic gridlocks, with resulting business losses, fuel consumption hikes, and fare exploitation. This paper provides an overview of Lagos' transportation options. Findings empower commuters to navigate mobility challenges by staying informed about traffic updates and alternative routes. The paper critically examines Lagos' evolving transport ecosystem, assessing government interventions, informal transport regulations, and strategies for creating an integrated, inclusive, and sustainable system that meets the city's growing mobility demands.

## **Leveraging Public-Private Partnerships For Sustainable Development In Lagos, Nigeria**

**Olanjumo Amoo** – Lagos State University, (olajumokeamoo0@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Lagos, Nigeria's most populous city, is a thriving metropolis that embodies the country's cultural, economic, and political dynamism. With a population exceeding 21 million people, Lagos is a magnet for diverse populations from across Nigeria and beyond, drawn by its economic opportunities, cultural attractions, and political significance. However, the city's transportation systems are inadequate, with congested roads, insufficient public transportation, and a lack of pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) have emerged as a promising solution to address the infrastructure challenges facing Lagos. This study therefore seeks to make a meaningful contribution to the existing body of literature on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and sustainable development, with a specific focus on the complexities of implementing PPPs in a megacity like Lagos. The research will employ a qualitative approach, comprising in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including government officials, private sector investors, community leaders, and local residents. Interactive focus group discussions with relevant stakeholders, participant observation, and thematic and content analysis of secondary data will also be conducted. The study's findings will have significant implications for various stakeholders in Lagos' transport sector.

**KEY WORDS:** Public-Private Partnerships (PPPS), Transportation infrastructure, Megacities, Sustainable development, Urban governance.

## **Connecting Lagos Against All Odds**

**Hope Afoke Orivri** – Lagos Studies Association Private Researcher  
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### **Abstract**

Come rain or shine, Lagosians would get to their locations. This mega city continually juggles the mix of transportation modes to find solutions. There has been existing road transport mode operating cars, trucks, buses – mass transit, coastal buses, mini buses; the tricycle (keke) and okada. Lagosians have also been moving from one location to the other using rail transport system in as far back as 1898 (Labisi, 1999, cited in Unilag Repository) when the first rail line of 32km was constructed from Iddo to Otta, and a tramway system was also developed to enable people move from one location to

the other within Lagos.

Water transport system has also featured prominently in the life of Lagosians, since Lagos is a coastal state. The state government gave a boost to ferry services when it banned operations of commercial motorcycles in the heart of the city. However, the state had operated its first ferry services from Apapa to the Island in 1925. Prior to that time, private businesses operated commercial wooden boat services transporting people along the coasts.

However, rapid urbanization would demand technology-driven transport system management for a city like Lagos, else, Lagos residents would continue to painfully navigate their paths around the bustling city. Residents who moved between the mainland and Island daily for work had a nightmarish experience in 2023 when the Carter Bridge was under repairs.

## **Evaluating The Effectiveness Of Multimodal Transport System In Lagos State**

**Adeleke Akinpelu** – (lekeakinpelu@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Effective transportation systems facilitate economic development by reducing travel time and costs, enhancing market access, and promoting equitable development. Due to increased urban development and a high focus on road transportation, Lagos State faces significant transportation challenges. The state has developed a multimodal transport system integrating road, rail, and water modes to address ensuing transportation challenges. Various initiatives by the Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA) and the Ministry of Transportation have attempted to integrate different transportation modes to address identified transportation issues in the state. However, transportation issues of urban congestion, poor transportation linkage, and unequal access to transportation persist. This necessitates assessing the effectiveness level of the multimodal transportation system in Lagos State. This paper will evaluate the effectiveness of the Lagos State multimodal transport system, focusing on its impact on urban mobility, environmental sustainability, and socioeconomic development. This paper will adopt a systematic literature review approach to assess the effectiveness of the Lagos State multimodal transport system. The paper will synthesise policy effectiveness, infrastructure development, and comparative case study findings.

**LC08**

**Our Lagos, Their Lagos: Narratives Of Identity, Power, And Continuity In a City Of Contrasts**

**Convener:** Ezeani Richard Emmanuel

**Panel Abstract**

Lagos stands as a microcosm of transformation, where the past intertwines with the present to define the trajectory of its future. From its pre-colonial origins as a vibrant trading post to its evolution under colonial rule and eventual emergence as a post-colonial megacity, Lagos has consistently been a melting pot of cultures, identities, and ambitions.

The proposed panel, aligned with the theme “Our Lagos, Their Lagos: Autochthonous, Conflicted Identity and Structures of Power in the 21st Century,” seeks to unravel the multifaceted history, present realities, and global connections of this iconic city.

This panel will explore four pivotal areas: (1) Lagos: Past, Present, and the Future – A chronological journey through Lagos’ transformation, examining the interplay between indigenous heritage, colonial disruptions, and contemporary urbanization. (2) Lagos and the History of Cities – Situating Lagos within global urban histories, highlighting its unique resilience and adaptability in shaping urban identity. (3) Lagos and Its Diaspora – Investigating the reciprocal relationship between Lagos and its global diaspora, showcasing how diasporic networks influence the city’s cultural, political, and economic frameworks. (4) Migrations and Integrations in Lagos – Analyzing the impact of internal and external migrations on the city’s demographic, social fabric, and contested notions of belonging and identity. Through a multidisciplinary lens, this sessional panel will bring together historians, sociologists, urban planners, and cultural theorists to interrogate how Lagos navigates the tensions between autochthonous claims and the forces of globalization. Discussions will delve into the city’s contested structures of power, from the indigenous elites to colonial administrators and contemporary political actors, shedding light on the complexities of identity in a rapidly evolving urban space.

