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## Between the Moment of Decision and Fulfillment: Obafemi Awolowo's Recipe That Stands the Test of Time

Gbenga Bode Babatunde

Former Chief Lecturer, Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, Nigeria

### Abstract:

Awolowo writes, in his letter of resignation from General Gowon's government, as Vice President:

*I would ... like to notify you that, with effect from July 1, 1971, I am no longer willing to continue in the offices of federal commissioner for Finance and vice-president of the Federal Executive Council ... I would like to state that though, by this resignation, I am leaving your government ... it does not mean that I am completely relinquishing all public services to our country and people. On the contrary, it is my resolve to continue, in all circumstances and until my life's end, to see the best interests of our fatherland, and promote the welfare and happiness of our people, in every way possible (Awolowo, 2018).*

*This study examines the ramifications of Awolowo's pledge to continually, continuingly and continuously be involved in "all public services to our country and people" as well as work for her best interests. Although my longitudinal study on Awolowo, from 1951-1983, actually, works on his rhetorical behaviour, as he has promised, "until my life's end", this particular study is limited to his activities, between the moment of decision to leave Awolowo's government and the time of fulfilment, by General Obasanjo, to usher in a democratic government. Thus, the study is all about Awolowo's rhetorical behaviour as a commentator on General Yakubu Gowon and Murtala Mohammed/Olusegun Obasanjo's military governments. It was the primary purpose of the study to subject Awolowo's political speeches, during this time, to analysis with a view to determining how, relatively prominently, he spoke on the issues of the economy, politics, socio-cultural milieu, international relations and education. This purpose was achieved by content-analysing the proportionally stratified sampled speeches within this period, using a logical scale of 25 themes. In this regard, the One-Way ANOVA and Newman Keuls' statistical tools were used to test the hypothesis regarding Awolowo's treatment of the issues of the economy, politics, socio-cultural milieu, international relations, education and the prominence attached to them. The research results are presented in 4 tables, showing Awolowo's placement of a greater emphasis on politics than the issues of international relations and education during this period and equal prominence on politics, the economy and socio-cultural milieu. Beyond this, the study's findings were found to bear some similarities with empirical findings on the rhetorical behaviour of political leaders and statesmen, in similar circumstances.*

**Keywords:** *Moment of decision, fulfilment, admonition, transition, commentator, aberration, dictatorship, participatory democracy, coercive authoritarian measures, fundamental human rights, power monopolist, animus revertendi, tenacity of office, morbid tenacity, social contract, transmission of power, political monstrosity*

### 1. The Study's Background

The outcome of this researcher's original study on the interactive effects of the independent variable of issue treatment and the dependent variable of issue prominence, is presented in this paper. The paper examines Obafemi Awolowo's treatment of the issues of the economy, politics, international relations, socio-cultural milieu and education, as a commentator on the military governments of General Gowon, Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo. In this regard, the paper situates Obafemi Awolowo's honest views, after his exit from Gowon's government, in vista. Against the backdrop of Nigeria's first transition from military authoritarianism to civilian democracy, this paper views Awolowo's rhetoric, during this period, as revealing Awolowo's uncommon courage in his resolve to tackle the military and make their leaders know that their government, although an aberration, has to kow-tow to the people's wishes

It is obvious that, in this interregnum, of serving as a commentator on the military governments, the concentration of researchers on other governmental matters regarding the Heads of State, rather than the transition debarred the adequate coverage of Awolowo's role during this period. That being the case, the rhetoric of non-military leaders, most especially, some of them, like Awolowo, who never ruled at the centre, was not considered of being given attention. Suffice to say, however, that this research was predicated on the presupposition that Awolowo's rhetoric of the transition period was tailored towards tabling, before the military heads, what needed to be on their priority list, as the nation transitioned; rehearsing how the transition would be executed quickly and without any rancour that could forestall it; presenting, before the military heads, templates that could be adapted or adopted for good governance; encouraging an enabling environment for smooth planning of the disengagement of the military and campaigning vigorously, after the ban had been lifted on political participation, using democratic socialism as his main focus of attention. Awolowo, as commentator on the military junta, was prepared to tell anyone who cared to hear that, even under the military, there must be a human face to

governance. His conviction, then, was that, governance under the military, could not necessarily be rooted in coercive authoritarian measures but rather on the readiness of the military men to listen to the voice of the opposition to govern within the rules of law. Awolowo's voice was the voice of courage during this time. That explains why this study considers it imperative to learn about Obafemi Awolowo, as a courageous Nigerian politician, who, through his voice of courage, contributed to the release of the masses of the people from the authoritarian rage of the military. We should not, actually, forget about such a personality in a hurry, should we? Besides, researchers must be able to inform the public about what made him tick. This explains the reason behind this study's endeavour to capture Awolowo's rhetoric of metamorphosis from military dictatorship to participatory democracy.

### 1.1. Statement of the Problem

As already revealed, by this study's background, the rhetorical behaviour of a statesman, during a period of transition, from military authoritarianism to participatory democracy, is bound to be that of courage, battle readiness and diplomacy. This is especially so if the statesman is both a commentator and participant in the political process of the period. Such a statesman needs to demonstrate courage because the military is a hard nut to crack. He needs to be battle ready because he has to do battle with the military, on one hand, and his co-participants in the political process, on the other. He has to demonstrate a lot of diplomacy because he will be dealing with doubly perceived opponents.

