

NNEWI

(AGBAN'ANO)

A Book of Readings on the History,
Peoples & Traditional Institution

GODSON O. MONEKE

Copyright © 2021 by Godson O. Moneke

All rights reserved; no part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher and the author.

Harmony Publishing

*Plot 1 Emmanuel Anabor, Off Mopo Road, United Estate,
Sangotedo, Lagos, Nigeria*

+2347032212481

publish@harmonypublishing.com.ng

ISBN: 9781005099497

Printed in Nigeria

FOREWORD

When the author approached me to write the foreword to this book, my immediate reaction was WHY ME? He explained to me that the assignment was a recognition of my position as the sitting President-General of the Umudim-Nnewi Development Association (UNDA). The author hails from Umudim-Nnewi and is a bona fide member of the UNDA, a highly respected one at that. My admiration of the author arose as result of his exceptional intellectual sagacity, tenacity of purpose and positive contributions which he has brought to bear on the affairs of the UNDA both in Lagos where he lives and at the national level.

Some eminent Nnewi scholars have written their accounts of Nnewi history but none appeared to have addressed the issues raised by the author. The author asked some salient questions and provided answers to them. The consistency evident in the author's accounts is unique and the points appear to connect well. This book is a veritable addition to existing repertoire on Nnewi history, traditional institution, practices and other works done by previous authors on the subject matter.

Knowing the author as a serious minded fellow, I believe that this book was borne out of numerous research efforts and I commend it

to students, professionals and all who are interested in Nnewi history, communities, traditional institution and other practices. Scholars who are conducting research works on the subject matter will find in the book a good reference material.

Finally, I thank the author for the singular honor of being asked to write the foreword to the book and enjoin members of the intelligentsia in Nnewi to write similar books so that we can always make the right deductions. I must commend the author for his painstaking efforts in writing this book and wish him God speed in his future endeavors.

ESV. Chief K C. Oranekwu ANIVS, RSV, MBA.

President-General

Umudim-Nnewi Development Association (UNDA)

PREFACE

I am compelled to write this book principally to correct certain misconceptions about the history, traditional institution and practices in Nnewi. I am appalled by the notion that NNEWI was a human being who lived and begot offsprings. My studies showed that Nnewi was not a human being not to talk of being a masculine gender. How ‘NNEWI’ would become somebody’s father or grandfather is inexplicable especially when we all know that “NNE” is used to denote mother in Nnewi vocabulary. It goes without saying that those who claim that NNEWI was their great grandfather of whatever generation either do not know their fathers or are ashamed to reveal the identity of their fathers or who they are. The frequency and audacity with which such falsehoods are repeated worries me. I used conceptual attributes to locate the philosophical underpinnings rather than unnecessary details. Reeling out fictitious names which some writers are good at can never be a substitute for erudition and factuality.

I have tried to use the migratory trajectories of the traditional rulership of each of the four communities to locate their respective origins as follows; Otolu (Aro), Uruagu (Oba/Agukwu-Nri), Umudim (Ojoto) and Nnewi-Ichi (Nne-Ewii/Ichi). It is therefore

preposterous to suggest that the four communities in Nnewi have a common heritage and ancestry. However, the reluctance to admit and the near ominous silence of the Otolo ruling family over their ancestral linkage to ARO is worrisome but facts are not debatable and can never be wished away. I have questioned the rationale behind the continued denial of government recognition for three of the four communities of Nnewi when all evidence inform otherwise. I condemned the centralisation of traditional festivals which hitherto were celebrated separately by the various communities in Nnewi. There is no compelling need or justification for the centralisation thus making the case for decentralisation strong. It is my considered opinion that separate celebration of traditional festivals by communities is an incontrovertible evidence of their autonomous status. I still believe that the centralisation in the first place was ill-advised and never in the best interests of the individual communities especially the three that are long overdue for government recognition but not yet given. According to Albert Einsteins “insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results “.

In studying the etymology of the word NNEWI, I looked at the ADAMBU (the only daughter of ERI) angle who established NNE-EWII as her final place of abode. Please note that NNEWI could be a possible corruption of the word NNE-EWII. I also looked at the AgbaN’ano pact signed by the four autonomous communities which was possibly consummated with the word NNA-EWII.

Please also note that NNEWI is again a possible corruption of the word NNA-EWII. It is important to note that the AgbaN'ano pact predated the colonial invasion of Nnewi in 1904. Therefore, between the two extremes of NNE-EWII and NNA-EWII one can locate the authentic NNEWI. I am inclined to believe that following the invasion and conquest of the ADAMBU'S abode by Otolo upon their arrival from ARO much earlier, all the vestiges of NNE-EWII were destroyed and consumed in the conquest. Descendants of ADAMBU were all scattered and it became TO YOUR TENTS OH ISRAEL.

It is therefore my considered opinion that the NNEWI which we have today is the corruption of NNA-EWII which arose out of the AgbaN'ano covenant. It is a truism that NNE-EWII predated the AgbaN'ano pact but had ceased to exist before then having been conquered and overthrown by the Otolo invaders from ARO. The AgbaN'ano pact was therefore made by Otolo, Uruagu, Umudim and Nnewi-Ichi. ADAMBU DESCENDANTS were not party to the AgbaN'ano pact since they had ceased to exist as a unit at that time. Therefore, those who call themselves OKPALA NNEWI AND AKA JI OFO NNEWI are imposters if they refer to the Nnewi that was given birth by the AgbaN'ano covenant. At best, they exist as OKPALA ADAMBU AND AKAJI OFO ADAMBU which is of no moment since the NNE-EWII which was founded by ADAMBU has ceased to exist.

I did not set out to write the history of Nnewi because I thought it was going to be a very Herculean task which it has turned out to be. What with extensive readings, research works and consultations that go with such ventures. Take a look at the many contradictions among previous writers in many aspects of their narrations and you would be discouraged. I found myself writing this book after the informed experience of the group WhatsApp discussions on the Ogbako-Nnewi platform in May, 2020. After this session, I decided to embark on serious readings and research works to gain proper insight into who we are as a people. I read the works of authors before me on IGBO HISTORY AND NNEWI HISTORY, copiously read through some documents, interviewed some people and read some useful but unrelated and related biographies and autobiographies to make useful deductions. Personal experiences as a person who has blood relations from all the four communities of Nnewi came into play. Stories told me by those old relatives which made little meaning to me at that time were juxtaposed with what I read later and other personal experiences. I have tried to balance the views but have been typically and brutally frank and honest in these accounts. I have no time for embellishments because my motivation is to tell the truth and leave factual and reliable records for posterity. I do not lay any claim to perfection and anybody who has superior information and facts is encouraged to bring them up. . That is how scholarship is incubated and nurtured.

History is different from folklore, so I tried to restrict myself to history. Issues of folklores were only used as interjections where necessary. I studied the Igbo race and it's anthropology and tried to situate Nnewi in the matrix. This book is not a novel or an adventure into folktales and fables. It is a serious work designed to stimulate our intellectual thoughts. The thematic focus can be gleaned from the title of the book and it never deviated from this. I attempted to draw attention to certain developments in the Nnewi body polity which I consider unhealthy and called on all and sundry to rise up to the occasion and preempt a looming disaster. Let me make it clear that I do not hold anything against any of the four occupants of the royal throne in Nnewi. I believe that they are ordained by God to be where they are and should be supported by all of us. I only feel exasperated and frustrated when I see things going the wrong way or people holding on to what I call PYRRHIC VICTORIES. I take the welfare of all as a DESIDERATUM and am frustrated by behaviours of dramatis persona which I see as capable of yielding unfavourable outcomes. People who appreciate the virtues in altruism and the demands of a high level of reasoning will easily understand my frustrations. In writing this book, I do not intend to disrespect anybody or group but only to give an alternative viewpoint at worst. Since no knowledge is lost or useless, people are enjoined to embrace eclecticism in their understanding of knowledge and events.

When I insist on government recognition of all the four Obis and their communities as autonomous communities which they have been since time immemorial, I am looking at their contemporaries elsewhere who have achieved such status without much ado. The tragedy of our situation is that leaders often fail to reckon with the unspoken sentiments of the silent majority until it is too late. Giving life and prominence to such sentiments should not be seen as a rebellion but a helpful advice. The status quo is good especially to those who profit from it no matter its imperfections but nature is dynamic and we must move with the trend or be left behind. History is always kind to leaders who voluntarily adapt to change rather than wait to be caught up and be consumed by it. In a clime like ours, it is always hazardous to speak truth to power. What with the threats, blackmails, negative propaganda and name calling. I therefore consider it a great sacrifice and forbearance to write ‘against the current and unearth hidden truths ‘. The thesis of this book should be seen in that light. This book is arranged in thirty-four chapters and epilogue excluding salient documents which are presented as appendices. Each chapter is complete on its own and deploys a unique style in addressing issues that are relevant to Nnewi. Herein lies the epistemic authority on which this book is founded.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing a book like this is a very difficult thing to start especially for somebody who is not a typical writer. The necessary leap of faith was encouraged by special and close relatives and friends for whose wise counsel I remain eternally grateful. This book would not have been possible without the moral support I enjoyed from them.