By critically engaging with Lagos’ layered narratives, this panel aims to inspire a reimagining of the city as a symbol of resilience, conflict, and interconnectedness, contributing valuable insights into the broader discourse on African urbanism and identity in the 21st century.

## **Presentations**

### **Urban Imagery And The Duality Of Lagos In Toni Kan's *The Carnivorous City* And Leye Adenle's *When Trouble Sleeps***

**Omoh Giwa** – Lagos State University of Education, (victoriagiwa12@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

Lagos is a city of paradoxes -vibrant yet chaotic, wealthy but impoverished, full of possibilities yet rife with limitations. one of Africa's dynamic cities, its portrayal in literature oscillates between admiration and exasperation. This study examines the urban imagery and duality of Lagos as depicted in Toni Kan's *The Carnivorous City* and Leye Adenle's *When Trouble Sleeps*. Kan presents an image of consuming beast with the ability to devour its inhabitants in the pursuit of power and survival. in the same manner, Adenle explores criminal organisations in the city as it dictates social order. Using Lefebvre's *The Production of Space* (1974), this study examines Lagos as a social space arguing that the city is not just a backdrop but an active force that shapes human experience in both novels. The study employs a qualitative research approach by conducting textual analysis on the novels focusing on imagery, characterization and thematic preoccupations. This study contributes to the discourse of literary crime fiction in relation to urban spaces as it critiques the social realities of Lagosians.

### **Identities And Existence: The Multicultural Dynamism Of Lagos**

**Deborah Ajibola** – University of Ibadan, (deborahajibola02@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

The Nigerian nation comprises of peoples who can not be disconnected from African belief systems. Each state is a recognized entity with indigenous beliefs and practises. However, among all the states in the country, the multicultural dynamism of Lagos is laudable. Past artistic studies of Lagos have underscored the traditions of its residents in tandem to the discourse of identities.

Undoubtedly, the inhabitants of Lagos State are cosmopolitans who survive in the metropolis by identifying with their indigenous culture and other cultures around them. The appraisal of Lagos is culture-based. For residents of Lagos, issues of identity are central to their existence because of the unending changes within their sociopolitical formation. From colonial time to the present, Lagos has been experiencing influx of different cultural practises. It is adjudged as the centre of world's culture because of its multi-dynamic traditional aesthetics.

The continuous influx of different ethnic groups and tribes engenders the multiple coexistence of different belief systems and traditions. This is accountable for the outstanding status of Lagos as the state of all people. Therefore, Lagos can be considered a land of survival of not just humans but also of culture, beliefs, traditions and values which are syncretized to form a great people.



## **State Of Origin And Sense Of Belonging: a Case For The Ará Èkó**

**Faithful Oluokun** –University of Lagos, (oluwabukunmi00@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Indigeneship in Lagos is one of the most contested identities, which is largely attributed to the socio-cultural and economic privileges the state offers. This paper examines current debates on nativity and citizenship in Lagos, analyzing migration to Lagos with a focus on migrants from other southwestern states in Nigeria. It examines the acculturation of these migrants and the emergence of a unique identity termed Ará Èkó. This identity represents a distinct group of people whose sense of belonging floats between their state of origin and Lagos. While they lose connection to their native origins, they remain excluded from full participation in Lagos's polity.

Utilizing the theory of belonging, this research interrogates the hybrid cultural identities of Ará Èkó and the challenges they face in navigating transnational and local cultural politics. It highlights how migration, acculturation, and identity formation contribute to a distinct yet precarious cultural category within Lagos's cosmopolitan society. This paper contributes to the understanding of hybrid cultures and transnational flows between Lagos and her diasporas, positioning the city as a space for identity transformation.

Themes: Indigeneship, Citizenship, Migration, Identity Formation, Sense of Belonging, Cultural Hybridization, Acculturation.

## **Power And Identity In Lagos: The Struggle For Cultural Dominance And The Definition Of a Yoruba Lagosian In a Multicultural City**

**Adedolapo Adewuni** – University of Lagos, (dolapoadewuni@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Lagos, Nigeria's commercial and cultural hub, is a city defined by its complex, multicultural identity. At the heart of this identity lies a significant struggle for cultural dominance, particularly among the Yoruba people, who have historically shaped the city's social, political, and economic landscape.

This project seeks to explore the dynamic interplay between power and identity within Lagos, focusing on the evolving definition of the Yoruba Lagosian. In a city where Yoruba culture is predominant but coexists with a rich tapestry of ethnic groups, the question of who truly represents the "Yoruba Lagosian" becomes both a matter of personal and collective negotiation.

The study will investigate the historical and contemporary forces that have influenced Yoruba migration and settlement patterns in Lagos, while examining the ways in which different Yoruba sub-groups from across the Southwest such as those from Oyo, Ogun, and Ondo interact and sometimes clash in their claims to Lagosian identity. By exploring how Lagosians navigate cultural affiliation, language, and social practices, this project will delve into the power dynamics that shape

the identity construction of Yoruba Lagosians. It will provide a nuanced understanding of how identity is not only rooted in historical and ancestral ties but also shaped by contemporary urban politics, migration, and the negotiation of cultural space in a fast-evolving metropolis.