Political transitions have been generally seen as definite movements or changes from one political stage to another. They can be gradual, like in the transition from Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo's Government to Alhaji Shehu Shagari's, in Nigeria (which this paper focuses) or sudden, like the transition from General Abdusalam Abubakar's Military Government (Nigeria's last military government) to President Olusegun Obasanjo's Civilian Government in 1999.

Be that as it may, there is a common consensus among scholars that the transition period is often bedevilled with uncertainty because it is filled with threatening negotiations, undecided promises and precarious atmosphere (Elsner and Farrands, 2018). Indeed, Awolowo, in a press conference, addressed on 18 August, 1975, warns the political class about the uncertainty in the military government transition, when he says:

Before ban on political activities is lifted, aspiring politicians must realise ...[that] after nine years of military rule, it is natural for some Army Officers to have developed such fondness for public offices as to stimulate in them a nostalgia and animus revertendi for these offices..." (Awolowo, 1981b:159).

He also advises the Military Government, in the same Press Conference, "to bear in mind, constantly and scrupulously, that there is such a cancerous and fatal disease in public life known as TENACITY OF OFFICE" (Awolowo, 1981b:161). He gives the defining features of TENACITY OF OFFICE as barefaced unjustifiable resolve to cling to power with macabre penchant for elongation, even after the legitimacy for continuity in such public office has been completely eroded. Warning against such attitude, in America, too, Sorensen, (2018) states that it is better to listen than to lecture and more profitable to learn than to threaten and concludes that American "foreign policy will rest on the traditional American values of restraint and empathy, not on military might."

Although such views, as rightly expressed by Awolowo, (1981); Elsner and Farrands, (2018) and Sorensen, (2018) are universally corroborated by empirical results from notable research, little attention is paid to adhering to them and enforcing them, especially in Africa. That explains the reason the larger part of the continent is still grappling with the stability of democracy. That substantial literature exists, on which the political class can fall back, to develop the templates for permanent change, is incontrovertible; what is missing is the will to learn from the past. It is acknowledged that African leaders have often promised and sworn by the genius of Caesar or the lightning bolt of Jupiter or, even, by the God Almighty of Heaven, to make a difference and effect a desirable change. It is regrettable, however, that they seemed to forget as soon as they got to government, even as they repeated such evils or worse evils than the governments before them committed, thus, orchestrating the fall of the government once again. The inference from this attitude is that the labour of the past heroes, like Awolowo, who thought about durable change, spoke about positive change and even practised the change advocated, at their own time, would have come to nothing. This is unacceptable.

Thus, the major problem of this study, is attributed to the Nigerian researchers' unsteady regard for transition rhetoric and, especially, the word of wisdom coming from Awolowo, the most articulate politician of his time. This study posits that researchers should give more attention to carrying out studies on Awolowo as a proponent of positive change. Particularly, massive research is required on appropriating the legacy left behind by Obafemi Awolowo on such policy formulation and execution that will stand the test of time. This remains the only way to gain from his recommended change.

It is common knowledge that Awolowo, during the transition, discussed extensively on the modus operandi of the transition, including what to expect in obvious dereliction by our leaders, on such topics like:

- Under the Military, the Rule of Law is not Totally Suppressed but it is Largely in Abeyance" (Speech delivered at Mainland Hotel, Lagos on 2 November 1971, to advocate absolute adherence to the rule of law);
- University of Ibadan 1972 Foundation Lecture entitled "An Analysis of the Basic Cause and Remedies of Economic Backwardness" (Lecture delivered at the Trenchard Hall of the University of Ibadan, on 16 November, 1972, pointing the way forward to the economic emancipation of Nigeria);
- Address at the Convocation Ceremony of the University of Ife (Lecture delivered on 6 October, 1973 to show the way forward for Nigeria to become an economically advanced country);
- "An Analysis of the Basic Cause and Remedies of Economic Backwardness" delivered at the University of Ife Convocation Ceremony on 6 July, 1974. (Convocation speech calling for: the recognition of man as the soul

dynamic in nature, a stop to the use of power to enslave and cancellation of Nigeria's 1973 Provisional census for reason of favouring only the North of the country);

- Brigadier Mohammed and His Team Must Entertain no Illusions as to Their Instant and Transitional Role in the Affairs of Our Great Country (Statement issued by Awolowo on 18 August, 1974, encompassing the following themes:
  - Our Military Administration Must be Recognized only as a corrective regime;
  - The strength of an army is not in its number but in its discipline;
  - The army cannot mobilize the people for the implementation of national development plans;
  - How the Military regime failed to eradicate corruption in our national life;
  - To return Nigeria to a happy and peaceful civilian rule;
  - Case for the creation of states on linguistic bases;
  - The new Federal capital of Abuja and the old city of Lagos);
- "General Murtala Ramat Mohammed died a martyr to Nigeria's peace, unity and prosperity" (Address delivered on 20 February, 1976, at the End of a Week-Long Mourning of the Death of General Murtala Ramat Mohammed, admonishing Nigerians to be of good courage, have good ideals and do good works, while they are still alive);
- "The Problems of Africa: Need for Ideological Reappraisal" (1976 Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Lectures, calling for African leaders to address the issue of ideological goals that will move the continent to the next level);
- "Persecution of Political Opponents and Promotion of Ethnic Hegemony should now be Totally Abjured" (Address at the Ahmadu Bello University Convocation Ceremony, urging Nigerian politicians to stop political persecution and ethnic chauvinism);
- "At Last the Dawn" (Speech welcoming the transition programme of the military after the ban has been lifted on party politics);
- "Party Political Broadcast" (Addressing to supporters and Nigerians generally on Awolowo's philosophy of democratic socialism and how he hoped to rule the country if elected as president).

This study posits that, judging by the articulateness displayed in discussing the above themes, before the broad public, more research is needed on Awolowo's postulations in order to bring out the desired templates for the desired changes.

### 1.2. Aim of the Study

The main aim of this investigation was to examine the relationship between Awolowo's treatment of the five issues, under study, and his readiness to simultaneously take on the military in power and his co-participants who were equally desirous to replace the military. This was in line with the study's intention to investigate the general assumption that an articulate, courageous and vociferous Awolowo would tailor the discussion of the various themes, in the polity, towards three perspectives – how to encourage or pressure the military to pass on power to the civilians; persuade and inoculate the citizenry over the wiles of his political opponents and argue about the cause of his party in anticipation of a successful transmission of power from the military to the politicians.

### 1.3. Significance of the Study

The evaluation criteria of the study were both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitatively, the study employed the content analysis of speech data, as primary evidence, and used the ANOVA and the Newman Keul's Method of Multiple Comparison, to gauge the hypothesis. Qualitatively, the study reviewed literature, as secondary evidence, with the intention of contextualizing the study as well as adding flavour to the write-up on the findings. Thus, the two methods used prominently were those of content analysis and information methods.

With the employment of these methods, the significance of the study becomes obvious. With regard to the content analysis method, we are able to recover and examine the refinements of characters of participants or stakeholders in Nigeria's political set up, thereby, ensuring easy investigation and understanding of the, hitherto, grueling socio-cognitive and perceptual constructs. Also, through the information method, we are able to see what actually took place, thereby enabling us to carry out contemporary obligations efficiently without having to wait for eons.

Suffice to say, then, that, at no better time than now is this kind of research more relevant, when there is the need to recover and examine the refinement of the characters of some of our political participants at the time of transition from military authoritarianism of the Gowon and Mohammed/Obasanjo eras to civilian democracy. This will enable us to see whether there is any semblance of such today or whether there is any change, of any sort, for that matter. At no better time than now is this kind of research more relevant, when there is the need to see what actually happened in the past that calls for attention in the present, through the information method.

Thus, with the past and present information, at our disposal, there is no better time for this study than now when the president, an ex-military ruler, who has often been accused of trampling on the freedoms of the people, as a military man, is currently in the saddle as civilian president. At no more appropriate time, than now, is this research needed, when the dichotomy between the president and the masses accords all power to the former. At no more appropriate time is the research needed than now when the supreme power of the state is gradually sliding to a power monopolist, like of the past military rule in Nigeria and the 1971-79 transition period, which this study focuses. At no more germane time is a voice, like this relevant, when the fundamental human rights of citizens are being gradually eroded, in similarity to the information available during past military rules.

Indeed, the significance of this paper becomes obvious in contemporary Nigeria when all that Awolowo advocated for, during the transition from military dictatorship to civilian democracy are being thrown into the trash bin. The value of this paper becomes apparent, for example, when the same rights of defenders, that Awolowo defended vehemently - the rights embedded in the paramount human rights contraptions – rights of expression, association and assembly – are being gradually eroded. Particularly nauseating is the fact that the right to condemn government leaders as well as their aides and agencies and to advise them on how they can better their performance, to which Awolowo was a great advocate, has actually developed wings. What about the right to justice and, especially, to enjoy one's admission to bail? This is a no-go area as the Buhari presidency would say that people who have been in detention from 2015 to 2018, like Colonel Sambo Dasuki (Rtd) and Sheikh Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, are being denied bail because of national security. This study, therefore, becomes highly significant in that it will further motivate the likes of Ben Nwabueze, Wole Soyinka, Balarabe Musa, Femi Falana, Olisa Agbakoba, Egun Onagboruwa, Obiageli Ezekwesili, Colonel Abubakar Umar (Rtd), Shehu Sanni and Dino Malaye, to continue their patriotic role of weeping erring government officials to line in order to ensure permanent democracy in Nigeria. There is no doubting the fact that this article will appeal to other forward-looking Nigerian patriots and respecters of history, who will want a stop put to the back-and-forth movement of Nigeria from democracy to military rule.

### 1.3.1. The Impact of the Study within Its Discipline

The intendment of the study is to add to relevant current studies on the use of the content analysis method to investigate the pervasive rhetoric during the transition period from military dictatorship to democratic governance. It is also the expectation of the study that the content analysis method will be a relevant instrument for this purpose. Thus, it is expected that this study will be very impactful in humanities and the social sciences which have often adopted this methodology to pry into the speeches of heads of government and other well-seasoned and articulate politicians with a view to making valid inferences that could affect the contemporary society. The study's resort to empiricism will also reveal current issues in the methods of subjecting speculations in the field of political rhetoric to objective verification and actuality. The most important impact of this study is that it will assist upcoming researchers in adapting or adopting the methodology for further relevant studies.

### 1.4. Research Question/Hypothesis

The genesis of this study was to unravel the problem associated with researchers' lackadaisical attitude to studies on transition from military dictatorship to participatory democracy in Nigeria. It is a very high assumption that such attitude can rub the country of very vital aspect of the country's development. It is contended that, when we do not know what triggered a transition and the communications that assisted in the management of the transition, we might be creating, advertently or inadvertently, complex futuristic problems that might combine to frustrate governance. Researchers' failure to think ahead and hypothesize about the why associated with the what results, during the first transition from military to civilian governance in Nigeria, might deny Nigerian leaders clear vision that can be deployed in case certain circumstances of the transition repeat themselves. It is submitted that it was probably as a result of this oversight that the succeeding democracy that ushered in the second republic in Nigeria, after the transition, failed.

It has been established, under the statement of the study's problem, that scanty research on the transition-to-democracy rhetoric was a big noticeable minus. This study posits that, in so far as Awolowo was forthcoming on the what, the why and the how of the transition, a research into the issues he discussed during this period would add to existing knowledge and assist Nigeria's leaders to see if there still exist gaps yet to be filled in governance today. Most importantly, this paper has given a bold attention to answering the research question: Is there any significant difference in Awolowo's reactions to the five different issues during the period of military rule after his exit from Gowon's Government? Converted to a hypothesis,  $H_0$  will state: There will be no significant difference on Awolowo's reactions to the five different issues during the period of military rule after his exit from Gowon's Government.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1. The Historicity of Transition from Military Dictatorship to Participatory Democracy in Nigeria*

In a previous work, I have traced the history of Nigeria from its first attempt at constitution making in 1914 to January 15, 1966 when the Republican Constitution of 1963 was set aside, following a violent military coup d'état which supplanted Nigeria's First Republic (Babatunde, 2018g:537). I have also traced, among other things, the circumstances surrounding the involvement and emergence of General Yakubu Gowon, as Head of State, by the July of 1966, following another military putsch, to counter the earlier one in January spearheaded by Major Emmanuel Ifeajuna, Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu and Adewale Ademoyega.; the simultaneous declaration of a state of emergency on May 27, 1967 and the division of Nigeria's four regions into 12 states; the declaration of the Eastern part of Nigeria as an independent state of Biafra, on 29 May, 1967 by Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu and the declaration of "a full blown civil war on 6 July 1967", which ended on 15 January, 1970 (Babatunde, 2018g:537-540).

Let me begin this section by saying that the military dictatorship, put in place in 1966, lasted for about 13 years - including the civil war period (1966-1979), under four military Heads of State, ending only in 1979, when the General Olusegun Obasanjo's military administration ushered in the Second Republic with the promulgation of a new Constitution, the 1979 Constitution. The first four Military heads who ruled Nigeria include: General Aguiyi Ironsi, General Yakubu Gowon, General Murtala Mohammed and General Olusegun Obasanjo (in that order).

It was the speculation of the political class that Gowon would hand over power, shortly after the civil war. Following the January 1970 surrender of the Biafran force and the remarkable reconciliation that followed, everybody was, in fact, expecting the transition Time-table but this was not to be. Even when it was obvious that Gowon had become a statesman and an international leader, with his involvement in the creation of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), not even his body language suggested that he was planning to hand over to the civilians. The political class were embittered by this hedonistic attitude. This was, indeed, the major reason for Awolowo's resignation from Gowon's government on July 1, 1971. Awolowo considered it better to put pressure on the government from without than from within. That explains the reason, Awolowo, in his popular 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1974 address at the convocation ceremony of University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), killed two birds with just one stone. First, he declares that power must be transmuted to the people, while warning General Yakubu Gowon against tenacity of office, to be mindful of the fact that "power enslaves, absolute power enslaves absolutely" (Awolowo, 1981b:72). Secondly, he condemns Gowon's provisional census result, which put the North, Gowon's tribe, as having 65% of the total population, with the whole of the South, (encompassing the South West, the South East, the Mid West and the Delta Zone) credited with 35%, as a futile exercise (Awolowo, 1981b:77).

Not long after this, precisely on July 29, 1975, Gowon was toppled, in a bloodless palace coup, while attending the Organization of African Unity summit in Uganda and he was exiled to the United Kingdom. With this development, Murtala Mohammed became the new Head of State with General Olusegun Obasanjo as his Vice.

Mohammed, however, had a little stint as Head of State, having been assassinated in a bloody but unsuccessful coup on 13 February, 1976, barely six months after stepping in as Head of State. Although Gowon was fingered as one of the masterminds of the Colonel Buka Sukar Dimka coup, stripped of his rank and remained in the UK for exile, he was later pardoned by Alhaji Shehu Shagari in 1981 while his rank was also magnanimously restored by General Ibrahim Babangida in 1987.

Before his death, Mohammed Murtala Muhammad, had introduced very transformational transition agenda. The first thing Murtala's government did was to cancel the 1973 Census exercise, which had been dismissed by Awolowo as an effort in futility. He, thereafter, reverted to the 1963 Census figures, as has been, equally, suggested by Awolowo. He also began, on a clean slate, by purging the civil service and the academia of corruption. He had, as part of his plans, the promulgation of a new constitution, the creation of more states, the reform of the local government and the creation of a new capital for Nigeria. While Chief Rotimi Williams, a legal luminary and the first Nigerian Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) was appointed, in 1975, as the Chairman of the 49-member Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC); Justice Ayo Irikefe was appointed as the head of the committee on creation of new states (which recommendation led to the creation of seven more states for Nigeria in 1976) and Justice Aguda as the head of the committee for the movement of the Nigerian capital from Lagos to a place central to Nigeria and devoid of the congestion problem which Lagos was already having. Abuja was eventually chosen by this committee.

Murtala Muhammad's objectives, at creating the CDC, which, among other things, included ensuring: utmost participation in politics, peaceful acquisition of political authority, broad distribution of political largesse that cut across party and ethnic lines, the widening of political concurrence and the conduct of free and credible elections (Anucha, 2010), were strictly adhered to by the Williams 'committee. The committee also recommended "an executive presidential system similar to that in the United States" and the promotion of federal character and an impartial judiciary, as dictated by Muhammed (Anucha, 2010). Later, in 1977, Obasanjo inaugurated a Constituent Assembly, which took over the draft constitution from the CDC and fine-tuned it before the Supreme military council ratified and put it in the public domain on September 21, 1978, following the lift of the ban on party political activities. The combined efforts of the CDC and the CA brought about a metamorphosis from the erstwhile British Parliamentary system to the American Presidential system of government. Another new thing, in the Constitution was the requirement for political parties' presence to be recorded in, not less than two-thirds of the states, as a prerequisite for registration.

In line with Murtala Muhammad's objective of broad distribution of human and material resources among the diverse elements in Nigeria, the constitution incorporated the idea of the federal character. In line with this idea, for example, each state of the federation must have, at least, a ministerial appointment.

Although Murtala Mohammed was unable to achieve all that he set to do, as a result of the abortive coup of Buka Suka Dimka, which claimed his life in 1976, his able lieutenant, Obasanjo, went ahead with the transitional agenda. Obasanjo, indeed, pursued all of Muhammed's programmes with religious catholicity. Among other things, he created more states, embarked on local government reform and allowed politicians to form parties and canvass for elections, as the pinnacle of the transition programme. He actually worked hard on the transition programme by, first, promulgating the 1979 Constitution, with presidential power to the would-be president and state governors, as a substitute for the British Parliamentary system. He also appointed an electoral umpire known as the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO), headed by Chief Michael Ani. Fifty-two parties applied to FEDECO to be registered for the purpose of participating in the various elections but only five of them were registered (Omipidan, 2015). Indeed, the General Election of 1979 witnessed the competition among 5 registered parties. The president, now with an executive power, could only be proclaimed as having won in an election if he was able to win a quarter of the votes in not less than two-thirds of the 19 states, to which the country had just been divided under Murtala/Obasanjo's Regime. The five major parties that emerged include: Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP), the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), the Nigeria People's Party (NPP), the People's Redemption Party (PRP) and the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). The parties were registered to contest for various elections into the various posts at the local, state and the federal governments. While Aminu Kano's PRP, Waziri Ibrahim's GNPP and

Obafemi Awolowo's UPN, were parties of the left with socialists' rhetoric and inclination, Nnamdi Azikiwe's NPP and Alhaji Shehu Shagari's NPN were capitalist-oriented parties.

A lot of intrigues characterised the election, which, Obasanjo had earlier prophesied might not be won by the best candidate. Whether by prophecy or intendment, but perceived as more of the latter than the former, Obasanjo was correct. Awolowo, adjudged as having the best organized campaign and the best preparation, in terms of presidential rhetoric and manifestoes, lost narrowly to Alhaji Shehu Shagari of the NPN, in an election considered by observers as inconclusive. The major highlight of the election was the twelve two-third controversy, which took the likes of Professor Ayodele Awojobi and Professor Chike Obi (the Mathematics professor) to the Court to prove that two-third of 19 states can never be twelve two-third that Richard Akinjide canvassed. The twelve two-third-imbroglio was against the backdrop that the successful candidate was supposed to have mustered 25% in two-third of the states of the federation to win outrightly, failure of which would lead to a run-off election. It was because of the attempt to forestall a rerun election that the two-third controversy became hot, with the Chief Justice of the Federation, Justice Fatai Williams, having deliberately and erroneously bought into the theory of twelve two-third as constituting two-third of 19 states, made an addendum ruling that the case should never be cited as a precedent. This was the second time Awolowo would be settling with a travesty of justice, the first time being during his ten-year sentence on September 16, 1963, where Justice Showemimo confessed that, ordinarily he would not have jailed Awolowo but that his hands were tied.

He, eventually, handed over power to the National Party of Nigeria's controversial successful presidential candidate at the general election, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, after putting in place, the 1979 Constitution. The 1979 Constitution set up Nigeria under a presidential system of government with a federal government, 19 state governments, a federal capital territory, 3 arms and 3 levels of government.

## 2.2. *The Place of Political Horse-Trading in the Transition Agenda of the Nigerian Military Government*

Cambridge Dictionary (2019) defines political horse-trading as: "clever, and often difficult, discussions, in which people or organizations try to make a business arrangement, and each tries to get something more favourable to them." Collins Dictionary also defines the phrase, from the British perspective, as "bargaining that involves unofficial or secret compromises" and from American perspective as "hard bargaining to obtain equal concessions by both sides in a dispute."

From its etymology, the phrase "horse trading" is known to have originated from the literal buying and selling of horses. Wikipedia records that the dishonesty arising from the difficulties in evaluating the merits of a horse offered for sale makes the business apparently unethical, albeit in a positive sense. Thus, the phrase can be seen as a form of antithesis where we have, as I have argued in my book, *Essentials of Effective Writing*, "the simultaneous expression of two contradictory ideas" (Babatunde, 1996:165). The mutual incompatibility in the expression is also extended to its more recent variant, "political horse trading", where political participants, from two extreme camps, more often confronted with the difficulty in reconciling their conflicting views, try to negotiate the best position from their divergent ends. This is a variant of political logrolling, where different parties exchange favours through ceding of known hard grounds to more subtle ones.

Themes (2019) argues that horse trading can be seen as an art, learnt through learning and tutelage, spanning several years or where the gift or talent is in one's blood. He reasons that the ingredients of horse-trading will include: ability to hear others and the gift of persuasion.

In all of the transitions in Nigeria, Ubani (2018) argues that the outgoing military government often asks for compromises that confer certain privileges in their socio-politico-economic interests, which they had enjoyed, in the past, and are unwilling to relinquish. The most prominent demand, that has been noticed, over the back-and-forth transition from militarism to democracy is the pledge from the politicians not to probe the outgoing military government. Apart from these personal interests, military rulers also often demand, from in-coming civilians, the protection of the corporate interests of the military, in general. In exchange, politicians often ask for the military to support their government and protect them from perceived opponents or competitors. They also often demand that the military should keep off from meddling in the affairs related to direct governance.

## 3. Methodology and Data Collection

A post-factum design was adopted for the quantitative and qualitative investigation of Obafemi Awolowo's rhetoric as a commentator on the activities of the military governments, the period after his resignation from General Yakubu Gowon's government. The intention of the study was to confirm the correctness, or otherwise, of the speculation that Awolowo, as a commentator on the military's transition to participatory democracy, would relate his speeches to suit the time. This philosophical assumption was geared towards testing whether Awolowo's rhetorical behaviour, as he reacted to issues that were germane to genuine expectations from the military, the political class and the citizenry, in moving the nation forward, could be justified. Thus, the study was principally engrossed in diagnosing to what degree were Awolowo's reactions to the issues of: the economy, politics, socio-cultural milieu, international relations and education, in agreement with the mood of transition, when he was a commentator on the Military Governments of General Yakubu Gowon, Murtala Mohammed and Olusegun Obasanjo. It was the purpose of the study to concentrate upon Awolowo's speeches with a view to drawing valid extrapolations regarding his mindset for transition agenda. This is with a view to determining whether or not he demonstrated his usual attributes of discussing relevant issues with courage and outspokenness in the polity, during this period. Further to this is the supposition that Awolowo would vary the treatment of the issues discussed in accordance with their relative importance, with the most preferred or urgent matters being assigned a high degree of prominence. For the purpose of quantitative analysis, ten of Awolowo's speeches were selected

through the proportional stratified sampling method. The five issues were also partitioned into 25 themes, which were clearly operationalized. Thereafter, the One-way Factorial Analysis and the Neuman Keuls' Method of Multiple Comparison were employed to determine any significant difference between the dependent and independent variables.

### 3.1. An appropriate Contextualisation of the Research

For an appropriate conceptualization the problem of the study has been explained through relevant theoretical postulations and empirical studies. The hypothesis has also been tested via unassailable statistical analysis. Besides the validity and reliability of the content analysis instrument through a pilot study and objective operationalization of the study's constructs. Moreover, upon the subjection of the instrument to reliability measure, the Pearson's Product Correlational Analysis has shown a high 0.95 reliability coefficient.

## 4. Research Findings, Data Analysis & Analytical Framework

### 4.1. Research Findings

The question this paper has raised is this: Is there any significant difference in Awolowo's reactions to the five different issues during the period of military rule after his exit from Gowon's Government? Transposed to a hypothesis, we have the following null and alternative hypotheses:

- $H_0$ : There is no significant difference in Awolowo's reactions to the issues during the period of military rule after his exits form Gowon's Government.
- $H_1$ : There is a significant difference in Awolowo's reactions to the issues during the period of military rule after his exits form Gowon's Government.

In order to ascertain whether or not any discovered differences, in reality, existed in the population of Awolowo's speeches, the study's stratagem was to run the hypothesis. Thus, the study tested the speculation of whether the sample estimate of Awolowo's selected speeches could be generalized to the population parameter. To achieve this, the study clearly defined the research hypothesis; operationalized the relevant constructs; set out the null and alternative hypothesis; set the significance level; made a two tailed prediction and guaranteed that the distributions being studied were normal, using the ANOVA, the parametric test considered to be relevant to the variables tested. After running the statistical test, the study rejected the null hypothesis at  $P < .05$

Source of Variation	Ss	Df	Ms	F	P
Total	317278.02	49	-		
Between	64745.32	4	16186.33	2.9	$P < 0.05$
Within	252532.7	45	5611.83		

Table 1: The ANOVA Performed on the Five Issues during the Period of Military Rule After Awolowo's Exit from Gowon's Government

The above Table gives a statistical justification for the rejection of the null hypothesis. It has been established that the findings were in conformity with the major assumption guiding the study because the probability of obtaining the F values under the null hypothesis is less than 0.05. Findings have shown that the F obtained (2.9) is greater than the F critical (2.57) i.e.  $F = 2.9$ ;  $df = 4/45$ ;  $p < 0.05$ . It is obvious, then, that Awolowo put more prominence on certain issues than the others during this period. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is upheld, i.e., A significant difference exists in Awolowo's reactions to the issues during the period of military rule after his exit from Gowon's Government.

Be that as it may, the obtainment of a significant F here was an initial step in the analysis. A post-mortem multiple comparisons analysis is as shown in Table 2 below.

The Different Issues	Economics	Politics	Socio Cultural Milieu	International Relations	Education
Politics	N = 10 X1 = 77.7	N = 10 X2 = 104.8	N = 10 X3 = 40.5	N = 10 X4 = 13.4	N = 10 X5 = 143.3
Economics		27.1 ns	37.2 ns	64.3 ns	63.4 ns
Socio-cult. Milieu			64.3 ns	91.4*	90.5*
Inter Relations				27.1 ns	26.2 ns
Education					0.9 ns

Table 2: Multiple Comparison of the Magnitude of Salience for the Five Issues which Awolowo Reacted to after his Exit form Gowon's Government  
n. s = Not Significant \*  $p < 0.05$  \*\* $p < 0.01$

Table 2 reveals, at a glance, the difference between any two adjacent means (see Rows 2 - 5). The observed differences were compared with the critical differences in order to reach conclusions regarding the hypothesis. The critical differences obtained from the studentized table ate as shown in Table 17

	<b>0.05</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Q2	67.01	89.03
Q3	80.51	101.35
Q4	88.56	110.8
Q5	94.24	114.13

Table 3: Critical Difference Obtained from the Studentized Table on Ho<sub>5</sub>

In addition to the critical differences, the means of the five issues were also compared. The means are reproduced again in Table 4 so as to see them at a glance:

Period	Research Question	Mean Scores Of Issues					Source
		Politics	Economy	Soc-cult Milieu	Int. Rel.	Edu.	
Awolowo as Commentator.....	Any difference in issues.....?	104.8	77.7	40.5	13.4	14.3	Table 2

Table 4: Mean Scores of Five Issues Treated by Awolowo as Commentator on the Military Governments of Gowon, Mohammed and Obasanjo

Thereafter, the following conclusions were reached for the period when Awolowo was a commentator on the military governments of Gowon and his successors, after leaving Gowon's government as Vice-President.

- Awolowo placed a greater emphasis on politics than either of the issues of international relations and education during this period.
- Awolowo reacted to the issues of politics, the economy and socio-cultural milieu equally during this period.

#### 4.2. Data Analysis

In this analysis, politics, with a mean score of 104.8, was the most important subject in Awolowo's agenda following his resignation from Gowon's government. The remaining mean scores are as follows: the economy mean (77.7), socio-cultural milieu mean (40.5), Education mean (14.3), and International relations mean (13.4). Examination of data also revealed Awolowo's interest for the philosophy of democratic socialism. The values espoused by Awolowo, during this period could be observed from the ten speeches, which constituted the stratum of sample for this period.

The assumption underlying the research question was confirmed to be true. The ANOVA statistic revealed that a significant difference existed in Awolowo's treatment of the issues after leaving Gowon's government. Although the mean score of politics was the highest, a post-mortem comparison merely showed that politics was more significantly discussed than international relations and education. There was, thus, parity between the issue of politics, the economy and socio-cultural milieu.

The issues of international relations and education had very low salience during this period probably because Nigeria had just concluded a civil war. Awolowo's rhetoric was thus directed mainly to domestic issues of importance. These domestic issues of importance, inevitable, were the issues of the economy, politics and socio-cultural milieu. Education too did not form part of the core issues of national importance because the mood of the nation did not call for propaganda on education. It was at the latter end of the period when the ban was lifted on partisan politics that campaigns were mounted on the desirability of educational development and especially free education. It is submitted, finally, that, in the quest for a viable political order, after several years of army rule, it was only reasonable to concentrate on the social, political and economic issues germane to such political order.

#### 4.3. Analytical Framework

The study's research design used the modified version of Holsti's (1969) and Johnson's (1988) analytical models. Thus, the analytical framework, in addition to Holsti's and Johnson's inclusion of the study's purpose, types of comparison, questions and research problems, further highlights the relationships between the dependent and independent variables and the study's analytical scheme.

### 5. Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusion

#### 5.1. Introduction

I have argued, elsewhere (Babatunde, 2018b:145) that Awolowo, during the colonial era, "tried to puncture holes into the political and economic policies of the colonialists ... demonstrated more astute knowledge and more capabilities for seeking information and managing information than his other political colleagues." That was exactly what he repeated during this period which saw the military behaving in the manner of the ousted colonial masters. During this period too, Awolowo sought information to "advance planning and decision" mainly in politics. Like in the days of the colonial masters too, Awolowo made politics the bedrock of his agenda of antagonising the military's penchant for wasteful spending, especially on white elephant projects that were of no benefit to the common man.

Awolowo, indeed, should be seen as a special breed of politician who was never afraid nor intimidated even where angels feared to tread. He was a man who would say it as he saw it, no matter whose ox was gored. As he always played by



the rules, he also expected others to play by the rules. He paid the ultimate price for being a sticker to the rules when he was incarcerated in 1963 on a trump up charge of treasonable felony, during the civilian regime. During the period under consideration, period of military rule and military transition of power to the civilians, Awolowo also proved that he was still the same courageous, forthright and unbending politician, who would insist on the right thing being done. That he was able to relinquish his apparently juicy position of the Vice-President of the Nigerian state to champion the cause he believed in – true democracy – set him apart from most other politicians, who would have jumped at the opportunity of continuous service, in the face of imminent danger to the worthy cause of democracy. Consequently, what forms the major bedrock of the study's discussion is the role Awolowo played as the political linchpin for the vital assignments that the government had to carry out to foster the cause of democracy in Nigeria.

## 5.2. Discussion

Apparently referring to Gowon's unreadiness to hand over power to the civilians, Awolowo explains two propositions of a universal character which could be deduced from a study of history and human nature. The first "IS That In The Process Of Any Great Undertaking, Two Stages Are Crucial: The Moment Of Decision And The Moment Of Fulfilment" (Awolowo, 1981b:72). Awolowo argues further that the moment of fulfilment called for much higher order of courage, dedication and self-sacrifice than the moment of decision because it was the more critical of the two.

