

# Obafemi Awolowo: The Asiwaju of Yorubaland - A Legacy Series



## Obafemi Awolowo: The Asiwaju of Yorubaland (Legacy Series) by Matthew Distefano

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

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Obafemi Awolowo (1909-1987) was a Nigerian nationalist, statesman, and political leader who played a key role in the country's independence movement and post-independence politics. He is considered one of the most important figures in Nigerian history.

Awolowo was born in Ikenne, Ogun State, Nigeria. He studied law at the University of London and was called to the bar in 1946. He returned to Nigeria and entered politics in 1947. He was a founding member of the Action Group, a political party that advocated for the independence of Nigeria.

Awolowo served as the Premier of the Western Region of Nigeria from 1954 to 1959. During his time as Premier, he implemented a number of

progressive policies, including free primary education, free healthcare, and the establishment of the University of Ife. He also played a key role in the negotiations that led to Nigeria's independence in 1960.

After independence, Awolowo served as the leader of the opposition in the federal parliament. He was arrested and imprisoned in 1963 for his alleged involvement in a coup plot. He was released from prison in 1966 and returned to politics. He was elected President of Nigeria in 1979.

Awolowo died in 1987. He is considered one of the most important figures in Nigerian history. He was a brilliant politician, a gifted orator, and a visionary leader. He left a lasting legacy of progressive policies and ideals that continue to inspire Nigerians today.

## **Early Life and Education**

Obafemi Awolowo was born on March 6, 1909, in Ikenne, Ogun State, Nigeria. He was the son of David Awolowo, a farmer, and Mary Efunyela Awolowo. Awolowo had a traditional Yoruba upbringing and attended the Ikenne Methodist Primary School.

In 1923, Awolowo enrolled at the Abeokuta Grammar School. He was a brilliant student and excelled in his studies. He was also a gifted athlete and played football and cricket.

In 1927, Awolowo graduated from the Abeokuta Grammar School with honors. He then worked as a clerk for the Nigerian Railway Corporation. In 1934, he was awarded a scholarship to study law at the University of London.

Awolowo excelled at the University of London and was awarded a Bachelor of Laws degree in 1946. He was also called to the bar at the Inner Temple in London.

## **Political Career**

Awolowo returned to Nigeria in 1946 and entered politics. He was a founding member of the Action Group, a political party that advocated for the independence of Nigeria.

In 1954, Awolowo was elected Premier of the Western Region of Nigeria. He served as Premier until 1959. During his time as Premier, he implemented a number of progressive policies, including free primary education, free healthcare, and the establishment of the University of Ife.

Awolowo also played a key role in the negotiations that led to Nigeria's independence in 1960. He was appointed Minister of Finance in the first independent government of Nigeria.

After independence, Awolowo served as the leader of the opposition in the federal parliament. He was arrested and imprisoned in 1963 for his alleged involvement in a coup plot. He was released from prison in 1966 and returned to politics.

In 1979, Awolowo was elected President of Nigeria. He served as President until 1983, when he was overthrown in a military coup.

## **Legacy**

Obafemi Awolowo is considered one of the most important figures in Nigerian history. He was a brilliant politician, a gifted orator, and a visionary

leader. He left a lasting legacy of progressive policies and ideals that continue to inspire Nigerians today.

Awolowo's legacy includes:

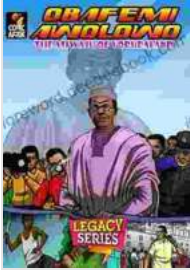
- \* The free primary education program that he implemented in the Western Region of Nigeria.
- \* The free healthcare program that he implemented in the Western Region of Nigeria.
- \* The establishment of the University of Ife.
- \* His role in the negotiations that led to Nigeria's independence.
- \* His leadership of the opposition in the federal parliament.
- \* His presidency of Nigeria.

Awolowo was a complex and controversial figure. He was admired by his supporters for his intelligence, his integrity, and his dedication to the progress of Nigeria. However, he was also criticized by his opponents for his ambition and his authoritarian tendencies.

Despite the controversies, there is no doubt that Awolowo was one of the most important figures in Nigerian history. He was a visionary leader who left a lasting legacy of progressive policies and ideals.

Obafemi Awolowo was a Nigerian nationalist, statesman, and political leader who played a key role in the country's independence movement and post-independence politics. He is considered one of the most important figures in Nigerian history.

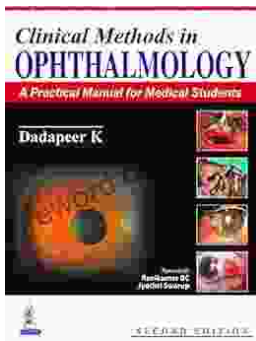
Awolowo's legacy includes his progressive policies, his dedication to the progress of Nigeria, and his leadership of the opposition in the federal parliament. He was a complex and controversial figure, but there is no doubt that he was one of the most important figures in Nigerian history.



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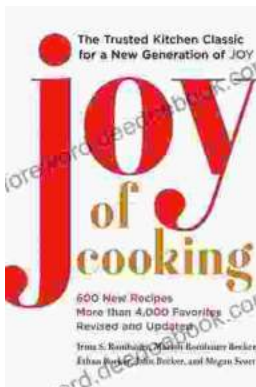
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