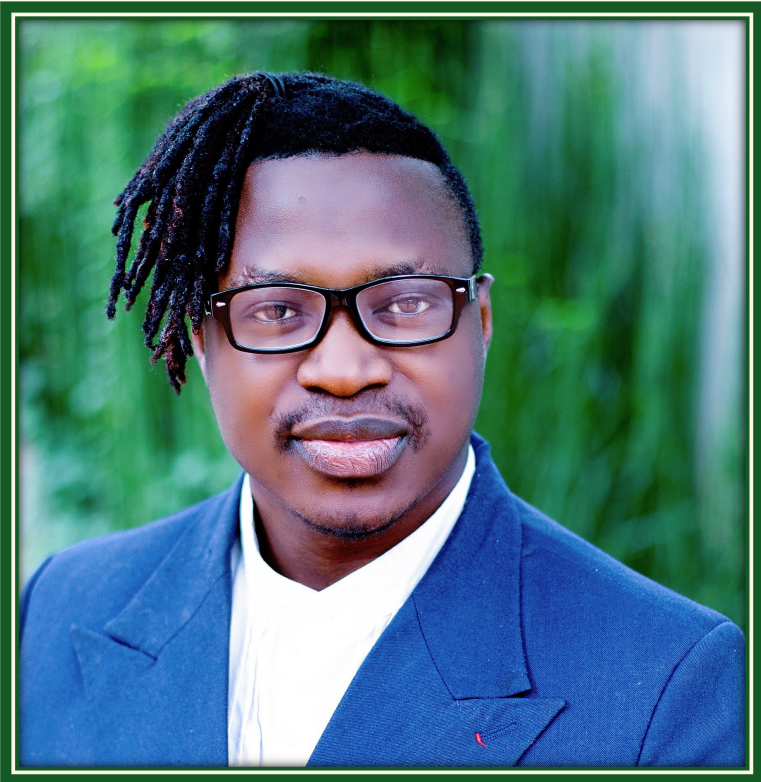


The Department of Anthropology Presents

An Indigenous Hermeneutic Approach to the Archaeology of Potsherd Pavements in Yoruba Culture



Olanrewaju Lasisi

*Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Race, Place, and Equity
UVA School of Architecture*

Friday, October 20, 1-2:30PM
Brooks Hall Commons

Abstract – Through the lens of indigenous hermeneutics, this talk expands upon the previous interpretation of potsherd pavements in Yoruba culture, moving beyond their role as architectural floors. It emphasizes their multi-functional roles, serving as sundials, naturalistic art objects, and cartographic maps. By examining festival ceremonies associated with potsherd pavements in two Yoruba kingdoms— Ijebu and Ile-Ife— the presentation reveals that the newly identified functions of these pavements are integral to the Yoruba's systems of time-reckoning, ritual practices, power dynamics, and spatial politics, as well as to the broader fabric of their social organization. Therefore, this talk advocates for a nuanced approach to Yoruba archaeology, one that considers the 'unwritten documentations' found within this hermeneutical framework as a basis for locating sites, excavating units, and interpreting finds. Through this hermeneutical lens, we open new avenues for understanding social complexity in pre-colonial African societies.

Co-Sponsor: The Carter G. Woodson Institute and Interdisciplinary Archaeology Program



THE CARTER G.
WOODSON
INSTITUTE



DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY