

UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT

**INACTIVE SQUARES AND
THE RUMBLING STATE**

AN INAUGURAL LECTURE

BY

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INAUGURAL LECTURE SERIES

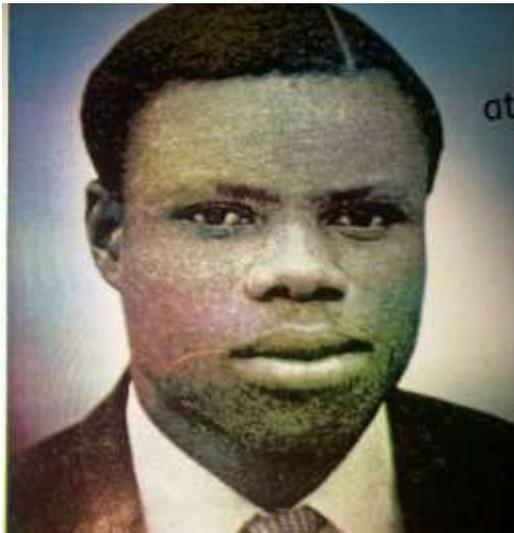
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DEDICATION

Dedicated to the Almighty God who has been so gracious to me:

..... and to my father



He had hoped he would be here
to watch the dance steps of his son
in this square full of roving eyes.
But 10 years ago, his flight was announced.
He could not wait, but with smiles he left
and travelled to glory. I mean my friend, mentor, headmaster, my
father:
Elder Godwin Iheanacho Nwaogu
(1929 – 2004)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Today is a special day in my life and career as an academic and a professor. I therefore should like first of all to publicly thank God for His grace and favour which He has lavished on me. I have come this far – and here in the University of Port Harcourt, only by His special grace. There can be no higher calling or greater honour, than to bow and kneel before you Lord. For at your feet is indeed, the most high place for me.

To Nnenna Ugo Omenihu Nwaorgu, my best friend, and lover, whom I have the privilege to call the wife of my youth, I cannot possibly thank you enough for your invaluable support, encouragement, care, love and prayers.

My dear mother, Mrs Bessie W. Nwaorgu, I thank you for your deep care and concern. You taught us to pray and this has always helped, especially when the task becomes harder and confusing.

To Victor, Adaeze and Vyne, our indomitable trio, our friends and joy, thank you for believing in Dad so much and always reminding me that I can make it. I am proud of you.

My siblings have been such a vault of encouragement with their spouses, in every sense: Saint Pal, Dr Prince and Karen, Bishop Tony and Jane, Dr Nick and Jennifer, and Dr C'Laurel, Love and Benjamin, Pastor QueenAmy, Mrs Phoeby Olua, Ngozi and Prince and Bar. Sandra. Some of you had to sit for hours in the air plane to be here to see Dede pay his academic debt. I cannot thank you enough for the support I have received from you.

I greatly appreciate the Chancellor of Rhema University, Bro. Emma Okorie and his dear and amiable wife, Sis. Chi Emma Okorie.

My sincere gratitude goes to you, Professor J.A. Ajienska, Vice Chancellor, University of Port Harcourt, for approving this date, September 11, 2014 for my inaugural lecture. I had prayed that you would not remember the global September 11, the Twin Towers, the Pentagon or the unprecedented carnage that Al Qaeda visited on the global family and the United States of America in particular. Vice Chancellor, Sir, you are known for taking brave decisions in difficult circumstances, I have experienced it.

Vice Chancellor Rhema University Aba, Professor O.C. Onwudike and his dear wife, Dr and Mrs Jude Ehiemere, Professors O.JB Ojo, S.W.E. Ibodje, Kimse Okoko, Willie Okowa, Mark Anikpo, Osi Akpoghome.

May I tender my respects to Prof. Emeritus, N.D. Briggs who no matter where he meets you and recognizes you, will spare a moment to talk to you as an elder brother; and, Professor Baridam, both former Vice Chancellors of this great university. My brother professors in the faculty, and all colleagues, I salute you all.

I like to appreciate Promise (my Daughter-Inlaw), Princewill (Okoroafor), Mr and Barr. Mrs Chiedu Henry Parkinson for their encouragement all through the period I embarked on this work. I also like to thank Kalu Uche, Dona-Carine Nwankwo, Paul, Tony; Courage Nwonuma and Chinemerem Alvan Nwankwo, who tirelessly worked on the manuscript. I take full responsibility

for all the errors, not them. I thank all my students and a host of other Friends of Nwaorgu (FON), too numerous to mention.

PREAMBLE

Vice Chancellor, Sir,

It takes a deep breath of courage for a professor to present himself to the university community and the academic world, especially in this era of globalization, to deliver his inaugural lecture. It may be somewhat more unnerving if records had been set and broken, or in the present circumstance, where the Senate of this university, has come up with rules to ensure quality. It would appear that the lecturer is up against several challenges.

The comforting thing about it all is that the professor and inaugural lecturer has what he professes which he is ready to communicate to all. In my case, Mr Vice Chancellor, I carry on my head a great weight. In almost forty years of existence of the University of Port Harcourt, this is the trail blazer for the Department of Political and Administrative Studies. I know that after now, there will be a floodgate opened for many more from our department. It was in 1993 that the Faculty of Social Sciences made her debut with late Professor Salau's lecture on *Environmental Crisis and Development in Nigeria* (Anikpo, 1996:1). In 1996, Professor Anikpo of Sociology Department not only debunked the five finger fallacy, but also carved a niche for himself with his *Hegemonic Legacies: Issues in the Sociology of Underdevelopment* (1996). The following years recorded such titles as Okowa's *Oil "Babylonia" "Matthewnomics" and Nigerian Development* (Okowa, 2005) and Akpoghomeh's *The Terror of Transport and the Transportation of Terror* (Akpoghomeh, 2012).

As weird and intriguing as these lecture titles are, they were delivered with such eloquence and finesse, and above all, they connect so intimately. They touch on themes such as the people, the state, development and underdevelopment, conflict and security.

It does not require much intelligence to associate underdevelopment with interminable crisis or insecurity. It would be unnecessary to ask who is at the receiving end of all these – the people of course. Vice Chancellor, Sir, appreciating the centrality of the people in issues of governance, which includes among other things, citizens' participation in political process and social engineering, I have chosen a simple title for this inaugural lecture which is – *Inactive Squares and the Rumbling State*. I do hope we would be able to relate very closely with this.

The questions we shall seek to answer are not many, but they are crucial and include the following:

What are squares and why are they so important?

When are they active?

What are the consequences of their inactivity?

In the same breath we shall attempt to present a simple discourse on the state. The legitimacy which the state enjoys flows from the people – and certainly from the squares. It will be important to examine what could cause the rumbling of the state and what would be the result of such rumbling?

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

As a Political Scientist, my interest and concern centre on the people and their interaction with the state. Development is simply and squarely about people, their well-being, aspiration and

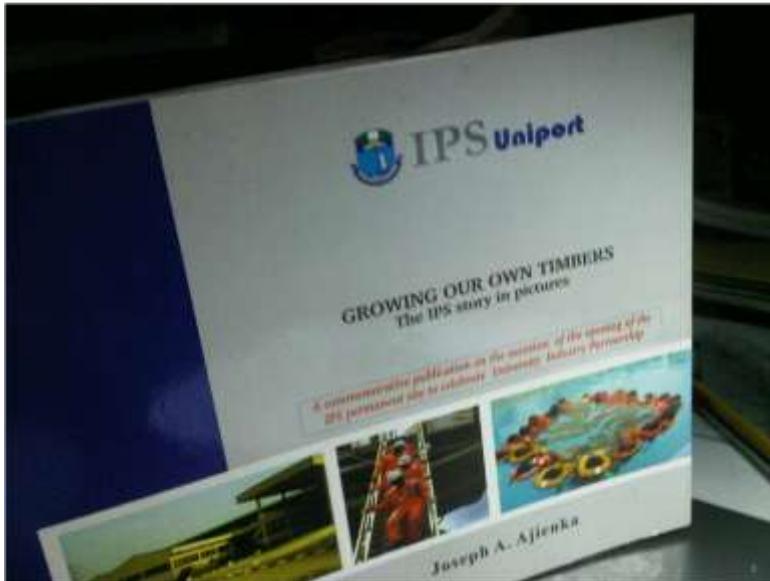
challenges. I have interpreted, explained and applied development theories and strategies, strictly within the context, realities and circumstances of Africa and African states. These theories and strategies I have maintained, should serve as guides and not school masters for development in Africa. Their prescription for development through the path of modernization, appear parochial for any realistic African development and thus, should be Africanized if they must meet the need of the hour and the development initiatives of the continent.

Recent global events have helped to expand my research interest. Today, I occupy unofficially, an unendowed Chair of Terrorism, since most of my researches and project supervision are in the area of terrorism and security. It is clear that development will not thrive in the face of insecurity.

A Man Who Dares to Waste an Hour of Time Has not Discovered the Value of Life – Charles Darwin

Vice Chancellor, Sir, I do not wish to waste this one hour. I do remember that you have been somewhat kind to me. On June 30, 2010, you gave me, at your IPS office, a set of books you authored. One of those books is entitled: *Growing Our Own Timbers, The IPS Story in Pictures*.

Picture 1: Growing Our Own Timbers, The IPS Story in Pictures



From your large and generous heart you have offered me today again, a glass of sparkling water, an ambulance and a team of medical personnel, I guess from our UPTH. Unlike the set of three books all of which I took with joy and gratitude, I shall today choose to accept only the cup of sparkling water (for I shall have no need for the ambulance and the medical team) and I say once again to you, thank you.

This lecture shall be presented in three parts. These shall follow the title of a book by Jean Paul Satre (1966), *Being and Nothingness*, which for the purpose of this lecture, has been

highly adulterated or altered; and Ayn Rand's *We The Living* (1959).

Part 1 – Between Nothingness and Being

What I Profess

Part 2 – Being in Nothingness

Inactive Squares and the Rumbling State

Part 3 – We the Living

What is to be Done?

PART I

1.0 *BETWEEN NOTHINGNESS AND BEING*

Every coin has two sides and life appears to offer two levels of destinations to man. These are basically, the dome of Nothingness and the hall of Being. It is all a matter of choice. The dome of Nothingness does not require philosophies, cerebrations and the flexing of intellectual muscles. In fact, doing nothing is all one needs to coast home to the dome of Nothingness, knowing that when one aims at nothing, he certainly will hit it. It is not the same with gaining entry into the hall and pavilion of Being. Much determination is invested and countless frustrating challenges are encountered and surmounted. It thus becomes clear then that professors are indeed, no happen chances or mushrooms that sprout over-night without warning signals. Professors are timbers that have been in the painful process of growth for many years. They represent a category that deliberately denied themselves comfort, pleasure and sleep, to form, through years of study and research, their academic DNA. A professor is a long growing timber, and this professor today, Mr Vice Chancellor Sir, stands to briefly tell the story of how he made it to the pavilion of Being.

