

**[Call for Panelists: “Rethinking African Urban Archaeology: From Antiquity to the Present,” the 4th Annual Lagos Studies Association Conference Lagos, Nigeria June 27-29, 2019](#)**

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“Rethinking African Urban Archaeology: From Antiquity to the Present”

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Lagos Studies Association Conference

Lagos, Nigeria

June 27-29, 2019

The publication of V. Gordon Childe’s *The Urban Revolution* in 1950 significantly transformed the scholarship on the development of cities. While some scholars across disciplines found Childe’s work innovative and valuable, others have criticized it for seeing settlements and cities as static by imposing a *trait-list* of the criteria that characterise a city. The limitation of Childe’s approach to the study of African urban revolution soon led to the introduction of functionalist approach, which emphasizes the status of urban centres in relation to the rural or outlier settlements. Functionalist approach has been used to unmask the complexity of African cities. For example, the work of S. McIntosh and R. McIntosh in Mali has articulated the interdependence of city centres and their hinterlands. The authors emphasize the economic function of Jenne-Jeno in the regional circulation of commodities. Similarly, on the eastern coast of Africa, studies have shown that socio-economic relationship existed between the Swahili stone-towns and the countryside villages.

Furthermore, Akin Mabogunje, in his ground-breaking work, *Urbanization in Nigeria* adopted the functionalist approach in explaining the emergence of Nigerian urban centres from the pre-colonial era to the 1960s. Can all African cities be engaged from these perspectives? Can the modes of precolonial urbanisation help explain the trajectories of contemporary African cities? What are the challenges confronting African urban archaeology as a field of study?

If you are interested in joining this panel, send a 250-word abstract and a short bio to Dr. Abidemi Babatunde Babalola ([ab2577@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ab2577@cam.ac.uk)). Deadline: January 15, 2019. Visit the LSA website for additional information about the Conference:

<https://lagosstudies.wcu.edu/>

### About the Panel Convener

Dr. Abidemi Babatunde Babalola is Smuts Research Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre of African Studies, University of Cambridge. He previously held the McMillan-Stewart Fellowship at the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research, Harvard University. He received his PhD in African archaeology from Rice University.