### **Our Lagos, Their Lagos: Narratives Of Identity, Power, And Continuity In a City Of Contrast**

**Onyebuchi Emeakayi** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos,  
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#### **Abstract**

This study analyzes the way identity, power relations, and the past intersect in Lagos, Nigeria. It does this by examining the different stories that are woven into the city's social life. This paper provides a close examination of the rival visions of "Our Lagos" and "Their Lagos," demonstrating how a wide variety of stakeholders—from colonial powers that be and local communities to postcolonial governments and marginalized groups—both create and undermine categories of spatial, cultural, and political belonging in Africa's largest metropolis. Using ethnographic field research, archival research, and theoretical perspectives from urban studies and postcolonial theory, this project explains how narratives of ownership and exclusion both solidify dominant power relations while also making possible spaces of resistance and redefinition. The research indicates that Lagos is not only a physical urban environment but also a contested discursive landscape in which identity is continually renegotiated through daily practice, cultural forms, and collective memory. This research contributes to broader scholarly understanding of urban African identities and also to understanding how cities that are deeply divided socioeconomically remain intact socially despite persistent tension between competing visions for city growth and belonging.

Keywords: Power, Identity, Lagos, social belonging.

### **Igo Loju Omo Odaran: Our Lagos, Contemporary Connections And Social Identity Amongst The Youths**

**Isoken Onoyona-Ekeocha** – University Of Ibadan, ([ekeochasoky@gmail.com](mailto:ekeochasoky@gmail.com))

#### **Abstract**

This paper is to employs philosophical, ontological and sociopsychological theories to explore the increase in social vices, like substance abuse, the menace of gambling, and the deceptions of playing betting games. amongst young people of Lagos. The problem with drug abuse and like vices has consequences for the mental health of young people, influencing and shaping their identity. The paper questions urbanization and how the back streets of Lagos become a melting pot for dubious identities, as it boomerangs to Nigeria and West Africa. Therefore, analyzing the connection between substance abuse, mental health, and identity crises amongst young people in Lagos.

This research, aims to contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between drug abuse, mental health, and personal identity. Its objective is to examine the deceptive ontological and sociopsychological notions that lure young people into such vices, without consideration for their

future. It shall be cross-disciplinary, employing literature review, critical analysis, and philosophical elucidations to explore the intersection of social structures and personal identity crises. It recommends and concludes the need to rescue these youths, imploring thinkers and policy influencers consideration for the next generation through useful and practical policies, that engage more young people in gainful mind developmental activities, promoting mental health and reducing susceptibility to substance abuse.

## **Post-"Gangs Of Lagos": Discourse And Indigeneity Questions In Lagos**

**Adeleke Ogunfeyimi** – Osun State University, Osogbo, Nigeria, (yinkaleke2000@yahoo.com)

### **Abstract**

The making and guts of *Gangs of Lagos* are the essentials that offer the movie to scholarly contexts of historical continuity, cultural identity, land rights, human rights and political footing. Set in a fictionalized version of Lagos, the movie follows the struggles between rival gangs and other criminal organizations in present-day Lagos. Although it may be argued that the movie is an extensive research into the realities of gangland Lagos, as some critics claim, it is also not far from the truth that it has offered itself to continuous scholarly debates. Investigating Post-Gangs of Lagos: Discourse and Indigeneity Question in Lagos, this study sets to dissect the movie's exploration of ambition, poverty, surviving in a city of luxury and misery, the impact of political thuggery on everyday life, the cycles of violence that serve the canals that run the city, and how the rich protect their own at the expense of the poor. Some of the discourses and questions the study seeks to explore are the immediate responses of Lagos indigenes; the timing of the film: few years after EndSARS nationwide protests in 2020; few months after the 2023 presidential elections in Nigeria, and the interpretations alluded to the "proscription" of the film by the censor board like NVFCB. The study sets to analyze how the film reinforces dominant ideologies within the society by subtility positioning viewers to identify with particular viewpoints through the camera angles and editing techniques.

## **Lagos As a Vector Of Madness In Kuku's Nearly All The Men In Lagos Are Mad And Ugonna's Who Drove Nearly All Lagos Men Mad?**

**Ekikereobong Usoro** – University of Ibadan, (ekikereobongusoro@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Lagos, the Centre of Excellence, is also associated with the identity of the insane within discourse on the dating pool with narratives by female writers presenting men as agents of lunacy and literary texts by male writers projecting women as the pathogens of madness. Although studies on the different identities in Lagos are not new, not much has been done on the idea that many are mad but few are roaming within the context of Lagos. Therefore, this paper critiques Damilare Kuku's *Nearly All the*

Men in Lagos are Mad and Ugochukwu Ugonna's Who Drove Nearly All Lagos Men Mad? to detail how Lagos is a vector of madness, not only to natives of Lagos or Nigerians but even to foreigners from other countries residing in the state. With Guy Debord's psychogeography which examines the psychological impact of a geographical environment on individuals, the paper reveals that the city of Lagos affects her inhabitants psychologically, transmitting the insanity noticed in relationships from, man to woman (and vice versa), young to adult (and the other way round), Christian to Muslim (and the reverse). As collections of short stories, there are many differing voices, but this does not forestall the agreement by both authors and their characters that Lagos is a stage where madness within relationships is displayed.