With a plethora of publications, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to summarize each of them, but what the professor professes becomes the thread that links them up and helps him carve a niche for himself. However, some of the publications that got me into this privileged club of those who, for fear of academic death, living in Nothingness or being sentenced by ineptitude and the pursuit of distractions, shall be briefly highlighted.

Let me state here, and very clearly, that I am a professor of political science. People, their challenges, existential conditions/poverty, education and their perception and rating of government and governance have been and shall continue to be the hub of my academic interest. This will of course, not exclude conflicts, violence and terrorism, which we see like MTN, “Everywhere we go”.

How have the policies of government transformed the lives of the people? To what extent would it be right to associate the social eruptions witnessed all over Africa and in Nigeria, in particular, to state failure?

For development to be meaningful, it must be people-centred since they are the real wealth of the state which invariably owes them the creation of an enabling environment to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives (Ayres, 1995).

Nwaorgu (1995a, 1995b) explains that certain factors that may be grouped under two broad categories, the internal and the external, work in concert to constrain development especially in the global south and with particular reference to Nigeria. The internal factors include capacity of leadership – how clairvoyant, responsive or repressive, high level of corruption, illiteracy and mass poverty. In *Geopolitics of Steel Production in Nigeria* (1995b), I have drawn attention to the fact that the politics of narrow interests, rooted in ethnic manipulations and in total disregard of economic sense in the location of industries, have been the bane of Nigeria’s development. Leaders, no matter at whatever level, that fail to see the universality of people, and rather partition them into groups with different agenda, may only

enjoy a pyrrhic victory and history will not grant them a place of honour. The external factors include the rising tide of globalization, with all its implications, Nigeria's over involvement in international engagements – more for prestige reasons than for principles of necessity, and the debilitating imperialist actions of major global institutions and the Transnational Corporations (TNC) exploiting the entire spectrum of Nigeria's natural resources with little or no replenishment plans.

Late Chief Awolowo had argued that Nigeria is not a nation, but a geographical expression and a political arrangement to serve the interest of colonial government. Internally today, we are no strangers to the problems and challenges this arrangement has brought to bear on the country. However, beyond the domestic is the international dimension. I had examined this in *International Border Clashes* with specific reference to the Bakassi palaver. The wide and artificial borders of Nigeria create serious security challenges which successive leadership never seriously considered. Security issues are very fragile in nature and require care and tact, and in this particular case (Nwaorgu, 1995c), a military option which we had advised government and which was underway, would have been better than the later.

In discussing issues about democracy, governance and the polity, I have pointed out clearly (Nwaorgu, 1998, 2004), that several forms of socio-political institutions existed in Nigeria before the colonial intrusion on her political environment. Here, the high sense of organization within these institutions and the firm and unambiguous form of democracy they exhibited even at this pre-capitalist stage of their development is highly commendable. The extant Nigerian society could look back into history and glean

what is best for her socio-political organization, and perhaps, cap it with the tenets of liberal democracy and she will be the richer for it. Concerning human development, the pervasive poverty, rising inequality in both qualitative and quantitative terms, security issues and citizen participation in governance require government's attention. Seers' (1969, 1972) exposition on the meaning of development shows a tripod concern that captures in clear relief, the key elements in the relationship between the state and the citizens. These elements – poverty, unemployment and inequality are not only the defining characteristics of development, they are the citizens' parameters for judgment in terms of performance of government. Any government that reduces substantially the levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality would have endeared itself to the hearts of the people. It would mean for the government, reinforced legitimacy. In such an atmosphere, the frequency of conflict is expected to be greatly minimized. An interesting aspect of Seers' tripod concern, is that while it appears to define broadly governance today, these elements, perhaps with the addition of security, were central in the discussions at the squares.

Ethnicity and development are two interesting phenomena that have become, through the frequent use or abuse, close cousins. However, what I have done in *Ethnicity and Development: A Case Against its Underdevelopment* (Nwaorgu, 1999), is to launder the undeserved dirty image of ethnicity. Here is an attempt to debunk and set aside the popular view that there is nothing positive about ethnicity. A continued association of ethnicity with conflict and violence does not simply negate the phenomenon's nation-building qualities, but totally undermines it. My position here is simple: that instead of ethnicity retarding development, it rather enhances it and creates healthy

competition. Such was the case before the collapse of the First Republic in Nigeria. This period saw especially, different ethnic groups aspiring to improve themselves and bring development to their people. Gradually, the literacy rate began to rise, agriculture was not left out. In this regard, the post-independence regional leaders in Nigeria, especially in the Western and Eastern regions, embarked in a highly competitive manner, on several programmes, aimed at improving the lot of their citizens. Each region attempted to outclass the other. While this is happening at the regional level, it continued to the many ethnic groups that make up these regions. Instead of the phenomenon of ethnicity being anti-development, in many ways, it has been a strong brick for social upliftment of the different ethnic groups. It is a well-known fact that while religious organisations built several schools, some ethnic groups rose to the occasion also and built schools – Ngwa High School, Ibo National, in Aba, and Okirika High School in present Rivers State, all in the former Eastern region. The positive sides of ethnicity are healthy and supportive of nation-building efforts of government, and should not be neglected. It is this neglect and poor patronage that constitute the underdevelopment of the phenomenon.

In another vein, when one considers the relevance of Joint Ventures in the development of the global south, it becomes evident that such so called Joint Ventures typify the asymmetrical relationship that exists between the global north and the south, which has continued to dwarf the latter's development (Nwaorgu, 1999). Notwithstanding the attraction it may hold, its negative impact on economic development and transformation does far out-weigh whatever promise it may pretend to have. Developing countries should be bold enough to negotiate such partnerships in such a way that they do not become underdogs and merely come

out with marginal benefit and a colossal loss of resources. This is the main thrust of the argument in: ‘The Irrelevance of International Joint Ventures in Developing Societies’ (Okodudu, 1999: 124-132).

The role of the state is indeed germane in her quest for development. A careful examination of the Nigerian state and her efforts at privatization may be revealing. As a policy, privatization is quite acceptable, but for development to be realized through this policy path, some knowledge and appreciation of the character of the state is necessary. In ‘The State and the Dilemma of Privatization in Nigeria’ (Nwaorgu & Akpan, 2004), we argued that a non-autonomous privatized state cannot drive and direct privatization to the benefits of all segments of the population. The lack of autonomy by the Nigerian state and its consequent attempt at privatization has no doubt bred corruption, indiscipline, nepotism and the lack of commitment to national development objectives. The above factors have undermined the efforts of this policy in more than one way; viz:

- (i) The implementation of the programme which now only benefits members of the ruling class, who either buy off the enterprises involved or squander the huge revenue that has been generated from the sale of the enterprises;
- (ii) The state is unable to provide the preconditions of development of the private sector – socio-economic infrastructure and political stability;
- (iii) We noted that it had literally blocked the emergence of a disciplined entrepreneurial class which should be the driving force. What we have is what Okowa (2005) calls “abdulistic bourgeoisie”.

Vice Chancellor, Sir, it is absolutely difficult, if not impossible, to summarize one's nearly a quarter of a century academic contributions in a fraction of an hour and still speak to the title of the inaugural lecture. I wonder what mathematical computation that would justify it. I therefore, wish to devote what is left of my allotted time to the lecture topic. This is the second part of my presentation.

PART II

2.0 *BEING IN NOTHINGNESS*

The title of this inaugural lecture is “Inactive Squares and the Rumbling State”. What are squares, when are they considered inactive or in a state of inertia? What would make squares to become inactive? We would interrogate the relevance of squares in political engineering. It would be interesting to establish what, if any, relationship exists between the square and the rumbling state. If the state rumbles and for whatever reason, how do we begin to conceptualize or characterize the state? In the event of the continued inertia of the square, how would that affect the state and the welfare of the citizens?

The square expresses that space, both conceptual and empirical, in which people openly express themselves as a social, cultural or political community. Historically and empirically, it represents the space where Plato confronted the Sophists, where the Roman Senate met the people in exchange of political views or entertained the people with bull fights to divert attention from political problems. With the development of printing, it expanded to include that door on which Martin Luther posted his theses and later still, the media. Today the square has grown even wider and deeper with the advent of social media. On this point, if the Arab Spring taught us anything, it is how the digital or conceptual square can reinforce the historical or empirical square. In Algeria, Libya and Egypt, people were mobilized through social media to pour out into the squares in Algiers, Tripoli and Egypt. We have seen this process repeated in Turkey and in the occupy movement that invaded Wall Street in protest against the unprecedented

profits corporate organisations were making while millions of people could hardly eke out a living from their environment.

The square, by definition, is an area of activity – sometimes intense and at other times moderate. But it is never silent and inactive. Because the square is a necessary component of the society, leaders must learn to navigate to ensure their legitimacy and thereby the stability of the system. This is one area where liberal democracies seem to have grasped the very undercurrents of democratic exchanges and to use the square, by being fairly transparent and accountable, by allowing genuine freedom of speech even when it is inconvenient and uncomfortable – to stabilize the ship of state. Thus the active square is the very foundation for growth and development because it provides that market place where ideas, policies and platforms are honed.

The inactive square, by definition, represents political pathology. It does not matter that some states/governments seek to keep the squares silent and empty them of people and their ideas. When they succeed even for a while, they inadvertently cause the system to boil over. Unable to manage the wrath of the system, the state must rumble and crumble. Look again at Algeria, Libya and Egypt. The active square is constantly in motion and the state/government that seeks to render it inactive by disallowing the genuine freedoms thereby sets itself against the moving train. The challenge is to learn how to manage the square.

It is under such circumstance that the tenets of Frustration-Aggression theory appears illuminating. This theory holds that behaviour, whether as manifested by an individual or a group of individuals, is a direct response to feelings of frustration. The frustration felt is as a result of blocked access to a desired goal or expectation (Dollard et al, 1939). The degree of aggressiveness

would lie in the length and depth of frustration felt. Dollard (1939) and his friends held that:

- (i) All aggressive acts or responses are as a result of previous frustration; and,
- (ii) That all frustration leads to aggression.

These are what informed Ted Gurr's *Why Men Rebel* (1970), in which he believed that individuals would stop at nothing in challenging anything that impedes the realization of their expectations. Gurr (1970) and Beikowitz (1962) largely agree on the fact that the main source of violent actions (Rumbling) is basically frustration – a bottled up anger and dissatisfaction with the authority – state or corporate. It therefore, should be the responsibility of government to always monitor the barometer of the peoples' frustration and let some of its steam out through the safety nozzle or it would build up to something catastrophic.

But what is a square? Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary has defined a square as "an open, often quadrilateral area of the intersection of two or more streets..." Squares have always existed. Their usage may have rather increased than shrunk. The Holy Bible is replete with direct as well as indirect references to squares. In the book of Genesis, Vice Chancellor Sir, I would like to draw attention to what graphically presents the picture of a square both by its descriptive features as well as the use it was put to, and I quote:

And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field ... (Genesis 2:19 – 20, KJV).