My lovely wife, Mrs. Dorothy N. Moneke (nee Igbokwe) would always admonish me to temper my language, reminding me that she was my most valuable critic. She remained true to this role throughout the period covering the entire stretch of writing this book. I am fortunate to be the husband to this wonderful woman and do not take her contributions for granted just because she is my wife. I owe her a debt of gratitude. The thought of my only and younger brother, Mr. Charles N. Moneke in London and my only and elder sister, Mrs. Ifeyinwa C. Egbuna (nee Moneke) in the US gives me a special feeling which I cannot describe. I thank God for making me their sibling.

Arc. Udewulu Anthony Ifechukwu (Okonkwo) is a professional colleague, he is an Architect while I am a Quantity Surveyor. He is a friend who is open and truthful with me like a brother would. He

read through and corrected the manuscript. He means well and believes in the good of Nnewi and humanity. I shall endeavour to meet his standards.

I wish to acknowledge the roles played by some participants in the Ogbako-Oha Nnewi group WhatsApp platform, they contributed greatly in making this book rich. They inspired the discussions which motivated me to write this book. I have given a special place in chapter thirty-four to excerpts from the group WhatsApp discussions on the subject matter of this book as a further demonstration of my appreciation to these gentlemen. There are others whose personal contributions are monumental and immeasurable but who prefer to remain anonymous. I respect their wishes.

My childhood friend, Dr. Wilson Onyeka who is based in London, United Kingdom has been a backbone of moral support. He encouraged me to put my numerous writings about Nnewi into a book for records and posterity. I do not take this support for granted. Miss Rachel A. Chukwu did the computer works in connection with this book. I am grateful for this invaluable service.

I thank the President-General of the Umudim-Nnewi Development Association (UNDA), ESV. Chief Kenneth C. Oranekwu for graciously accepting to write the foreword to this book. Mr. President, I remain indebted to you for this honour.

Finally, my children, Kenechukwu, Chinemelum, Ifunanyachukwu, Chukwunonso and Onyinyechukwu always make me happy and proud. They give me the serenity which I need to be the reflective thinker which I am today. I thank God for making me dad to these beautiful children.

While genuine efforts have been made for an error free book, I take full responsibilities for errors that may find their way into this book.

Godson O. Moneke

DEDICATIONS

To the sweet memory of my beloved mother, Mrs. Constance Onachukwu Moneke (nee Anazodo) who went to be with the Lord in June, 2005. I learned honesty, integrity and fidelity from her and these are values which I hold dearly. May she continue to rest in perfect peace until we meet again on the resurrection morning.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	iii
PREFACE	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	xi
DEDICATIONS	xiv
CHAPTER ONE: NNEWI TOWN	1
CHAPTER TWO: SETTING THE RECORDS STRAIGHT.....	9
CHAPTER THREE: NNEWI: STRUCTURE, TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITIES	24
CHAPTER FOUR: THE HISTORY OF NNEWI.....	31
CHAPTER FIVE: NNEWI AND ONITSHA COMPARED AND CONTRASTED	46
CHAPTER SIX: FICTIONAL AND IRRESPONSIBLE WRITINGS .	53
CHAPTER SEVEN: ETU NNEWI SIRI MALITE BY ONE OF OUR ROYAL FATHERS IN A BBC INTERVIEW - A CRITIQUE ..	61
CHAPTER EIGHT: NNE-EWII AND NNA-EWII COMPARED & CONTRASTED.....	67
CHAPTER NINE: ON THE ALARM OVER PLAN TO REDUCE THE POWERS OF IGWE NNEWI.....	76

CHAPTER TEN: RANDOM THOUGHTS ON NNEWI UNITY, VALUES AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT OF NNEWI PEOPLE	81
CHAPTER ELEVEN: NNEWI AND INCIPIENT INORDINATE QUEST FOR TITLES —REDISCOVERING OUR MORAL ETHOS AND VALUES.....	96
CHAPTER TWELVE: SUCCESSION TO NNEWI THRONE, NAMES OF MONARCHS, DATES OF BIRTH, REIGN AND DATES OF DEATH - An Interrogation	104
CHAPTER THIRTEEN: THE METAMORPHOSIS OF NKWO NNEWI—AN UNBIASED VIEWPOINT	117
CHAPTER FOURTEEN: BETWEEN HISTORY, FOLKTALES AND WORKS OF LITERATURE.....	128
CHAPTER FIFTEEN: BETWEEN NNEWI AND THE UNITED KINGDOM - We should stop this delusion.....	140
CHAPTER SIXTEEN: TRUTH, HONESTY AND FIDELITY AS CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVES FOR UNITY, PEACE AND LOVE IN NNEWI	154
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: NNEWI TOWN UNION ELECTIONS AND LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE - A TIME FOR SOBER REFLECTION	166
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: THE NNEWI STAKEHOLDERS, NNEWI PATRIOTISM AND DEMANDS FOR LEGITIMACY	176
CHAPTER NINETEEN: THE ABOLITION OF THE OSU CASTE SYSTEM IN NNEWI—HOW NOT USE A SERIOUS MATTER TO SCORE CHEAP POINTS	186

CHAPTER TWENTY: ABORIGINES IN NNEWI - Setting the Records Straight	199
CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE: QUO VADIS, NNEWI - The Demands for Positivism	210
CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO: NNE-EWII, ABORIGINES AND EMBEDDED DELUSIONS	223
CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE: ABORIGINES IN NNEWI— Matters Arising.....	235
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR: THE WORD “NNEWI KINGDOM” IS AN ABSURDITY, IT IS AN ABERRATION	242
CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE: THE AGREEMENT BY THE FOUR OBIS OF NNEWI FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRESENTING CHIEF JOSIAH A. N. ORIZU TO GOVERNMENT (dated 21st March, 1956)	252
CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX: THE TERMS “IGWE” AND “OBI” EXPLAINED	262
CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN: THE POSITION OF “IGWE NNEWI THRONE” HAS NEVER BEEN HEREDITARY	271
CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT: NNEWI FLOODING, ANAMBRA STATE GOVERNANCE AND MATTERS ARISING	278
CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE: WHAT WE STAND FOR.....	289
CHAPTER THIRTY: MOTHER RABBIT (NNE- EWII) IS NOT A TOTEM IN NNEWI AND OTHER ISSUES	294

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE: A BAD WORKMAN QUARRELS WITH HIS TOOLS —Lessons in National Leadership and Development	303
CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO: SELLING OF LANDS IN NNEWI - Managing the Challenges of Urbanization Crises	312
CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE: FOUNDATION OF NKWO-NNEWI MARKET	320
CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR: EXCERPTS FROM THE GROUP WHATSAPP DISCUSSION ON NNEWI HISTORY, TRADITION, INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITIES HELD ON THE OGBAKO-OHA NNEWI PLATFORM FROM TUESDAY 19TH TO FRIDAY 22ND MAY, 2020	331
EPILOGUE: THE IGBO ECONOMIC REVOLUTION - The Underpinning Issues in Entrepreneurship.....	395
APPENDICES.....	407

CHAPTER ONE

NNEWI TOWN

Nnewi is one of the major towns in Anambra state of the southeast geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It is popularly called the ‘Japan of Africa’ because Nnewi indigenes either as traders or industrialists were among the first group of Africans to establish an enduring business relationship with Japanese business men and industrialists. Japan is a global economic and industrial power and Nnewi became prominent as a result of this interaction especially after the Nigeria Civil War of 1967- 1970. Nnewi is made up four autonomous communities namely; Otolo, Uruagu, Umudim and Nnewi-Ichi. Each of these four autonomous communities is traditionally governed by its own traditional ruler without any form of interference from any force outside it. These communities are marked by defined geographical boundaries which are inviolable.

Nnewi is the second most important commercial and industrial town in Anambra State. It is only second to Onitsha in this regard. The white man colonised Nnewi in 1904 and subsequent governments have continued to politically administer Nnewi as a town while recognising the individual autonomous status of the constituent

communities. Neither Nnewi nor any of its constituent communities is governed by a written constitution unlike other autonomous communities in Anambra state. This is not the way it should be in this age and time. They rather resort to oral tradition and conventional practices to manage their affairs and this has resulted in some skirmishes among the constituent communities often threatening peace and unity in the town. The attendant loopholes have been exploited by a few people who are lacking in honour and nobility within the town. It is recommended that the traditional governance structure of the town should be formally streamlined and not left loose or subjected to the whims and caprices of over ambitious revisionists.

According to Wikipedia, Nnewi sits on a land mass of 200sq miles (520sq. km). It had a population of 391,227 according to 2006 census. It is worthy of note that over forty percent of Nnewi indigenes live outside the town and therefore not included in this population. It is important to note that urbanisation of Nnewi has attracted immigrants into the town from far and near thus inhabitants of Nnewi and its environs were estimated to be around 2,500,000 in 2019. This multiethnic colour has given Nnewi the image of a modern city. It has also accelerated developments in the town and made it more cosmopolitan in outlook. Thus, most things that you associate with a modern city in Nigeria are available in Nnewi. Like most towns in Nigeria, it has its own shares of development process problems.

There is a concept known as AgbaN'ano Nnewi which is a covenant entered into by the four autonomous communities that make up the Nnewi that we know today. It was the AgbaN'ano pact that gave birth to the NNEWI town we are discussing about in this book. It was akin to a defence pact in which the parties covenanted to be their 'brothers keepers', to watch their backs and support them to repel or defeat any invading force to their mutual benefits. Details of the AgbaN'ano covenant are not discussed in this book but just to state that the effect of the AgbaN'ano pact is profound and there would have been no Nnewi without the covenant. This covenant was entered into about the year 1520. The AgbaN'ano covenant is the OFO that binds Nnewi together. Nnewi is a one town local government area known as Nnewi-North Local Government. There are many traditional festivals in Nnewi which were celebrated separately by the four communities until 1978 when the centralisation of all the festivals began. The reasons for this were not spelt out but it is the opinion of this writer that this centralisation robbed the the constituent communities of their individual identities.

Four Obis traditionally govern Nnewi namely; Obi Otolo, Obi Uruagu, Obi Umudim and Obi Nnewi-Ichi. The incumbents of these four traditional stools are respectively, Igwe KON Orizu 111, Obi Charles Afam (Obi Ogidi IV), Obi Bennet Okafor (Ama-Ukwu) and Obi George Onyekaba (Obidiugwu). All the four Obis are equal in all respects and none is superior to the other. Consequently, all

traditional, political and administrative responsibilities and positions in Nnewi are allocated in rotation among the four constituent communities of Nnewi with Otolo having the first shot followed by Uruagu, then Umudim and Nnewi-Ichi in that order. Nnewi was the biggest and most influential town among the surrounding communities and hence hosted their headquarter in the early days of colonial government. Until government presence became pervasive, Nnewi represented all the surrounding communities in government official engagements but never ventured to usurp the traditional stools of those communities. This was the case especially during the colonial administration.

Nnewi has developed into a metropolis and its influence is now felt far and wide. Nkwo-Nnewi motorcycle spare parts market located in Uruagu-Nnewi is the biggest and busiest of its kind in West Africa. It was developed by Prompt and Quality Services Limited owned by a son of the soil, Chief Ejiamatu O. Igbokwe (Ogbatuluenyi Nnewi) of blessed memory under a Contractor-Finance Contract arrangement with the Anambra state government then headed by Colonel Robert Akonobi. Nnewi hosts many industries especially in the area of production thus giving it the sobriquet, JAPAN OF AFRICA as earlier mentioned. Nnewi indigenes are very industrious thus making them eminently successful. Many indigenes of Nnewi are billionaires both in USDollars and Naira. The town boasts of the highest number of millionaires par capita in Nigeria and hence its indigenes are

respected both within Nigeria and beyond. Capital formation in Nnewi is only second to Onitsha in Anambra State and this is due to the resourcefulness and investments of Nnewi indigenes. In the fields of education, culture, entertainments and professions, Nnewi indigenes are equally outstanding.

Nnewi is a member of the ANA-EDO clan of communities comprising Otolu-Nnewi, Uruagu-Nnewi, Umudim-Nnewi, Nnewi-Ichi-Nnewi, Oraifite and Ichi. These six communities reverence EDO as the supreme DEITY to which members of the clan are beholden. Edo is worshipped as the clan's goddess of riches. Legends posit that the seemingly widespread successes of indigenes of the Anaedo clan in all fields of human endeavour in which they have ventured are through the benevolence of the Edo deity. It is difficult to dispute this because the successes and wealth of anaedo people are very evident. Nnewi is one town which has achieved a high level of development and industrialisation through the private sector, essentially self efforts. Government presence is very minimal in Nnewi and the reason for this neglect is unknown to this writer. The relationship is more of what government can appropriate from Nnewi than what it can do to grow prosperity in the town. A symbiotic relationship between Nnewi and the Anambra state government can produce a synergy which will benefit both parties.

Nnewi would have developed beyond its present level if love, unity and transparency had been practised and seen in action. For example, there is a deliberate attempt to dismantle and bastardise the traditional governance structure in favour of one of the four communities. This is being pursued like an agenda which is selfish, toxic and obnoxious. It is unbelievable how three of the four communities have remained unrecognised by the state government when their recognition is long overdue. It is very exasperating to learn that the leadership of one of the four communities which was supported by others to obtain government recognition is the one blocking them from being recognised by government through deliberate misinformation and vile propaganda. This is very unfortunate and heartrending. It is important to let all who care to know that the four communities of Nnewi are equal in all material particular and deserve to be treated equally without any form of discrimination. It is worth noting that Nnewi was founded by the four communities and not by one as is being erroneously peddled by one of the four communities. It was through the benevolence of these despised three communities that the fourth one became the first among them to obtain government recognition. Government should recognise these three communities because that is what the people want. Besides, these communities have been autonomous from time immemorial and existed independently. Government has criteria and list of requirements which communities seeking recognition must meet. That template should be used across board

so that nobody feels shortchanged. The process should be scientific and rational so that communities which qualify get recognised and be given a sense of belonging.

Nnewi is a microcosm of the larger Igbo society and all the attributes which make the Igbo race tick are dominant in Nnewi people. They are hard working and self-confident people who naturally aspire to be great and successful in both the works of their hands and handiworks. That is why despite the pervasiveness of corruption in Nigeria today, it is difficult to find an Nnewi person who has embezzled public funds as are nauseatingly commonplace today. Yet they are great and successful by just doing their legitimate businesses. This paradigm explains that corrupt people are not necessarily great and successful people. One can achieve success in life without necessarily being corrupt. What make for the success of the Nnewi person are integrity, hard work, self-confidence and belief in God.

It is many years since Nnewi was declared an urban area by the Anambra state government yet there is not much on ground that defines this status. Absence of a holistic physical planning is visible all over the town even to the uninitiated. Urban development is a very important component of physical planning which is almost absent in Nnewi. Internal roads are unplanned and buildings are indiscriminately erected without setbacks. Absence of a drainage master plan means that drainages are not properly linked up, making

erosion control problematic in the town. One would have expected that the sad experience of Onitsha would mean better planning in Nnewi but it does not appear that lessons have been learned. Refuse disposal and management systems are haphazard and indiscriminate in the town. There is no organised system of refuse disposal in the whole metropolis as should be expected.

Like I said earlier, government presence is almost lacking in Nnewi and there is nothing on ground to suggest that Nnewi is an important town to the government of Anambra state. There is no political and professional will on the part of government to implement the Nnewi Urban Masterplan. This has made Development Control very ineffective in Nnewi. It will be a tragedy if government wakes up later to start demolishing people's buildings under the guise of enforcing the implementation of the Nnewi Urban Masterplan. Such avoidable economic wastes should not be encouraged. Prevention is better than cure is a common cliché among our people. The Anambra state government should therefore do the needful now and not later. Government should take the urban planning of Nnewi seriously to avoid unwarranted and painful demolition of people's buildings and structures in future. People should be guided on the orderly developments so that the required synergy is achieved by the harmonious efforts of government and the private sector of the economy.

CHAPTER TWO

SETTING THE RECORDS STRAIGHT

The history of how the town, Nnewi came into being has been told by many people but remained largely undocumented owing to lack of intellectual rigour and the temptation to fill some missing lines based on the fertile imaginations of some writers. Some writers have used the story of the mother rabbits to concoct lines on the history of Nnewi because the name sounds like mother rabbit in Igbo language. The danger in this line of thought is the ascription to the mother rabbit of an intelligence far above that specie of mammals. This school of thought talked of the role played by the mother rabbit in protecting the MYTHICAL NNEWI families from invasion and extermination by unnamed foes. We were neither given the identities of these mythical families nor the foes. Why a human being would name his abode after a tiny bush animal and remain anonymous with an unknown identity appears unfathomable without any parallel in Igbo land. This sounds more of a fable and thus of doubtful reliability. The second school informs us that Nnewi was a human being whose father was a man called IKENGA son of another man named AGBAJA from