## **LC09**

### **Socio-Cultural Heritage Of Lagos State In Transition: Cuisines, Festivals, Dress Patterns, And Socio-Religious Activities In Perspective**

**Convener:** Prof. Habeeb Abiodun Sanni (Lagos State University)

#### **Panel Abstract**

**Culture in its various forms has been one of the distinguishing elements of the autochthonous people of Lagos State, the way it is for aborigines in several parts of the world. Though the cultural aspects of the people have been exposed to a series of interpolation, assimilation, and bastardization owing to the continuous influx of migrants from across the globe into the State and the persistent trends in globalization, Lagos State is still blessed with a series of cultural resilience. The changing climatic and demographical conditions coupled with the conspicuous presence of Western and Eastern religious practices in the State have also affected the people's culture and traditions in many ways. However, the custodians of the people's traditions and culture have endeavoured in the preservation and revival of the cultural heritage of the State. Apart from the pre-existing socio-cultural attributes, there have evolved some cultural elements that are as a result of acculturation from other regions of the world. In other words, modernity has given birth to some cultural traits in Lagos State while some traditions and customs have been modified. These modifications could be seen in the people's food, dress patterns, music, festivals, and religious activities among others. The period of colonial rule marked the period of massive socio-cultural change and this has been sustained in the post-colonial period.**

**The panel seeks to examine the history of the socio-cultural activities of the people of Lagos State. It seeks to reappraise the impact of colonisation, immigration, modernity, and globalisation on the traditional cultural characteristics of Lagos State. It also seeks to**

**unravel the factors behind socio-cultural survivability in Lagos State. Major socio-cultural elements such as traditional cuisines, music, dress, worship system, games and sport, festivals, naming and marriage ceremonies and others are expected to be historicised and analysed using a multidisciplinary approach. Interest scholars, commentators, and practitioners are invited to submit abstract.**

## **Presentations**

### **Enu Owa's Sacred Confluence: Religious Tolerance In Isale Eko**

**Bola Oguntade** – Centre For Housing and Sustainability, University of Lagos  
DOCOMOMO Nigeria. Nigerian Institute of Town Planners, (bolaoguntade2@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

Isale Eko, Old Lagos's historic core, pulses with a pluralistic past ripe for reexamination, aligning with the Lagos Conference's aims. This study probes religious tolerance through Enu Owa, a sacred precinct where the Enu Owa Mosque (est. 1787) and Kings Anglican Church (est. 1880s) stand opposite each other, interwoven with the Oba of Lagos's coronation rites. How did this spatial and ritual confluence embody tolerance? Using text and photography, I will analyze colonial records, missionary accounts, and oral histories alongside a photograph capturing the mosque-church duo—a visual anchor of coexistence. This interdisciplinary approach reveals how Enu Owa's religious adjacency, framed by Yoruba tradition, reflects a pragmatic tolerance rooted in Isale Eko's identity as a mercantile melting pot. Far from a mere anomaly, this harmony challenges narratives of African religious discord, offering a textured contribution to heritage studies. By marrying archival depth with photographic immediacy, this study illuminates Lagos's pluralistic foundations, resonating with African diaspora histories of resilience. Enu Owa emerges as a microcosm of negotiated coexistence, its lessons amplifying global conversations on interfaith living. This work underscores Isale Eko's enduring legacy as a space where diverse beliefs not only met but thrived.

### **Weaving Tradition And Transition: Socio-Cultural Heritage In 21st-Century Lagos**

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#### **Abstract**

This study examines the socio-cultural heritage of Lagos, focusing on cuisines, festivals, dress patterns, and socio-religious activities as the city evolves. Lagos balances its indigenous Yoruba roots with global influences, preserving traditions like the Eyo festival and adire textiles while embracing migrant-driven adaptations such as fusion foods and Western fashion. Using ethnographic

fieldwork, oral histories, and archival research, this study explores how colonization, migration, and globalization have reshaped cultural expressions, challenging indigenous custodians while fostering resilience.

Findings show that cuisines integrate migrant flavors (e.g., *suya*), festivals like Oro adapt to urban life, and dress patterns blend *agbada* with modern styles. Socio-religious activities, including syncretic Christian and Islamic practices, reveal tensions over spiritual authority amid Western influences. Despite urbanization pressures, Lagos's cultural heritage endures through community adaptation. This study proposes a participatory framework for cultural policy, ensuring indigenous voices coexist with diverse influences.

By analyzing these transitions, this research provides insights for policymakers, cultural practitioners, and scholars to safeguard Lagos's rich heritage.

## **Cultural Heritage And Its Empowerment**

**Oluwakemi Amupitan** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos,  
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### **Abstract**

Lagos exerts significant economic, political, and cultural influence in Nigeria and West Africa. Its diverse heritage blends traditions, values, and languages, with language being central to communication, social interaction, and identity preservation. It transmits culture i.e customs, traditions, and histories through oral and written forms, shaping societal evolution.

Multilingualism in Lagos, a hub of linguistic diversity, enhances communication, business, and social cohesion, fostering unity across ethnic groups. Learning multiple languages boosts personal growth and career prospects. For youth, linguistic skills, paired with knowledge and technical expertise, are vital for empowerment, job creation, and global recognition.

This study uses qualitative methods to explore how language improves communication in Lagos, how diverse languages aid development, and how youth tackle employment challenges in a multilingual setting. It aims to deepen understanding of language, knowledge, and skills as drivers of progress.

Findings will inform discussions on linguistic diversity, education, and economic opportunities in Lagos, offering recommendations to sustain cultural heritage, knowledge acquisition, and skill development for growth and global relevance.

**Keywords:** Lagos, communication, empowerment, development, opportunities

## **Aspects Of Some Indigenous Foods And Delicacies In Lagos State**

**Habeeb Sanni** – Department of History and International Studies, Lagos State University, Ojo.  
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### **Abstract**

Lagos' history predates the creation of the state in 1967. Before its creation, Lagos has gradually emerged as a cosmopolitan city not only as a result of British conquest and colonization, but also of its topography and careful planning of its traditional political leaders who created an impetus for its emergence as an important destination for economic prosperity not only for Nigerians, but also for people of diverse origins all over the world. Despite this seeming interest of people in Lagos State, which almost affected its homogeneity, the people have developed foods and delicacies peculiar to them, and for centuries remained part of their local delicacies. This essay explored some of these local foods and delicacies in the localities where they originated. The research adopted qualitative and analytical methods, based on primary and secondary sources like oral interviews with a purposively selected audience, archival documents, and ephemera, which were critically studied and analyzed. The essay concludes that despite the unending movement of people of diverse origins to the state and the seeming erosion of its indigenous elements, the people of Lagos State have retained their local delicacies.

Keywords: Lagos State, foods, delicacies, indigenous elements.

## **Re-Thinking The Dynamics Of Traditional Institutions In The Sustainability Of Traditional Practices In Ikorodu**

**Kolawole Omotayo** –Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo State.  
(omotayock@aceondo.edu.ng)

### **Abstract**

Traditional institutions are the custodian of local tradition, religion and customs. They enjoy unconditional validity and acceptability within a specific social or community setting and are rooted in, and by products of, the broad social- religious philosophy and cultural worldview of a specific community. The ontological paradigm of such communities consists of certain values and customs which they consider to be representative of their identity and useful to their social, political and ecological surroundings. Traditional practices generally and traditional religious practices in particular in Yorubaland are observed and performed through traditional institutions. These institutions provide the framework upon which traditional religious practices are sustained. Although, traditional institutions in Yoruba land have undergone series of changes since time immemorial, they have been resilient and have survived. In the words of Biodun Adediran: “From the pre-colonial era, the traditional institutions have been strengthened and weakened, elevated and humiliated, empowered and disempowered by emergent political/ruling class”. But against all onslaughts they have survived especially in Ikorodu. This paper therefore sets to look at the various traditional institutions in Ikorodu, their evolution, structures and their place in the enactment and resilience of traditional religious practices in Ikorodu in recent times.

## **Oro Festival: An Evolution From An Indigenous Spiritual Practice To a Political Tool In Nigeria's 2023 Election**

**Adedolapo Adewuni** – University of Lagos, (dolapoadewuni@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Oro Festival, a traditional spiritual practice deeply rooted in the Indigenous culture of South West Nigeria has evolved over the years with its intersection with politics. This project explores the transformation of the Oro festival from its origin as a sacred religious and cultural festival used to promote peace, honor deities and preserve cultural heritage into a strategic political tool used during Nigeria's 2023 elections to influence electoral outcomes, intimidate voters and solidify political power. By analyzing the participation of political figures in the Oro festival and its portrayal in the media, this research looks into how the festival's cultural significance has been reduced to a tool for political agendas.

Through interviews with community leaders, electoral observers and local participants, the study provides an in-depth analysis of how Indigenous festivals are integrated into modern political strategies. It also explores the socio-political implications of the relationship between culture, religion and politics in Nigeria. Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to the understanding of how traditional practices are manipulated in contemporary political contexts.

## **Eko For Show": a Study Of Contemporary Artistic Trends In Lagos**

**Wale Kofoworola**—Federal College of education (Technical), Akoka, Lagos  
(derealconcepts@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Lagos is becoming not only a mega city but also a global creative hub. As one of the fastest developing metropolitan city in the world, Lagos is often seen by many as a country on its own. Many Nigerians are of the belief that if someone had lived in Lagos, and such person has not become wise, then there is a heavy tendency that such person would never be wise; this notion attests to the fact that Lagos is a city for astute, shrewd, and creative individuals. The global art scenes has changed and African culture, arts are getting wider recognition from all spheres of artistic expression. Lagos is a city of artistic splendor, apart from various artistic "atmosphere", monumental/cultural objects spread across the city. Lagos is equally fast growing in various creative endeavors, and had immensely contributed to the development of art in Nigeria and Africa. Eko is endowed with diverse ingenious artists/artistes, art institutions / organizations and activities. This work employed empirical and theoretical approaches to examine some contemporary artistic events that unfolded in Lagos as a liberal city, such as the instance of misrepresentation of Eyo masquerade, a unique identity of Yoruba/Lagos in the Nollywood movie – The Gangs of Lagos, among others. This paper examines the distinctiveness of Lagos in the art world, identifies some of the emerging art trends and proffers recommendations on how the state can maximize the ginormous opportunities in arts for better improvement.



## **LC10**

### **Street Hustlers, Homeless People, And ‘Agbero’ In Lagos: The Making And/Or Unmaking Of a Metropolitan City**

**Convener: Moses Yakubu**

#### **Panel Abstract**

##### **Short Abstract**

**Street workers, homeless populations, and agberos represent three major groups that engage in various activities and risky behaviours on the streets and highways of Lagos. This panel aims to explore these groups’ experiences, challenges, and socio-economic activities and examine how their actions contribute to or impact the development of the metropolitan city.**

##### **Long Abstract**

**In Lagos, three major groups are particularly prominent on the streets and highways: street hustlers, homeless individuals, and agberos. Their visibility stems from the nature and patterns of their activities. Street hustlers include load carriers, truck pushers, and vendors operating under bridges. Homeless individuals are those without shelter who live in incomplete buildings, under bridges, in markets, and other unhealthy open spaces. Agberos, associated with the Roads Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) and the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), are responsible for collecting certain fees from commercial transport operators. These groups engage in various socio-economic activities and sometimes risky behaviors that can impact both their lives and society as a whole. Studies suggest that these groups may pose a security threat to lives and property in Lagos, and they are often labeled with negative terms like ‘omo ‘ta,’ ‘omo ‘le,’ ‘omo buruku,’ and ‘agbero.’ This panel invites papers that address, but are not limited to, the political economy of agberos, their structure and operations, the experiences and challenges of street workers and homeless individuals, housing policies, issues of poverty and unemployment, the mental health challenges faced by these groups, and government interventions aimed at promoting inclusivity and sustainable development.**

## **Presentations**

### **The Autochthony Of Egbon Adugbo And Security In Shomolu, Lagos**

**Ayomide Madojutimi** – Department of Political Science, University of Lagos.  
(ayomidemadojutimi60@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

This study explores the complex relationship between autochthony, security, and the phenomenon of Egbon Adugbo in Shomolu, Lagos. The conflicting autochthonous identities of Egbon Adugbo groups have raised concerns, as they assert territorial claims based on ancestral ties, cultural heritage, and local hegemony. Historically evolving from Omo Adugbo – distinct from Ara Adugbo – the term Egbon Adugbo now refers to individuals with deep familial and cultural roots in specific neighborhoods.

Using Shomolu Local Government as the study location, this research adopts a qualitative approach. A total of 46 participants were selected from the 12 wards of Shomolu Local Government. The sample includes six landlords, eight residents (four from Shomolu and four from Bariga LCDA), eight petty traders positioned at strategic junctions in Shomolu and Bariga markets, and two representatives from each ward with active community development associations (CDAs).

Preliminary findings suggest that the impact of Egbon Adugbo varies by neighborhood, influenced by local socio-political and economic dynamics. Additionally, the study highlights how governance failure contributes to this phenomenon and recommends inclusive policies to enhance security, community policing, and social cohesion in Lagos.

Keywords: Egbon Adugbo, Autochthony, Security, Community Policing, Governance Failure.

### **"Lagos' Unseen Architects: Hustlers, Outcasts, And The City That Won't Claim Them**

**Blessing Kintuna** – University of Lagos, (bleztuna@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

Lagos has never just been a city—it is a battleground of belonging. The 2023 elections ripped open long-buried tensions, exposing the fractures between "sons of the soil" and those deemed outsiders. Who truly owns Lagos? The political elite weaponized autochthony, turning indigeneship into a tool of exclusion, while millions who built their lives in the city were told they were mere tenants in a home they helped create. Ballots became battlefields, and democracy was tested against the raw force of identity politics, street-level power struggles, and elite interests desperate to retain control.

This paper examines how the 2023 elections in Lagos reignited old questions of indigeneity, migration, and political dominance. Why did a supposedly cosmopolitan city descend into rhetoric of "us vs. them"? How did political actors manipulate ethnic and regional sentiments to shape electoral

outcomes? And in the aftermath, what does this mean for the future of Lagos as both a global city and a contested homeland?

Lagos has always thrived on contradiction —hyper-modern yet deeply traditional, welcoming yet exclusionary. But the 2023 elections forced the city to confront itself. As the dust settles, one question lingers: Was this just another election, or did Lagos witness a shift that will redefine power in Nigeria for decades to come?

### **Street Hustlers, Homeless People, And 'Agbero' In Lagos: The Making And/Or Unmaking Of a Metropolitan City**

**Sulaimon Adisa** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos,  
(sulaimonayomide54@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

In Lagos, three major groups are particularly prominent on the streets and highways: street hustlers, homeless individuals, and agberos. Their visibility stems from the nature and patterns of their activities. Street hustlers include load carriers, truck pushers, and vendors operating under bridges. Homeless individuals are those without shelter who live in incomplete buildings, under bridges, in markets, and other unhealthy open spaces. Agberos, associated with the Roads Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) and the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), are responsible for collecting certain fees from commercial transport operators. These groups engage in various socio-economic activities and sometimes risky behaviors that can impact both their lives and society as a whole. Studies suggest that these groups may pose a security threat to lives and property in Lagos, and they are often labeled with negative terms like 'omo 'ta,' 'omo 'le,' 'omo buruku,' and 'agbero.' This panel invites papers that address, but are not limited to, the political economy of agberos, their structure and operations, the experiences and challenges of street workers and homeless individuals, housing policies, issues of poverty and unemployment, the mental health challenges faced by these groups, and government interventions aimed at promoting inclusivity and sustainable development.

**Keywords:** Street hustlers, homeless individuals, agbero, metropolitan city, and Lagos

### **Rethinking 'Order' In Lagos: Cooperation And Tensions In Bariga Streets**

**Catherine Nkulume** – University of Lagos, (unkulume@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

As a megacity, Lagos attracts migrants across and beyond the nation. The promise of the megacity status is however, often vitiated by limited resources and other factors, which challenge integration

and sustenance of its inhabitants. In popular cultural parlance, "This is Lagos" expresses a survival of the fittest syndrome and reflects how things work in the city. Lagos is marked by a confluence of formal and informal structures, where the formal systems of law and order are appropriated by marginalized members of the city and informalized to enable them cope with the city's socio-economic dynamics. The ability of 'Lagosians' to navigate within both formal and informal frameworks, and often carefully manage the chaos that arises, not only defines social transactions and life but also makes the city unique and therefore deserving of close study. This paper will carefully examine this scenario, focusing on the stretch of road from the University of Lagos to Bariga, where there is often a fierce competition for management of the road infrastructure between formal agencies such as LASTMA and informal actors like the "agberos." or 'area boys'. The main objective is to explore the practicalities of life that inform the mutual coexistence and cooperation between the authorities and the 'lawless' elements. Observation, interviews, and other relevant qualitative methods will be used to examine the situation and document the reports.

## **Street Hustlers, Homeless People, And 'Agbero' In Lagos: The Making And/Or Unmaking Of a Metropolitan City**

**Oluwatomisin Clement** – (oluwatomisinclement0@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

Lagos is a metropolitan city and the melting pot of Nigeria's economy. A place for all; it accepts all and sundry. A place with different economic inequality and urbanization. Due to the city's quick development, there have been cases of homeless people, street hustlers and Agberos. These new sects of people in the megacity navigate the economy and political system of Lagos.

Although the street hustlers never sleep, they use this as a means of survival and enjoy legitimate equal opportunities around the clock. Exorbitant house rents, demolition, flood disaster and fire outbreaks render many homeless, leaving millions without adequate shelter.

"Agberos" informally known as thugs are involved in the collection of fees, taxes and rates from traders and motor drivers at the parks. They are usually associated with thuggery, violence and extortion. They are semi-gods at their base.

Through the interaction of these formal and informal structures, Lagos's identity as a megacity where profound social issues and economic opportunities meet is being revealed. This research aims to shed more light on Lagos's complexity and a plan for more equitable urban planning by examining these connections and how Lagos as a metropolitan city influences these groups.

**Key Words:** Street hustlers, Homeless People, Agbero, Lagos, Metropolitan City, Urbanization Social Inequality, Informal Economies.

## **The Agberos On The Ground For Indigenes: Lagos 2023 Elections In Retrospect And Prospects**

**Abayomi Sharomi** – Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State  
(abayomi.sharomi@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng)

### **Abstract**

The Lagos 2023 elections brought to the fore several issues that bother on the fundamental being of Nigeria. Such issues include the question of identity (between being a Nigerian and being a full blooded Yoruba), indigene and resident (between being Lagosians or settlers in Lagos), political allegiances (which followed the divide of tribalism). This paper explores the consequences of identity politics in Lagos politics given the cosmopolitan nature of Lagos and its ever expanding stream of settlers from different parts of the country. In generations to come will indigenous Lagosians be able to hold sway in Lagos politics? Or perhaps it does not matter if future political gladiators in Lagos are not indigenes. How long can agberos (most of whom are also not Lagosians) continue to hold the ground for indigenes against settlers, especially Igbos who are evolving as a political block in Lagos? Answers to these questions and others put the Lagos 2023 elections in discourse for future elections.

Keywords: Agberos, Identity, Lagos, Indigenes, Politics

## **LC11**

### **Urbanisation And The Practice Of Traditional Medicine In Lagos State**

**Conveners:** Dr. Akinmayowa Akin-Otiko and Ibukunoluwa Akinola

### **Panel Abstract**

**The rapid urbanisation of Lagos makes it imperative to plan for and evaluate the state of Traditional Medicine in Lagos. As cities expand, traditional knowledge is exposed to the threat of extinction. Traditional medicine, deeply rooted in local ecosystems and cultural practices, is facing increasing challenges as Lagos expands and its natural environment disappears. The focus of this panel is the practice of traditional medicine in Lagos as the World Health Organisation say that 80% of Africans are returning to the use of herbal medicine and Lagos is not an exception. Interestingly, there is a Law in Lagos State that allows for the practice of Traditional Medicine in the urban space. Although the Lagos State Traditional Medicine Board has licensed over seven thousand traditional medicine practitioners, there are still little signs of the practice in Lagos State. This panel invites**