Sir, the number of animals and birds and of all kinds and description involved, is certainly over-whelming and would only have been accommodated in a square that was clean so that the giraffes (as well as snails and ants), would be seen by all. Here also, every animal and bird or fowl participated fully by:

- (1) Paying attention to learn and memorize the names given to their fellow creatures – knowing that after then, they will in turn begin to use them to address each other.
- (2) They would have ululated and even applauded the ingenuity/wisdom of Uncle Adam in his choice of names for different kinds of animals.

Again, in Lamentation 2: 11 -12, town squares are clearly mentioned. Permit me again to quote, but this time from NET translation of the Holy Bible:

My eyes are worn out from weeping
My stomach is in knots. My heart is poured out
on the ground due to the destruction of my
helpless people; children and infants faint in the
town squares; children say to their mothers
“where are food and drink?”
They faint like a wounded warrior in the city
squares. They die slowly in their mothers arms.

The imagery in these verses of the Holy Bible is rich and sadly compelling, and could make any square crackle and throw sparks of light violently about.

Indeed, the square is a large area which serves myriad of purposes, and is common to developed and developing countries. There is hardly any country that has not got at least a well-maintained national or central square.

What an Obi/Ovuu is to a family is what a traditional square is to a community. The community is made up of a mosaic of families that are bound together by one ancestry. They have and celebrate a common custom, buy and sell at a common place. Therefore, the square is a free, large and sacred place of a community that serves many a purpose from the mundane (social, cultural, political) to the spiritual. It is an arena where tough issues are deliberated upon, where kings are crowned or dethroned, where warriors are sent off for a bloody campaign or received after the campaign. It is a place of judgment, a place for the people and created by the people. The New Yam festival, intra and inter-community wrestling matches, the banishing of anyone that had offended the gods of the land, or the public repudiation of a witch or wizard, would never be done at a better place than at the village square. The square is an arena for the convocation of the members of the community. It is a sacred place of invocation of the spirits of the ancestors, who are regularly consulted and invited for the resolution of highly intractable problems faced by the community. It is the birth place of modern day democracy, to say the least. The state (and we shall in a moment define and characterize it) was delivered from the womb of society in the square. The legitimacy it enjoys is a product of the collective mandate of the people and freely given from the square. Issues of leadership succession, security, justice etc. impinge on the development of all within the community and are discussed publicly till communal consent is secured. If done otherwise, it shall be seen as farcical and lacking in authority and legitimacy.

Inactivity could be taken to mean inertia, as in physics and engineering sciences. It presupposes the fact that every moving object continues to move on a trajectory that is consistent, and so will continue, unless an external force interferes with its speed or direction. It is the tendency of an object to also resist change in motion. This is Newton's first Law of Motion.

	Linear Motion		Rotational Motion	
Position	x		θ	Angular position
Velocity	v		ω	Angular velocity
Acceleration	a		α	Angular acceleration
Motion equations	$x = \bar{v}t$		$\theta = \bar{\omega}t$	Motion equations
	$v = v_0 + at$		$\omega = \omega_0 + \alpha t$	
	$x = v_0t + \frac{1}{2}at^2$		$\theta = \omega_0t + \frac{1}{2}\alpha t^2$	
	$v^2 = v_0^2 + 2ax$		$\omega^2 = \omega_0^2 + 2\alpha\theta$	
Mass (linear inertia)	m		I	Moment of inertia

The fact before all, especially my colleagues from the physical sciences, that celebrate the Newtonian Laws of Motion, with particular reference to Newton's first law of motion. These laws are merely illegally adopted children. Their celebration in the disciplines of mathematics, engineering, or astronomy in total neglect of their father is a total disservice no matter the value these branches of learning claim to have added. Newton did not discover the law of motion no more than anyone would think that Mungo Park discovered River Niger. The law of motion (inactivity or inertia) was first discovered in 400 B.C by Aristotle, the grandfather of Political Science, the discipline this lecturer, represents and professes. We in political science greatly endorse collaboration in whatever form it is conceived; but the

non-recognition of the source and the celebration of the third party is tantamount to abuse and denial of intellectual property rights of Aristotle and Political Science. It will take keen observation of the behaviour of people (which Mr Newton and his friends between early 16th and late 17th Centuries, changed to mass or object) such as Aristotle engaged in, to appreciate their relationship with each other and the state. This has been my pre-occupation as a political scientist and the main engagement and service of the discipline of political science to the society in general and the state in particular. Political Scientists are by no means politicians, their job in the society is not to scout for troubles and, chancing on some, blow their implications out of proportion for cheap popularity. They are not just social critics, whose stock in trade is to criticise every action or inaction of government and society. Political Scientists are trained to educate, inform and by accepted ethical standards, correct, construct and reconstruct society through such studies that avoid any form of detachment from society and its needs. Waldo (1975) corroborates this position when he opined that:

Political Scientists should be more concerned with issues of justice, freedom, equality, with political activity. In a period of stress, turmoil and gross inequities, it is irresponsible to carry on as usual in academic detachment. At minimum, political scientists need to be concerned with issues of public policy and political reform.

This is a major thrust in today's lecture. Injustice, inequality and the non-guarantee of basic freedom, serve for a while as

tranquilizers if not an anaesthesia that deadens with frustration, the once active spirit of the people – the square.

However we look at inactivity (inertia), one thing is clear, and it is that it is frustrating. The frustration is made worse when the recipient of some grace turns around and against his/her benefactor. The physical square does not move, but from the square, things that move the society are generated. If these are not allowed to run their free and normal course, by some external force or manipulation, inactivity, first through apathy, definitely would set in and the social balance will be greatly affected.

Every society and indeed, every square, is in motion and in every sense, the first Newtonian Law of Motion applies to them even with more serious consequences. As a social and spiritual rendezvous, it has unquestioningly, especially in African tradition and mythology, become the defining symbol of the souls of the forebears as well as the root of the collective existence of the community. The history of squares may be unclear in some cases, but in many, there are concrete accounts of their origin. If it is not that it was the very spot that the communities' ancestors first settled, it would be the place where slaves were gathered and kept before they were moved to their final destination. Whatever the story behind their origin may be, fact is that, the origin and location of the square reasonably have a strong fraternal cord that binds the entire community together, and from which they derive their strength to act as one.

For the Romans, the square was primarily for public gatherings, debates and public speeches, especially by famous politicians (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Forum). It also was an

arena for political activism, as in Athens, the supposed birthplace of democracy. It was also a place for sports and contests. Many squares exist all around the world, but some are outstanding. These include:

Picture 2: The Syntagma Constitution Square



Source: http://www.sofiaecho.com/shimg/zx500y290_897119.jpg

It was in commemoration of King Otto's benevolence in granting a constitution after a popular military uprising on September 3, 1843.

There is the **Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China**, which ranks among the first three largest squares in the world.

Picture 3: Tiananmen Square, Beijing, China



Source: <http://1.1.1.1/bmi/www.abc.net.au/news/linkableblob/5496536/data/students-protest-and-pay-their-respect-to-reformist-leader-hu-y-data.jpg>

Picture 4: The Tafawa Balewa Square (TBS), Lagos, Nigeria



Source: <http://www.gidi-it.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/tb3.jpg>

Picture 5: The Eagle Square, Abuja, Nigeria



Source: <http://www.punchng.com/wpcontent/uploads/2012/10/Eagles%20empty.jpg>

Picture 6: Tahrir Square, Egypt



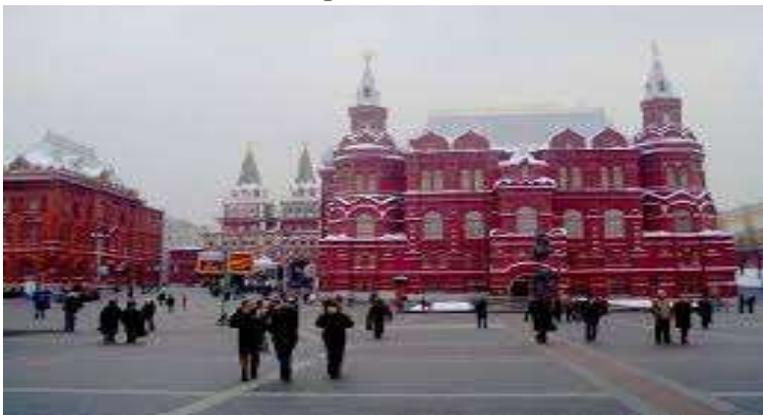
Source: <http://stevehollier.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/w-tahrir-square-cairo-now-j1.jpg>

Picture 7: Zocalo Square in Mexico



Source: <http://www.planetware.com/photos-large/MEX/zocalo-plaza-de-la-constitucion.jpg>

Picture 8: Russia's Red Square



Source: https://encryptedtbn3.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9Gc_SOHhW0zs3f7v30hwvUJuABfTfUsdGTB2ajEJvm3dkT3zcRHkR7jQ&relod=on

Picture 9: Trafalgar Square, London



Source: <http://www.avalonschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Trafalgar-Square-1.jpg>

Picture 10: A Village Square in Benin



Source: http://www.biodiversityinternational.org/fileadmin/_processed_/csm_strengthening_capacity_and_awareness_tree_in_a_village_in_Benin_BiodiversityVinceti_4e1b262bbb.jpg

To understand the reason for the inactivity of the square, it is important we recall that we had noted earlier that the square had existed before the state. In fact, the state was given birth to in the square. The state has frustrated the development of the square and with some socio-political and economic placebo, like an overdose of anaesthesia, numbed the activities and collective conscience of the people. What then is the state?

The state is a widely accepted phenomenon with an appreciably long history. Many a contrasting view exists that characterize it, either as the servant of the bourgeoisie, an autonomous force, or a relational force. An instrumentalist explanation of the state presents it as an instrument of oppression and domination of the society, using every Machiavellian principle to dislodge, confuse, dominate, control and exploit the society to the advantage of a few. Sylla (2013:11) supports the existence of the domination of the many by the few in the following words:

The inconvenient truth is that the majority can be oppressed by the rich minority who, through their influence, can keep on a leash both the people and their representatives.

What could be more frustrating and for how long would the people live with such conditions and humiliations?

As would be expected, Ekekwe (1986), the Orator of this inaugural lecture, has dissociated himself with the crude instrumentalist characterization of the state. In his judgment, it would be quite difficult, and almost impossible, for the state to merely be an instrument of the ruling class. What informs this view, is the fact that the state also plays other roles besides

domination while the ruling class is in itself internally divided and thus, subject to serious intra-class competition. It is possible too, that he has deliberately turned the other way, not acknowledging the fact that it is the ruling class that functionally defines as well as characterizes the state. Notwithstanding their internal squabbles, still they wine and dine together with a nothing has happened face, being bonded by their common interest.

I like what Engels (1942:155) says about the state. He holds that the state is a product of the society at a particular point of its development. The point at which the state came to be, was at the cross-roads of contradictions that tore the society into two mutually antagonistic classes. To preserve the society, the state arose from within it, to be above it, for the sole purpose of mediating between the classes and moderating the effects of the contradictions. It does appear now that the state has become totally oppressive and repressive and no longer the mediating personality it was originally conceived to be.

In an attempt to understand the nature and character of the Nigerian state, it is perhaps instructive to examine the views of some scholars that have made some notable contributions to this field of study. Ake (1985:3), for instance, had lamented over the near lack of autonomy of the Nigerian state, which in fairness to Nigeria, is not a peculiar characteristic, but a feature common to all post-colonial states. Ake explains that:

The unique feature of socio-economic formations in post-colonial Africa, and indeed in contemporary periphery formations generally, is that the state has very limited autonomy. That is,

the state is institutionally constituted in such a way that it enjoys limited independence from the social classes, particularly the hegemonic social class and so is immersed in class struggle.

The intra and inter class struggles leave the masses as the main casualties and ultimately weaken the transformative activities associated with the square. The deliberative, consultative and invocative nature that characterize the square, which also accord it, the prominence it enjoys, had become silent as a result of the excessive power of the state which is sustained by large-scale institutional corruption and the monopoly of the machinery of violence. Conditions such as these are not a rarity especially in rogue and crude capitalist states, a category the Nigerian state enjoys membership of.

An aspect of Alavi's three theses of conceptualization of the state in post-colonial societies is considered complementary to this discourse. It appears indeed germane here for the understanding of the rumbling of the state. It accepts that by all standards and descriptions, Nigeria is a post-colonial state. Alavi thus states that:

The state assumes a relatively autonomous economic role with the appropriation of a large portion of the economic surplus which is allocated to economic activity of the stated purpose of promoting economic development.

The Nigerian state has encouraged corruption, inequality and neglect which arouses in many of her citizens, a rebellious spirit and dare devilry in their determination to sink the ship of the

state. Oil producing states of the world, with the exception of Nigeria, appear to have transformed substantially, the lives of their citizens. Williams and Turner (1978: 132-156) hint on this when they opined that: “the state controls access to oil supplies and lucrative contracts. The state itself, and its civil servants, thus become the focus of mass distributive conflicts”. It is not in doubt that the problem of the citizens is caused by the state. It is not in doubt also, that the rumbling is a reaction from the people. Then why will it be in doubt that if these symptoms are not diagnosed and properly treated, that the Nigerian state shall in months and years ahead, harvest political and social eruptions of indescribable proportion that could have the potential of redrawing the map of Nigeria?

The whole essence of development is to engage the energies of the state, in a determined effort to exit the state of nature and all it represents, with a commitment to providing the greatest good for the greatest number.

The sham democracy most developing countries, especially in Africa and particularly in Nigeria practice is best described as Cabalcacy – a government by a cabal. Late Dora Akunyili cried out about this during the period late President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua was sick. Only the cabal then knew his state of health, while top government officials outside this small circle, irrespective of their religious and ethnic or political propinquity knew nothing at all about it. The Cabal, I hate to think of them as national political elites of any kind at all. They are mere opportunists, self-seeking individuals whose collective role is far from nation building. The self-ordained political encyclopaedia and ready reckoners erroneously think that they, in their narrow circle, possess all the wisdom to run the state affairs in total

disregard of the people. The attitude of these individuals re-echoes the assertion of Bottomore (1983:24) that democracy is continually threatened and often stifled by property-owning, privileged and dominant groups who are always fearful of any autonomous, unregulated incursion of the 'masses' into politics. The sustained political alienation of the real owners of the authority of the state in matters that affect their existence, questions the very definition and essence of democracy. It certainly does call for its re-conceptualization.

In effect, what gives the square its relevance and power, is its practical democratic ethos. The strength and teeth of democracy do not come from the stage-managed periodic selections or elections. It is rather the authorship, not the sponsorship of the elections, and the level of popular participation during and after the elections. It is the power of the people most times typified in their loud public expressions of agreement or otherwise that stirs the square. This is the truth, the voice of the people, and the real democracy.

Democracy must not be robbed of its naturalness and physical character as it deals with and reflects the real concerns of the people. This is what distinguishes the square and real people in the political process from the electronic political squares and the digital version of democracy which most states have resorted to creating merely to deceive their gullible audiences. The celebrated Athenian democracy of the 5th Century B.C, was characterized by the deep and extensive involvement of the masses in the decision of issues that affected them. The hallmark of democracy, which is the livewire of the Square, is participation. The Nigerian state whether during the colonial or post-colonial era, had always set the limits to citizens'

participation and engagement. This limit, however, was not negotiated but imposed. This is no democracy. If it is, then it is a badly fractured one and by its own bone setters – the State. It requires re-constitutive surgery and the re-introduction of its consultative, deliberative and consummative character. It should not be conceived any longer to be restrictive, exclusive and non-responsive or repressive. What appears to be the norm among many states described as democratic, is that they have still retained much of authoritarianism that the people had earlier fought against. Mkandawire (1999:125) rightly observed that:

Democratic states that are built on the ruins of authoritarian rule often retain some of the previous state's institutions, which linger due to social inertia and structural rigidities.

In every sense, the character of the Nigerian State and its brand of democracy are graphically represented here. It does not matter if it was during the colonial regime or during the long period of military rule that the authoritarian state ruled. The manifest fact is that it seriously affected the people, and encouraged political inactivity through state intimidation and other serious cut-backs on the rights and privileges of the people. This is common in a culture that disregards the real owners of the license to rule, and denies them a place on the platform of decision making. These days, struggle for power is not to render services, but for the juice that can be squeezed from its use in state affairs (Nwaorgu, 2011).

Soyinka (2006:199) has remarked generally on the nature of the African democracy and explains:

In far numerous African nations, the comparative index of brutality, contempt for the rule of law and abuse of human rights between some so-called democracies and military dictatorships leaves dubious space for absolutes. One has only to consider Kenyan ‘democracy’ under Arap Moi, or the stale tobacco ash-end of the Hiterite Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe masquerading as a passion for land restitution.

The above remarks of Soyinka informed Gates’ (Soyinka, 2006) assertion that “if the spirit of African democracy has a voice and a face, they belong to Wole Soyinka”. I would rather say that they may probably not belong to Soyinka, but he would undoubtedly be one of the great priests in the shrine, coven, or lodge, where the spirits are worshipped, invoked and perhaps, placated. Soyinka appears to have mastered the mood of the spirits and also to have known their set time of entry from the astral to the material world of humanity clothed with flesh, with blood flowing under it.

Nothing about the square at anytime had to do with inactivity. Inactivity set in as a result of the over-bearing influence of the state and its excessive use of the machinery of violence it had the sole right to use. The state had gradually become Frankenstein’s monster, hunting its creator. Athenian democracy was a vibrant and a convenient one; convenient in the sense that its population was just about 40,000 people who had citizen status. This is so, because citizenship in Athens was restricted. Slaves and foreign residents were not qualified to be part of the process (Hague & Harrop, 2001:19). However, their participation in politics was quite vigorous and seen as “a natural social activity not sharply

separated from the rest of life... Rather political life is only an extension of, and harmonious with, oneself” (Dahl, 1989:18). In a situation such as this, the square comes alive with debates on pressing public issues with a view to finding some (lasting) solution to them. This is more like *Direct Democracy* which the Athenians practiced.

Notwithstanding the many interpretations of democracy most of which might be quite misleading, Plato (Republic, BOOK 6) for example, portrays democracy as the “worst of the good forms of government and the best of the worst”. Voltaire defined it as the “subdivision of tyranny between several citizens” (see Sylla, 2003:8). Much of the poor image that democracy has had to put up with, has been as a result of seeing it more as a process in which the people elect their leaders who will now take over the affairs of the people. Beyond that, it should be seen as a process that creates a sense of accommodation and synergy between the rulers and the ruled. It is only in this way that mutual respect, transparency, equality and accountability would be realised – which are the bedrock of nation building. These are the attributes of democracy, whether direct or liberal representative types, and are realizable more in the *Ekklesia* (People’s Assembly) or in this lecture, the Square.

The degree of interaction between the group that governs (Dahl, 1961) and the group that is governed, to a great extent determines the survival of a political system, as well as how much of the dividends or benefits of democracy that will be made available to the populace. These benefits or dividends will not be produced nor distributed in an environment of conflict and insecurity.

The people must be presented with the problems, threats and challenges that tug at their corporate existence. They should have the opportunity to actively participate in the discussion and decision to provide solution to these problems in their various *Ekklesia*. No matter the cloud of prejudice against direct democracy which Athens and several other states had practiced, this system or form of political engineering has remained widely acknowledged as “a beacon for the future rather than a residue from the past” (Arendt, 1958).

For whatever it is worth, the singular concern in this lecture remains; the role of the *ekklisia*, or the Square, in mediating between the competing interests of the state and the people. How would the square mid-wife the birth of the greatest good for the greatest number in the extant political health-care delivery arrangement. The denial of these dividends no doubt, frustrates and strengthens the suspicion and odium the people already nurse against the state and this ultimately weakens legitimacy thus leading up to several eruptions and rumblings. Not every eruption or rumbling will be considered political if it has no demand for some authoritative allocation of values. I like to note here, that these values are scarce and mostly economic, or on the other hand, impinge on the economic well-being of the people, for which they seek the authoritative action – by way of allocation – by the state.

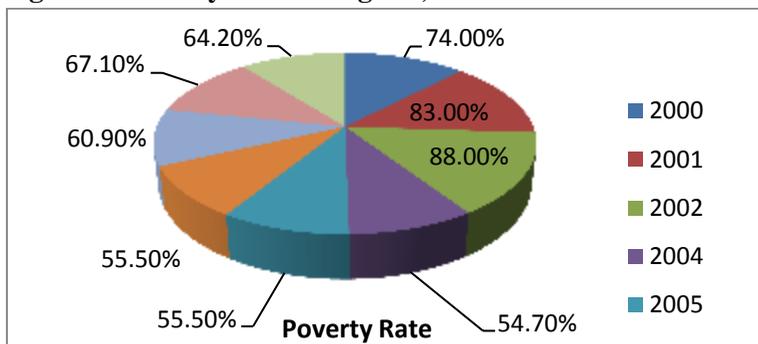
Soyinka’s remarks on democracy is a dangerous indictment of the state of democracy in Africa, the leaders and the states they have been placed in charge of by collective mandate, to superintend. This being the case, it is evident therefore, that democracy in Africa is in trouble. What follows is an explanation of the above factors which stand implicated as factors that have

not only led to the inactivity of the squares, but also encouraged the rumbling of the state. What democracy – direct or its variant, liberal representative, will tolerate:

- Inactivity and Voicelessness
- High Incidence of Poverty
- Very Low Level of Literacy
- High Unemployment Level
- Pervasive Insecurity
- The Inadequacy or Total Non-existence of Basic Infrastructure?

For the purpose of illustration, some of these statistics are presented in charts and tables hereunder:

Figure 1: Poverty Rate in Nigeria, 2000 – 2013/14

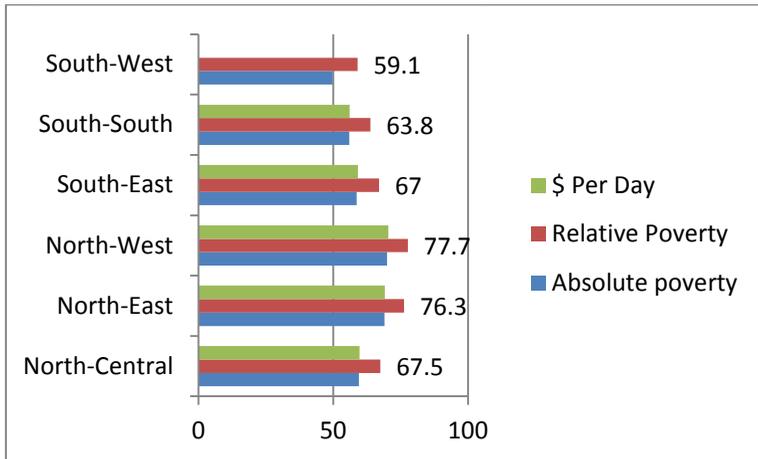


Sources: Federal Office of Statistics (1999) *Poverty Profile for Nigeria 1980-96*. Lagos; FOS; National Bureau of Statistics (2005, 2011) *Poverty Profile for Nigeria*. Abuja: National Bureau of Statistics; CIA World Factbook, 2013.

Figures contained in the chart above show that the rate of poverty in Nigeria in 2000 was 74.0%. The figure rose to 83.0% and 88.0% in 2001 and 2002 respectively. There was a reduction to

54.7% in 2004 with a slight increase to 55.5% in 2005, same figure recorded in 2008. In 2010, the figure stood at 60.9% rising to 67.1% in 2011. The figure has been put at 64.2% for 2013/2014. When considered on the basis of geographical zone, the statistics becomes much clearer.

Figure 2: Incidence of Poverty by Geopolitical Zone, 2010



Source: Compiled by the author from National Bureau of Statistics, Harmonized Nigeria Living Standards Survey [HNLSS] (2010) figures

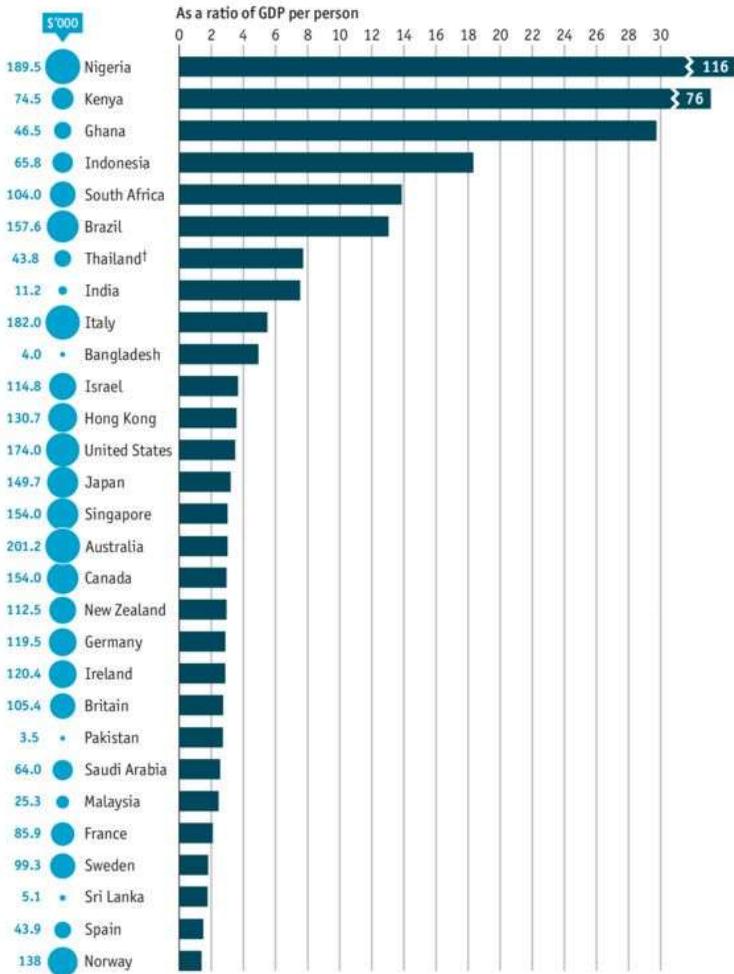
Absolute poverty, according to Human Development Report (2008), is the level of poverty as defined in terms of the minimal requirements necessary to afford minimal standards of food, clothing, health care and shelter. For the measure to be really absolute, the line must be the same across different countries, cultures, and technological levels. In the case of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria, the level of absolute poverty is quite alarming. The table above indicates that as at 2010, the South-West had the least rate of 49.8%. This is closely followed by the South-South with 55.9% and the South-East with 58.7%.

North-Central is fourth with 59.5% while the North-East ranks fifth with 69.0%. The North-West has the highest absolute poverty rate of 70.0%. These figures indicate that in as much as the level of absolute poverty is quite high in Nigeria, its rate in the North-West is the highest.

Relative poverty is the condition in which people lack the minimum amount of income needed in order to maintain the average standard of living in the society in which they live (UNDP Human Development Report, 2008). Relative poverty is regarded as the easiest way to measure the level of poverty in an individual country. The graph indicates that just as the North-West had the highest absolute poverty rate, same goes for relative poverty (77.7%) while the South-West equally had the least with 59.1%.

Basic salary of lawmakers

Selected countries, 2013*



Sources: Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority; government websites; IMF; *The Economist*

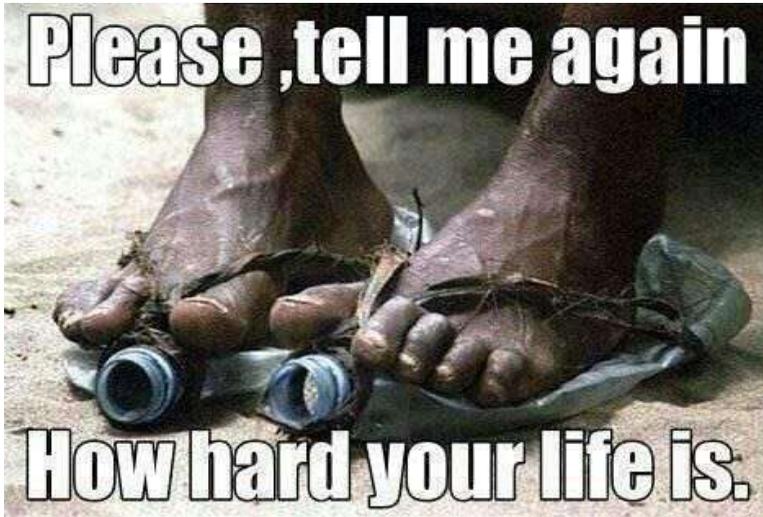
*Or latest available year
†Governing party constituency MP

inonomist.com/graphicdetail

It is interesting to note that while some wallow in abject poverty, some others are living in affluence. A look at the pictures below will suffice:



Source: *Whatsapp picture from a friend*



Source: *Whatsapp picture from a friend*

These pictures may be caricatures but they tell powerful stories of life in this Federal Republic. What is glaring from the picture above is that politicians and their families live in affluence while the voters that entrusted them with their votes live in abject penury.

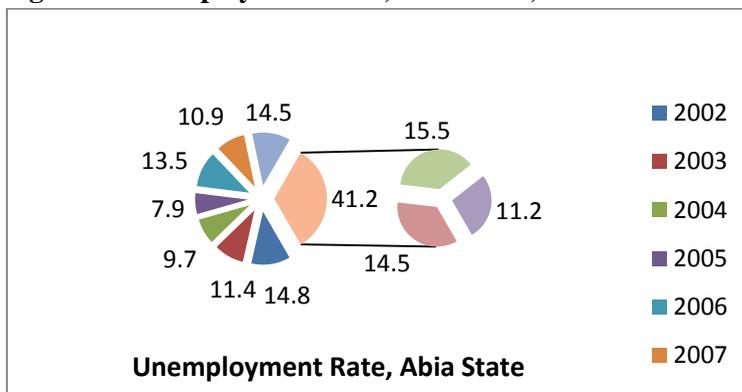
Table 1: Unemployment Rates by States in Nigeria 2002-2011

State	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Abia	14.8	11.4	9.7	7.9	13.5	10.9	14.5	14.5	15.5	11.2
Adamawa	12.9	11.9	16.7	21.4	17.9	11.9	29.4	29.4	31.4	18.4
Akron	12.3	14.4	14.4	14.4	15.3	13.5	34.1	34.1	36.1	18.4
Anambra	6.6	9.1	9.5	9.8	10.8	11.1	16.8	16.8	17.8	12.2
Bauchi	10.4	20.5	25.1	29.7	23.9	7.3	37.2	37.2	39.2	41.4
Bayelsa	3.5	7.1	14.0	20.9	16.0	6.9	38.4	38.4	40.4	23.9
Benue	8.2	4.8	11.7	18.6	10.8	67.4	8.5	8.5	9.5	14.2
Borno	6.4	0.8	3.6	6.3	5.8	7.8	27.7	27.7	29.7	29.1
C/River	7.9	12.0	11.5	11.1	16.9	11.8	14.3	14.3	15.3	18.2
Delta	14.9	17.1	10.8	4.5	13.8	18.9	18.4	18.4	20.8	27.2
Ebonyi	2.8	16.7	11.8	7.0	10.9	11.5	12.0	12.0	13.0	23.1
Edo	4.8	3.1	6.5	9.9	8.6	5.1	12.2	12.2	13.2	35.2
Ekiti	17.5	8.2	7.9	7.5	8.7	15.6	20.6	20.6	22.6	12.1
Enugu	15.2	16.5	21.6	27.4	20.0	11.5	14.9	14.9	15.9	25.2
Gombe	13.4	7.6	15.2	22.8	15.6	10.5	32.1	32.1	34.1	38.7
Imo	19.9	22.1	19.3	16.5	21.5	7.6	20.8	20.8	22.8	35.9
Jigawa	6.1	20.5	19.8	19.1	21.6	17.4	26.5	26.5	28.5	35.9
Kaduna	8.4	19.6	15.9	12.1	14.1	5.9	11.6	11.6	12.6	30.3
Kano	12.8	25.9	22.5	19.1	19.4	12.7	27.6	27.6	29.6	21.3
Katsina	10.4	20.3	22.1	23.8	19.3	5.8	37.3	37.3	39.3	28.1
Kebbi	12.3	19.8	19.9	19.9	15.2	11.8	12.0	12.0	13.0	25.3
Kogi	19.9	14.9	11.8	8.7	12.5	16.5	19.0	19.0	21.0	14.4
Kwara	8.8	5.4	4.2	2.9	7.5	16.4	11.0	11.0	12.0	7.1
Lagos	8.0	25.6	16.1	6.5	15.5	10.2	19.5	19.5	20.5	8.3
Nasarawa	1.6	5.1	6.9	8.7	8.1	7.6	10.1	10.1	11.1	36.5
Niger	6.3	6.7	3.5	0.2	3.6	17.0	11.9	11.9	12.9	39.4
Ogun	9.2	1.3	1.9	2.5	2.3	3.9	8.5	8.5	9.5	22.9
Ondo	16.8	7.3	6.8	6.2	6.7	5.8	14.9	14.9	16.9	12.5
Osun	1.0	0.4	1.2	1.9	2.7	6.3	12.6	12.6	13.6	3.0
Oyo	7.0	0.8	3.1	5.3	4.3	6.5	14.9	14.9	15.9	8.9
Plateau	11.8	0.4	1.6	2.8	2.9	8.7	7.1	7.1	8.1	25.3
Rivers	6.6	15.3	11.2	7.0	25.0	4.7	27.9	27.9	29.9	25.5
Sokoto	4.1	4.9	4.5	4.1	6.4	12.1	22.4	22.4	24.4	17.9
Taraba	16.8	23.8	13.6	3.4	14.0	5.9	26.8	26.8	28.8	12.7
Yobe	15.0	12.1	10.7	8.0	13.6	19.9	27.3	27.3	29.3	35.6
Zamfara	46.4	71.5	61.3	51.1	50.8	12.8	13.3	13.3	14.3	42.6
FCT	14.4	5.3	5.9	6.5	16.4	16.4	21.5	21.5	23.5	21.1
Nigeria	12.6	14.8	13.4	11.9	13.7	14.6	19.7	19.7	21.5	23.9

Source: NBS (2010); CBN Annual Report and Statement of Account (various issues)

In order to get a clearer picture, figures from three states will be examined individually.

