

# Livelihood in Colonial Lagos: A Window into the Past



## Livelihood in Colonial Lagos by M Hakan Yavuz

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 643 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 181 pages



Colonial Lagos, a vibrant and bustling city, was a melting pot of cultures and a hub of economic activity. The livelihoods of its inhabitants were shaped by a complex interplay of colonialism, trade, and social stratification. In his book, "Livelihood in Colonial Lagos," Hakan Yavuz delves into this fascinating history, offering a rich and nuanced account of how Lagosians made a living and the challenges they faced.

## Economic Transformation and the Rise of Trade

The arrival of European traders in the 19th century transformed the economic landscape of Lagos. The city became a major port for the export of palm oil, rubber, and ivory, and a gateway for the import of European goods. This influx of trade brought both opportunities and challenges for Lagosians.



While some Lagosians benefited from the economic boom, many faced exploitation and displacement. The establishment of plantations and the rise of wage labor led to the dispossession of traditional farmers and artisans. The colonial government's policies often favored European businesses, creating a disparity between the economic opportunities available to Europeans and Africans.

### **Social Stratification and Urban Life**

Colonial Lagos was a deeply stratified society, with Europeans occupying the top rung of the social ladder, followed by African elites, traders, artisans, and laborers. This stratification was reflected in the living conditions, housing, and access to education and healthcare.



African women carrying baskets of goods in colonial Lagos

The colonial government's policies often reinforced social divisions. Residential segregation, for example, created distinct neighborhoods for Europeans and Africans. The African population was largely concentrated in overcrowded and unsanitary slums, while the European quarters enjoyed spacious homes, gardens, and other amenities.

## Cultural Transformations and Resistance

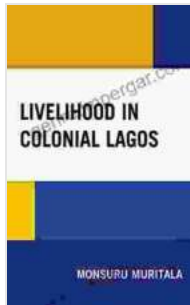
Colonialism brought about significant cultural changes in Lagos. The of Western education, Christianity, and new forms of mass media led to a gradual shift in values and beliefs among Lagosians. This process, however, was not without its resistance and tensions.



Many Lagosians sought to preserve their cultural heritage while adapting to the demands of colonial life. They blended traditional practices with new influences, creating a unique hybrid culture. This cultural resistance was also evident in the emergence of African nationalist movements, which challenged colonial rule and sought to restore African independence.

Hakan Yavuz's "Livelihood in Colonial Lagos" is a masterful exploration of the economic, social, and cultural history of this vibrant city. Through

meticulous research and engaging storytelling, Yavuz paints a vivid picture of the challenges and triumphs of Lagosians during the colonial period. This book is an invaluable resource for scholars, students, and anyone interested in the rich history of Lagos and its people.



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