**papers that will explore the impact of environmental and climate shifts on the practice of Traditional Medicine in Lagos. Authors will be expected to: i) evaluate the practice of traditional medicine in Lagos and propose efficient ways in which this practice can fit into the Lagos urban space. ii) interrogate whether traditional healers are adapting to the shift or abandoning their healing practices because of the dearth of healing materials in Lagos. iii) consider if there is a risk of a generational gap in passing down traditional healing knowledge due to the impacts of urbanisation in Lagos. iv) analyse what engagements practitioners of traditional medicine have with practitioners of western medicine. v) explore the role of policies in protecting traditional medicine and integrating sustainable practices in urban planning and climate strategies in Lagos State. Thus, this panel welcomes contributions from scholars, postgraduate students and practitioners on these sub-themes and others that may relate to them.**

## **Presentations**

### **Healing The Megacity: Can Lagos Preserve Traditional Medicine Amid Urban Chaos?**

**Opeyemi Opeagbe** –University of Lagos, Nigeria, (opeagbeopeyemi10@gmail.com)

#### **Abstract**

Lagos is Nigeria's fastest-growing urban centre. As Nigeria's most populous city, Lagos is projected to grow to a population of 50 million people by 2050, according to the United Nations. The rapid population in urban Lagos has given rise to urban poverty, the proliferation of slums, and overcrowding in housing, which can lead to poor living conditions, a lack of privacy, and poor hygiene and sanitary conditions. Traditional Medicine (TM) in urban Lagos is prevalent, and it refers to the health practices, methods, information, and beliefs that are used to prevent, diagnose, treat, or improve physical and mental health conditions using indigenous methods. The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between fast urbanisation in Lagos and the adaptability of traditional medicine and the possibility of co-opting into orthodox medicine in Lagos State. This paper investigates traditional medicine in the face of urbanisation in Lagos through an extensive literature review.

Findings indicate that although traditional medical practices have somewhat decreased as a result of urbanisation, they are also on the rise due to trends in holistic health and mistrust of orthodox medicine. The report makes policy recommendations to guarantee sustainable urban health delivery in Lagos State by regulating, protecting, and integrating traditional medicine with contemporary healthcare.

## **Urbanisation And The Practice Of Traditional Medicine In Lagos State**

**Kehinde Alabi** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos  
(mercykenny1@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

As Lagos rapidly expands, traditional medicine will continue to coexist with modern healthcare. Despite increasing hospitals, many residents will still rely on herbal remedies due to cultural beliefs, affordability, and family influence.

This study will examine urbanization's impact on traditional medicine use, selecting 280 respondents through random sampling. Data will be collected via questionnaires and interviews. Findings may show that 65% of respondents will continue using herbal medicine, with Agbo jedi-jedi (35%) for digestion, Agbo-iba (27.5%) for fever, and Aporo epa Ijebu (15%) for male reproductive health being the most common remedies. While 50% will consider it safe, 20% may report mild to moderate side effects.

Balancing traditional and modern healthcare requires regulation, practitioner training, and scientific validation of remedies. Public education on proper usage is crucial for a safer healthcare system in Lagos.

Keywords: Urbanization, Traditional Medicine, Healthcare, Safety.

## **Urbanization And Cultural Heritage: Navigating The Challenges To Survival Of Traditional Medicine In Lagos State**

**Amenaghawon Idawu** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos,  
(amen.abusomwan@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

The rapid urbanization of Lagos State presents significant challenges to the practice and preservation of traditional medicine, a practice deeply embedded in indigenous knowledge systems. As the city of Lagos expands with technological, environmental, and institutionalized infrastructures on the one hand, there is a deliberate marginalization of indigenous practices in favour of Western modernity, through the increasing dominance of Western medical practices on the other hand. This disconnect from the indigenous structures that sustain traditional medicine is compounded by the erosion of natural resources and the encroachment of urban development into rural areas where traditional healing practices have historically thrived. Through qualitative research, including interviews with traditional healers in various parts of Lagos, this paper aims to interrogate the social, cultural, and

economic factors that shape the survival and transmission of traditional medicine. It offers insights into how language can safeguard cultural heritage, and intergenerational knowledge transfer, amidst the pressures of urbanization and environmental change.

Keywords: African Traditional Medicine, Cultural Heritage, Urbanisation, Indigenous, Oratures.

## **Cultural Narratives And Women's Health Choices In Lagos**

**Loveth Ogbonna** – Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos,

### **Abstract**

This study seeks to interrogate hormonal dysfunctions, particularly menstrual disorders and hirsutism from the cultural perspectives in Lagos, Nigeria. The essence of this study is not to dispense the clinical insights which the biomedical perspectives offer, as they are invaluable, but to situate women's bodily experiences within cultural context. This situation helps in understanding how cultural narratives, interpretations, and beliefs affect both women's perceptions of the dysfunctions and their practical responses. Employing the qualitative research method, which draws on interviews and focus group discussions, traditional healers and community sages are engaged to provide cultural viewpoints and indigenous interpretations of these conditions. Clinicians are also sought, not only to offer further biomedical insights, but to also serve as intermediaries linking the researcher to willing participants experiencing these conditions. The research aims to understand the relevance of cultural interpretations in contemporary society, the coping mechanisms they offer, their points of differences and intersections with biomedical approaches, and how these cultural meanings influence women's adaptive strategies and health choices. This study offers a novel contribution across Gender Studies, African Studies and Medical Anthropology. The outcomes can also foster collaboration between the humanities and health sciences, they offer holistic understanding of women's health.

Keywords: Menstrual disorder, hirsutism, dysfunctions, cultural perspective.