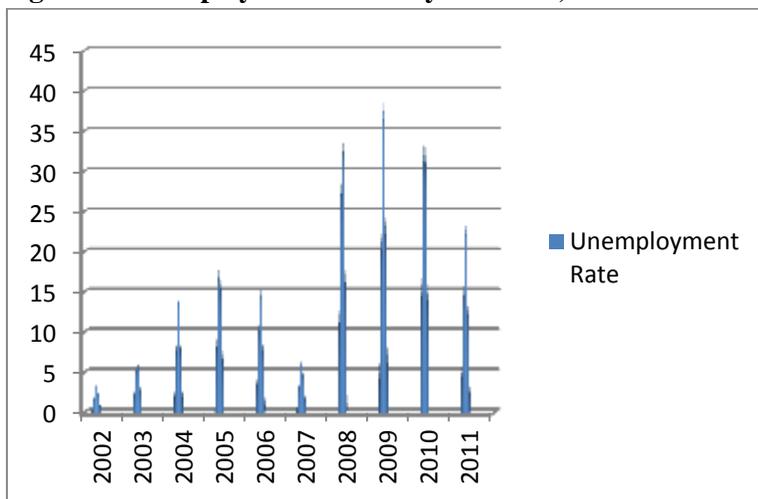
Figure 3: Unemployment Rate, Abia State, 2002 – 2011



Source: Compiled by the author from figures released by NBS (2010); CBN Annual Report and Statement of Account (various issues)

From the chart above, it could be seen that although the rate of unemployment in Abia State has been fluctuating, it has been generally on the high side. For instance, in 2003, unemployment rate was 11.4% as against 14.8% in 2002. This implies a 3.4% drop. 2004 and 2005 recorded improvements too with 1.7% and 1.8% reduction respectively. However, a rise was witnessed in 2006 with 13.5% (5.6% increase). This figure dropped to 10.9% (2.6% reduction) in 2007. 2008 and 2009 was stable at 14.5% (3.6% increase) while 2010 witnessed the highest rate at 15.5%. The rate was 11.2% in 2011; .2% higher than the 2003 value. The lowest unemployment rate in the state was witnessed in 2005 (7.9%) while the highest (15.5%) was recorded in 2010.

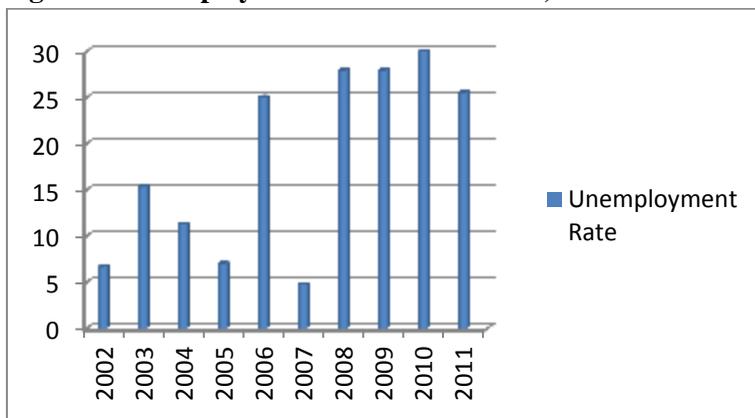
Figure 4: Unemployment Rate Bayelsa State, 2002 – 2011



Source: Compiled by the author from figures released by NBS (2010); CBN Annual Report and Statement of Account (various issues)

As at 2002, Bayelsa State had the fourth lowest unemployment rate (3.5%) behind Osun (1.0%), Nasarrawa (1.6%) and Ebonyi (2.8%). However, the figure rose to 7.1% in 2003 and stood at 6.9% in 2007. It should be noted that 2007 marked the last time Bayelsa State had a single digit unemployment rate. The figures were 14.0% in 2004, 20.9% in 2005 and 16.0% in 2006. For 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011, the figures were 38.4%, 38.4%, 40.4% and 23.9% respectively. It might be interesting to note that between 2005 and 2009 when incidence of militancy were at its peak, the rate of unemployment in the State was at double figures except in 2007. The figures stood at 20.9% in 2005, 16.0% in 2006, 38.4% in 2008, and 38.4% in 2009. The implication here is that there is a tendency to cite unemployment as one of the factors that fuelled insurgency in the South-South.

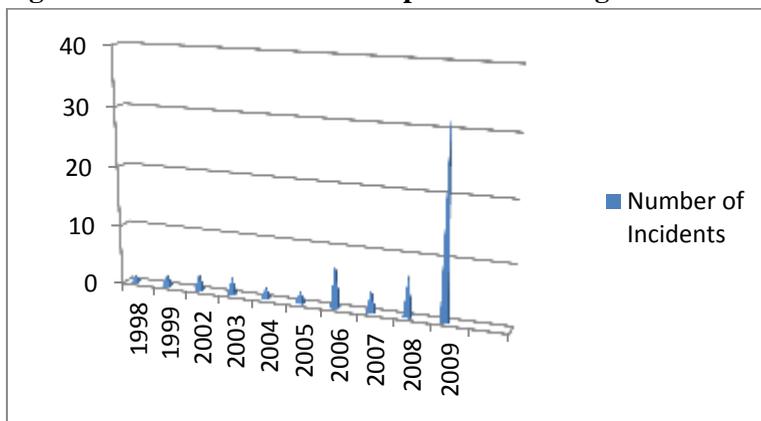
Figure 5: Unemployment Rate Rivers State, 2002 – 2011



Source: NBS (2010); CBN Annual Report and Statement of Account (various issues)

For the position that there is a tendency to cite unemployment as one of the factors that fuelled insurgency in the South-South to be generalizable, it will be interesting to analyze figures from another State in the Niger Delta. Rivers State witnessed her lowest unemployment rate in 2007 (4.7%), 6.6% in 2002 and 7.0% in 2005. These were the only time, thus far, that the state witnessed single digit unemployment rates. The figure stood at 15.3% and 11.2% in 2003 and 2004 respectively. In 2006, the rate was 25.0% while 2008 and 2009 had the same rate of 27.9%. As at 2010 and 2011, the rate was 29.9% and 25.5% respectively. As applicable to Bayelsa State, during the peak period of insurgency in the Niger Delta, unemployment rate in Rivers State was at double figures except for 2007.

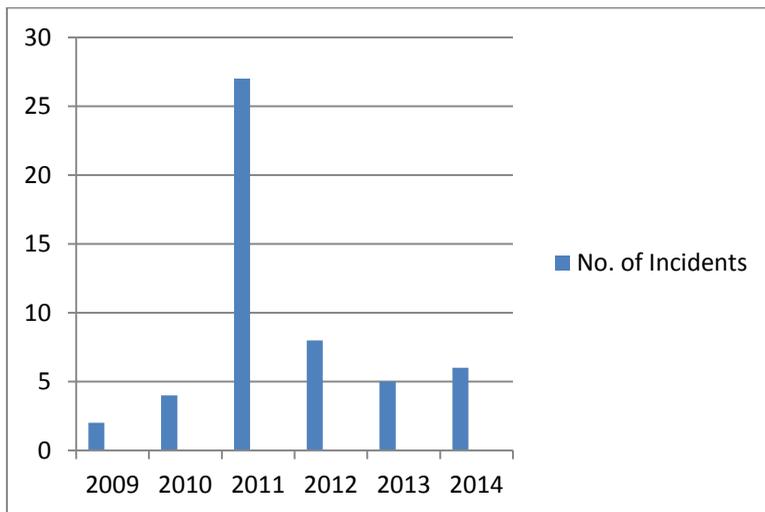
Figure 6: Violent Protests/Disruptions in the Niger Delta



Sources: Compiled by the author from figures contained in http://www.nigerdeltarising.org/resources/timeline#_ftn14, *Wikipedia Online Encyclopaedia*

Following the December 1998 Kaiama Declaration by over 5,000 youths in the Niger Delta, cases of violent protests and disruptions raged between 1999 and 2009. In 1999, there were 2 disruptive incidents. 2002 and 2003 recorded 3 incidents each while only 2 incidents each were recorded in 2004 and 2005. The number of incidents rose to 8 in 2006, fell to 4 in 2007 and rose to 7 in 2008. An all-time highest number of cases was 32 as recorded in 2009.

Figure 7: Incidence of Boko Haram Attacks, 1999 – June 2014



Compiled by the author from figures contained in Nigerian national dailies and weekly magazines

From July 27, 2009 when Boko Haram struck a Police Headquarters in Potiskum, Yobe State, killing 4 people, the number of such incidents has been on the increase. In 2009, 2 cases were recorded while 4 cases were recorded in 2010. The figure rose to 27 in 2011. 2012, 2013 and 2014 (June) witnessed 8, 5 and 6 cases respectively.

When a state cannot guarantee security, availability of food, protection of property and lives, such a state has failed. When a state neglects the education sector and when a miserable increase on the very low allocation is so highly celebrated, no doubt – such a state is on the speed lane of failure – and soon it will rumble, tumble and then crumble. However, Nigeria may rumble

or even tumble, but will certainly not crumble. There are enough resources that can be mustered to heal her.

But first we present here an explanatory theory which we hope would help us to understand why the state rumbles.

2.1 Insecurity, Alienation and Rumbling of the State

The theoretical explanation provided above suggests that things do not just happen, they are caused. A people alienated from the state which continually demands for their increased loyalty and patriotism are bound to be irritated. The level of ecological damage, insecurity, poverty and disease, the criminal and primitive accumulation of wealth (Amin, 1972) at the expense of the people encourage the feeling of hopelessness and frustration, thus calling for urgent (revolutionary) action. Green (1973) perhaps, had the Nigerian society in the colonial and/or post-colonial era, in mind when he pointed to the fact that:

The spontaneous eruption of masses of people determined to alter the immediate circumstances of their life is a frequent event in the first stages of revolutionary movements...

Are we contemplating a revolution, or has it already begun? If it has already begun, at what stage is it – the extreme frustration level or approaching the level of the masses’ aggression? These will be the subject matter of some other inquiry, some other time.

In 1929, such eruption by the masses was organised by the Nigerian women. This is what the history books refer to as Aba Women’s Riot.

Picture 11: Aba Women's Riot



Source:<http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-F8L6k7XKohI/UG06hGilODI/AAAAA AAADo/fR1mtUAPRBk/s1600/aba+women+riot.jpg>

It came as a result of the general frustration felt by the Nigerian masses who had become quite disgusted with the administration and a mindless imposition of taxes. If those women could take up ‘voices’ and ‘wooden arms’ against a repressive colonial administration, and damning whatever consequences they knew would follow, we live today in stranger times and should not pretend to be any wiser.

In Nigeria today, many rumbling sites and activities exist which task the nerves of government. Only the cases of Bakassi Boys and Boko Haram have been singled out for discussion. This does not in any way undermine the importance of other situations like the OPC, MEND, MOSSOP, MASSOB challenges.

2.2 Political Economy of Aba and the Bakassi Boys

Aba is a sprawling city of commerce in Abia State and provides industrial and consumer goods to not less than eleven states of the Nigerian federation as well as some West African countries including Cameroun and Gabon. It is a virtual city of importers, exporters, wholesalers and retailers. It has a low ubiquitous industrial sector that is exclusive to the manufacture of consumer goods based on copy technology. It derives significant part of its revenue from the oil city of Port Harcourt, which it serves as a virtual warehouse for capital and consumption goods.

The massive loss of lives, capital and property belonging to the Igbos during the civil war, especially the official state expropriation of houses belonging to the Ibos under the abandoned property project, forced a strategic rethink on investments outside Igbo states. Aba became a prime beneficiary of this new investment strategy. Exporters, importers, wholesalers, petty manufacturers set up their bases in Aba and compelled their clients to come to Aba to transact business. This was the genesis of the construction of Ariaria International Market and numerous markets in Aba that followed – Ngwa Road Market, Cemetery Market, Ogbor Hill Market, Alaoji Market, etc.

The unique feature of Aba lies in the absence of the state and its institutions except for the presence of police formations. State institutions are located some fifty kilometres away in Umuahia, the state capital. Ironically, the preponderance of the state revenue is derived from Aba through taxes, licenses and permits. Thus there is an inherent culture of self-reliance and self-help reinforced by their civil war experience. The state is never part of the everyday experience of Aba residents nor does it mediate in

their search for fortune and livelihood. The residents conduct their existence, including provision of infrastructure.

The boom in economic activities attracted to the markets and the city of Aba, dare-devil armed robbery operations. The traders' call on the government for security using formal security arrangements elicited weak or no response. Gradually, their customers from neighbouring states and others from Cameroun, Republic of Benin etc. began to withdraw. The negative economic consequences of this compelled a security decision-making process. This was accentuated by the gross inability of the police to confront this situation as Azuatala (1999) of *Newswatch Magazine* and Meagher (2006) also confirm. Disgusted with the operations of the police and the judiciary, Harnischfeger (2003) graphically captures in the following lines the general air of frustration of the people of Abia State and the Aba city dwellers in particular, over the issue of law and order in the in the state. He points to the fact that:

This state of affairs significantly overcharged the system and brought intense pressure on institutional structures for decision making, demanding that they facilitate the process of creating security value in favour of the public. The security domain in the face of prevailing situation had become totally violated by incessant violent crimes and dare devil criminals. This explains among other things, the reason for the birth of Bakassi Boys. However, through over-zealousness in their operations they quickly attracted negative local and international attention.

This position is corroborated by the reports of the Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Centre for Law Enforcement Education (CLEEN) (2002) which explain that:

On the part of the public and politicians alike, there appears to be a general acceptance of the idea that only violence can combat violence...

... Through the actions of the Bakassi Boys in the cities where they operate, armed robbery has been partially replaced, or displaced, by another, more insidious but equally brutal form of violence, which furthermore is sanctioned by the authorities... “the peace we have now is the peace of the graveyard”.

The large dose of violence in African societies today puts a serious question mark to the reason for the state and the meaning for the existence of state structures for the provision of security. It certainly questions the reason why anyone should obey the state, and not seek private means of protection when the state can no longer provide security for its citizens. It is then this condition of disillusionment among citizens and, in the case of Aba city in Abia State, the dynamics and eventual contradictions of capitalism, that heightened the need for security of life and property and the clientele. In addition to this is the failure of the state machinery charged with the provision of public security.

It is important to note that capitalism emphasizes among other things, the maximization of profit, which can only be generated in course of social production properly protected and secured by the state apparatus. Recourse to alternative source of protection

or security is in the first instance, a normal instinct arising from the economic implications of insecurity on private enterprise more than a determination or tendency to rebel against the state. The level of insecurity and poor state response to it was almost rehashing the experiences of the Igbos during and immediately after the Nigeria-Biafra Civil War which polarized their entire economic edifice. Out of sheer economic resilience, they as a people have struggled to survive and have in this survival revived their creative and entrepreneurial spirit, which the state almost destroyed. The decision for alternative security outfit, may appear spontaneous given that the revolutionary groundwork began as early as the economic interests of various groups in Aba, with particular reference to Ariaria International Market shoe-makers, came under serious threat with hoodlums having a field day.

2.3 Origin of the Bakassi Boys

Between 1996 and 1998, the level of law and order in Abia State and the vibrant commercial city of Aba had grossly deteriorated. It began with every street in Aba having its own gang of hoodlums called 'Mafia' and members were bold to answer 'Maf'. These mafia groups were largely young folks between age 18 and 25, dedicated to smoking marijuana and sniffing cocaine. Members of mafia groups were recruited from imps and street urchins who started by engaging in petty deviant behaviour, snatching handbags, wrist watches and other valuables, and graduated into a strong criminal community bound by rituals. In 1998, the city of Aba and its environs were under siege. Businesses gradually ground to a halt as daylight syndicated armed robbery became a regular daily occurrence. The state security apparatus – the police, did nothing to address the

situation. The worsening economic condition, widening mass poverty, and youth unemployment fuelled criminality in the state.

The earlier economic boom in Aba had become an attraction for criminals who frequently raided the town, its markets and business houses with impunity. These raids received low-keyed attention from the state government, and this heightened the desperation for security among the business community. Not long afterwards, economic activities began to drop considerably and eventually became paralyzed. The barometer level of insecurity in Aba rose and continued to rise without meaningful response to it by the state police force. The activities of a gang of armed robbers, who robbed, raped and killed a pregnant woman and two other male customers visiting the Ariaria International Market spontaneously galvanized into action, the shoe-makers of the Bakassi section of the Ariaria Market.

The result was the tracking down on November 6th, 1998 of this gang and all other known criminals who were then killed in public with machetes. Their bodies were burnt at a major burrow pit which subsequently served as an execution and cremation ground for the Bakassi Boys. This city cleansing lasted for about eight weeks, climaxing with the killing on December 25, of the notorious criminal boss called Jango (Newswatch Magazine, 1999). The use of machetes in the killing of the criminals was borne out of the Bakassi Boys' perception of the hardened criminals who were believed to have charms that acted as bullet proof.

This feat by the traders was publicly applauded and consequently matched with corresponding popular acceptance. As business picked up with some calm returning to the city of Aba, the traders

who had been in the forefront of the war against crime and criminals in Aba, withdrew to allow a more permanent arrangement to handle the security of the city and prevent a comeback as threatened by some criminals who were lucky to escape. This security decision gave birth to the second wave of Bakassi Boys.

The rising power profile of the Boys, reflected in the wide public approval of their ability to contain the criminals soon changed their character, derailed their original vision and in most cases, over-turned their style of operation. It did not take too long before the domestic and international environment became very critical about their operations (Takirambudde, 2002). In the light of the growing outcry and pressure on the federal government, this second wave was forced to go underground and most of the leaders arrested and prosecuted.

In the first quarter of 2006, there was a resurgence of crime and criminal activities in Aba. Armed robbery and violent crimes had resurfaced and re-entered the orbit of Aba's social and economic life without challenges by the police. This quickly gave rise to the third wave of Bakassi Boys.

2.4 The Bakassi Boys: Organisation

As spontaneous as the actions of the machete-wielding shoemakers may appear, the whole process was not a sudden outburst. The traders in the various markets normally have their elected leaders who direct the affairs of the traders and are responsible to the general assembly. Issues of the deteriorating level of security had figured prominently in the executive meetings of the traders' associations as Oguikpe Ezeji, leader and chairman of the first wave of Bakassi Boys confirmed. There are six zones of shoemakers in Ariaria Market and Mr Ezeji was the chairman of the

Bakassi zone. He and a few other shoe-makers did not deny their role in sensitizing the others to think security. This earned him the opportunity to lead the first wave Bakassi, a reward for his proven leadership qualities, fearlessness and integrity. His acceptance of this role meant his giving up the leadership of the Bakassi shoe-makers' zone.

It is somewhat surprising that no sooner had Aba city and its environs begun settling down to savour the (relative) peace that seemed to have returned than daylight and night armed robbery operations again enveloped the city. Commercial banks, wealthy individuals, prominent eateries soon became targets. However, the economic downturn this visited on the struggling Aba economy did not move the government and its security apparatus to come to the aid of citizens. Groups of young, unmasked armed robbers brought Aba again down on its knees. Fear and a higher degree of insecurity had descended on Aba. Many businesses started closing down again, scaled down their operations, transferring their key staff to other towns considered safer. Nothing again in terms of economic, social and even religious activities was alive any more. Aba residents had become trapped and prisoners in their homes. The situation deteriorated with the emergence of several kidnapping groups who kidnapped for ransom and could kill too, even after the ransom had been paid. Women and children, health workers and the clergy were not spared. This group, it was rumoured, had links in and access to the government house. The Square was by now completely inactive. The cries of families of victims could be heard everywhere. Meanwhile, the electronic squares with their imported audiences were alive and well, greatly eulogizing the efforts of government and the chief executive, in restoring hope, security and normalcy in Aba.

The kingpin, Osisikankwu – the tree that is taller than the palm tree – who hailed from Ogwe, in Ukwa East L.G.A. was the man who, with his group, was now terrorizing the entire Abia State. He held sway until the military intervention authorized by the federal government overpowered him and his group, and got him killed. From the Bakassi Boys’ era to the Osisikankwu saga in Abia State, the toll on human lives, especially among the youth, is unimaginable, and the effect is generational.

2.5 Terrorism: Boko Haram

In recent time, the most outstanding, the most daring, the most catastrophic single incident of terrorism was the bomb attack on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001 – in the United States of America, that claimed as many as 3,000 lives.

Picture 12: The Twin Towers in flames



Source: http://i.dailymail.co.uk/i/pix/2008/09/12/article-1054790-029F690C00000578-475_468x335.jpg

Africa has not been spared of terrorism; the level of insecurity and insurgency is alarming. In September 2013, for example, a Kenyan shopping centre in Nairobi came under siege by terrorists. To flush them out took as many as 67 lives, including that of several of terrorists.

The menace of Boko Haram, an Islamic sect in Nigeria, shocked the nation to its deepest soul with the December 25, 2011 bombing of a church in Madalla, killing several worshippers. Since then and now, more than 3000 people have been killed and several others seriously injured. What follows is an abridged table on terrorist activities, particularly by the Islamic sect, Boko Haram between 2013 and May, 2014.

Table 2: Boko Haram Insurgency – March to May, 2014

Date	State	Target	Casualty Figures
18 th March 2013	Kano		At least 22 killed and 65 injured, when a suicide car bomb exploded in Kano bus station
7 th May 2013	Borno	Bama	At least 55 killed and 105 inmates freed in coordinated attacks on army barracks, a prison and police post in Bama town
6 th July 2013	Yobe		42 people, mostly students, were killed in a school attack in northeast Nigeria
29 th September 2013	Yobe	Guiba	40 male students killed
14 th Jan. 2014	Borno State	Maiduguri	At least 31 people killed, over 50 people injured by suicide bombing
16 th Feb. 2014	Borno	Izghe	106 villagers are killed, 105 of whom were boys and men
25 th February 2014	Yobe	Federal Government College Buni Yadi	At least 29 teenage boys dead
14 th April 2014	Borno	Chibok	Government properties, including the only girls' secondary school, attacked. At least 16 killed or missing, and 234 female students kidnapped.
14 th April 2014	FCT Abuja		Two bombs explode at a crowded bus station in Abuja, Nigeria, killing at least 90 people and injuring more than 200
1 st May 2014	FCT Abuja		Car bomb explosion kills at least 19 people and injured at least 60 in the same area of Abuja as the April bomb

Compiled by the Author from Wikipedia Online Encyclopaedia

These activities, in concert with many this lecture has deliberately left out, characterize, my Vice Chancellor, the great

rumbling of the State. It is instructive to ask what must be done before it is too late. It is therefore, at this point, that this lecture approaches its last segment.

PART III

WE THE LIVING

- **What is to be Done**

Our task has been to establish the fact that the continuous weakening of the social structure, the high level of poverty, the steady widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, the repressive character of the Nigerian state has led to what this lecturer calls Inactive Squares. The lecture has drawn from the foundation of the Frustration and Aggression Theory to argue that frustration could degenerate into agitation and aggression. When this happens, the state is then set to rumble. Such was the case in January, 2012, over the government's (state's) removal of fuel subsidy and the increase in the pump price of fuel. There was in many states of the federation, formations of *ekkleisia* – people's assembly – determined to occupy Nigeria till there was a reversal of that policy. The firm resolve of the people and the population threatened the Nigerian state and led to working out some compromise. This was Athenian democracy in operation. Earlier and in nearly the same fashion was the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of the federal government, which resulted into serious riots that claimed several lives. For once, the Nigerian state was shocked at the unity of the masses, and felt threatened.

Politics and the Nigerian brand of democracy have become very expensive. While there is mass poverty, looming insecurity, unemployment and phenomenal inequality, the Nigerian legislators are more interested in having their salaries and allowances increased in total disregard of the people whose mandate put them in office. Hardly do they remember that in most states, workers in the primary and secondary schools, local

governments and state-owned tertiary institutions have gone without salaries for more than six months in some cases, about a year.

The level and rate of official corruption even among legislators and the flamboyant lifestyle of those in government is mind-boggling. It is sad to note the level of rascality among the legislators which often times culminate into physical combat in the respected hallow (or horror) chambers. Education, since the present administration, has enjoyed some increase in its budgetary allocation up to 9%, which is a far cry to the global benchmark of between 25 – 30%. How will our universities, for instance, transform the society at less than 15% allocation? The medical pilgrimage to India in particular, has continued, not as a result of lack of manpower or human resources, but rather, for lack of funding, provision of needed equipment and opportunity for training. The rich always die, after a brief illness, but the poor suffer and die after protracted illness. The cloud of frustration is thickening in the face of growing unemployment and desperate job seekers, many of whom paid with their lives for jobs they never secured. It is the children of the poor that are more likely to be posted to highly insecure areas to serve in the National Youth Service Scheme (NYSC).

Rand's *We the Living*, is about state dictatorship and oppression of the masses, who should be the greatest asset of the state. It is not particularly about what we know today as Russia. It is about the inactive squares and the frustration people are put through by the state. "What the rule of brute force does to men and how it destroys the best", says Rand (1959: ix), will be the same everywhere.

Vice Chancellor Sir, this lecture recommends a robust citizen engagement of the state. The National Conference is a good idea; but how many poor people are participating in it? Where are the real farmers, the real artisans, or is it not the meeting of old friends that have always survived every epoch and democratic experiment in the state? How much has been voted to be spent for this exercise, and how much would have been needed to have the same done in many peoples' assemblies – *ekkleisia* – all over the nation. The sense of involvement and participation by the people would have greatly powered our democracy.

The legislative business in fact, should be on part-time basis. Since most of the legislators are professionals, they should have time to practice their vocation and depend less, financially, on the public treasury. In this way, much will be saved for development of many sectors.

One area of frustration is blocked access. There are many that have continued to be in every government at the centre. It should not continue to be so. While negative ethnicity is not acceptable, an individual or group of individuals should not perpetually serve or occupy political positions for more than a maximum of two terms.

Education must receive attention and children of the top brass in government must earn their first degree in Nigeria, and serve in the NYSC like other citizens.

Government should become more popular in outlook and less elitist. Prompt attention and responsiveness to the people's needs will reduce, to a large extent, the feeling of alienation and aggression in the people. If the people are encouraged to be more

involved in issues, the decision-making processes about issues that concern them, they will be more active and receptive of government's policies

Vice Chancellor, Sir, in the beginning of this lecture, we noted that it takes courage to stand and deliver an inaugural lecture, and it should take courage too, to sit when you are done. I am done, Sir. Thank you all for listening.

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CITATION ON
PROFESSOR OMENIHU CHIEMELA NWAORGU
B.A (Hons), M.A (1st Class), PGD (Pop. Stds, 1st Class), Ph.D
Panjab University, Chandigarh, India



Vice Chancellor Sir, I have the pleasure to read at this occasion, the citation on a gentleman and an unassuming scholar, a dear friend and an occasional enemy – the inaugural lecturer today.

Professor Omenihu Chiemela Nwaorgu, was on Tuesday, 9th August, 1955 at Umuogele Umuakwu, in Isiala Ngwa North L.G.A., born to (late) Elder Godwin Iheanacho and Mrs Bessie Wozichi Nwaogu. He is the first child in a family of eleven children (6 boys and 5 girls). As the first child, his romance with leadership and responsibility came very early in his life. His headmaster-father strove hard to infuse in him as much discipline as he felt was necessary. This made him a junior father really, to his siblings, and till date he is a father to all of them.

Professor Omenihu Chiemela Nwaorgu started his primary education in the Qua Ibo Church Mission School at Akanu Afagha, in Osisioma Ngwa L.G.A. and moved with the family to every school his father was posted to head. The civil war in 1967 interrupted his education, which he resumed after the war in 1970 – at Wilcox Memorial Secondary School, Ogbor Hill, Aba. Although one of the smallest boys in his set, the discipline and leadership qualities his parents had helped him develop over the years blossomed and earned him a place among the rank of influential school prefects. It is like confirming the biblical saying: train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old, he shall not depart from it. Professor Nwaorgu has not departed nor deviated from that good way.

In 1974, he passed his WASC examination in flying colours. In 1975, he sat and cleared his London GCE Ordinary Level papers, and later the West African Examination Council A/L papers in Government, Economics and History. His headmaster father and mentor who insisted he must earn a teaching certificate, sent him to Teachers Training College, Uzuakoli, to be trained as a teacher. His result there remains outstanding till date.

In 1980, young Omenihu Chiemela Nwaorgu gained admission to study Political Science in one of India's prestigious universities, the Panjab University, Chandigarh, when in 1982 he earned with honours a bachelors degree in Political Science, in 1985, A Masters (in first class), a Postgraduate Diploma in Population Studies (in first class) and in 1990 bagged a PhD and made history by being the first African to earn a PhD since the history of the university in 1847 at Lahor and its relocation to Chandigarh in 1947.

In 1992/93, Professor Omenihu Chiemela Nwaorgu served in the NYSC, in the Department of Political and Administrative Studies, of the University of Port Harcourt. On the 7th of April, he was offered an appointment as Lecturer II, and since then has risen slowly but steadily through the ranks.

As an academic, he has taught several courses in the department, supervised countless number of undergraduate projects, more than twenty-five Masters degree and five Doctorate projects successfully. He has mentored several younger academics and served as Acting Head of Department in 2004; Chairman, Departmental Book Review Committee; Chairman, Faculty Book Review Committee; Member, Petroleum Museum Committee of University of Port Harcourt; Editor, Development Round Table, A Journal of Development; Member, Editorial Board of West Africa Journal of Research and Development in Education.

Professor Omenihu Nwaorgu is an external examiner, an assessor for professoral promotion to several and highly reputed institutions in Nigeria, and is a visiting professor of Political Science also to two universities.

He has served as Chairman Governing Council of Akanu Ibiam Federal Polytechnic, Uwana in Afikpo, Ebonyi State, Member Bayelsa State Government Committee on LEEDS document preparation (2008 – 2009), Chairman, Planning and Implementation Committee, Rhema University, Aba, Nigeria (under the mentorship of University of Port Harcourt), Member, Board of Trustees, Rhema University, Aba, Nigeria. Served as Abia State Co-ordinator, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) Legislative and Leadership Skill Programme. He is a member, Board of Directors Mission Africa (USA) Inc.

Professor Omenihu Chiemela Nwaorgu has authored/co-authored quite a number of publications which include eight books, several book chapters and over thirty articles in national and international journals.

Professor Omenihu Chiemela Nwaorgu is happily married to Mrs Nnenna Ugo Omenihu Nwaorgu and the marriage is blessed with three wonderful children (one boy and two girls), all graduates. Professor Omenihu Nwaorgu is a born again and is a pastor under the Living Word Ministries Inc. Aba – Nigeria – serving in the local arm, Church Aflame.

Professor Omenihu Nwaorgu is a member of several professional bodies including: Nigeria Political Science Association (NPSA) and Social Science Council of Nigeria (SSCN). He has been honoured with numerous awards including the Minister of Education's Best Performing Governing Council Chairman, 2010.

Professor Nwaorgu loves farming, acting and writing of poems.

Conclusion

Vice Chancellor Sir, it is my singular honour and privilege to present to you, to deliver the 110th Inaugural Lecture of the University of Port Harcourt, a gentleman, a very distinguished and humble scholar, an expert in terrorism but not a terrorist, Professor Omenihu Chiemela Nwaorgu.

Professor Eme N. Ekekwe