He also avers that the longer the time-lag between decision and fulfilment, the greater the requisite sense of courage, dedication and self-sacrifice. Besides, the longer the interval, the greater the strain and the more difficult "to sustain alive and on a higher scale, the attributes called forth at the stage of decision." The reason for this, Awolowo argues, is that the affairs of man are always susceptible to internal and external frictions and influences. The second is that "power enslaves: absolute power enslaves absolutely" (Awolowo, 1981b:73). A diligent search through history had shown that there was not a single instance where a regime which had come to power uninvited and had wielded that power for several years had found it easy to extricate itself from the sweet uses and shackles of power and had handed it to others outside its own hierarchy.

Awolowo criticized African leaders for the crave to hold tenaciously to power. According to him, Tenacity of office is

A political monstrosity whose characteristics are in inordinate and shameless love of power for its own sake, and a morbid tenacity for public office even when all the legitimacy for continuing in such public office has completely disappeared (awolowo, 1981B:73).

After Gowon was eventually toppled, Awolowo reminded the military again (under Murtala Muhammad) that its main task was to perform a quick and successful surgical operation and hand over to the civilians. Again, he prophesied that "it would be too much of a risk for it (the military) to attempt to undertake the massive and never-ending task of rebuilding and reconstructing our body-politic." He further, warned that "not all soldiers are saints, and not all politicians are devils." (Awolowo, 1981b:147).

Awolowo was saddled with the responsibility of tutoring the military again when Murtala Mohammed was assassinated in an abortive coup led by Lt. Col. Buka Suka Dimka. In his address of February 20, 1976, at the end of a week-long mourning of the death of Murtala Mohammed, Awolowo criticized the military for its "nine long years" of misrule "in the dark, cheerless tunnel of misrule corruption in high places, comparative loss of personal freedom, and socio-political degeneracy" (Awolowo, 1981c:121-123).

In addition, Awolowo catalogued the reasons why the ship of our state had drifted 'for upwards of 17 years' (1960-1977). These included "failure to realize the basic purposes of a state, to recognize the existence of an implied social contract... to declare, observe and strive to fulfil the fundamental social objective which epitomize the terms of the social contract" (Awolowo, 1981c:164).

Another problem identified by Awolowo was that of deliberate persecution of the opposition and a vigorous and sustained attempt to silence the voice of dissent. Related to this was the fierce and almost cutthroat competition among the three-so-called majority ethnic groups for federal hegemony

Awolowo saw the incursion of the military as dealing a decisive blow on the hard-earned freedom colonial rule. He saw the country as being in a state of siege under military rule. The basic freedoms are either expressly suppressed by the authority or are under individual self-constraint arising from fear of punishment without the due process of law" (Awolowo, 1981c:100). He concludes that: "Under military rule, the rule of law is not totally suppressed, but only in abeyance" (Awolowo, 1981c:101).

Arising from Awolowo's thoughts on freedom during this period was also the safeguard of the social contract among the aggregating families in Nigeria and the federating communities. First, there was an implied social contract "that the individuals within the families, the families within the unilingual community or state, and the nationalities or linguistic groups in the multinational state, will enjoy equal treatment". The second implied contract was that "the reciprocal obligations which citizens, families, and nationalities.... Owe to one another and to the state will be observed and fulfilled" (Awolowo, 1981c:156). Indeed, love was so important in Awolowo's social contract that he declared that the basis for living together was not for the love of one another but because of the advantages and security which such living together would ensure. It was on this principle that Awolowo's programmes of free education, free health, integrated rural development and full employment was based.

Awolowo's love of education made him to call on the federal government in 1974 to make education free and compulsory at all levels throughout the country and cancel all loans hitherto given to Nigerian students by any of our governments. Furthermore, Awolowo considered the education of every citizen, to the limit of his ability as a fundamental

right. He categorically states that: "to deny it or to treat it as a privilege is deprivation, and an assault on human dignity" (Awolowo, 1981d:33).

When the federal government failed to heed this call, Awolowo promised in his electioneering campaign, in preparation for the second republic presidential election, that as from October 1, 1979,

Education, at all levels, shall be provided free for all the citizens of Nigeria, both young and old. In particular: Education will be free and compulsory at primary and secondary levels. In other words, from the age of six to about seventeen, all children will be enjoined to receive education at the expense of the State. Textbooks will be supplied free and sufficient classrooms will be provided so that no pupil will have to go for some more than three miles to get to school. The shift system will be abolished: and the boarding system will be phased out. Post-secondary and post-graduate education...will be free...the study of science and training in technology will be specially encouraged...Adult education will be free (Awolowo, 1981d:34).

Indeed, Awolowo saw education not only as a fundamental right but also as an inalienable right. While promising to introduce free education at all levels any day he acceded to power, Awolowo reiterates:

Education is a fundamental right; and it is the inalienable right of every Nigerian citizen to be educated free by the State. To treat education as a privilege, the opportunity to acquire which must be paid for from loan given to the student by the state is a most misguided policy. For this and other reasons, all loans given to students, in this connection, which are outstanding on 1 October 1979, will be written off. (Awolowo, 1979:4).

### 5.3. Recommendations

Several of the factors responsible for democratic instability in Nigeria are still there today and something quick needs to be done to stem the tide. Awolowo mentioned that the moment of decision and the moment of fulfilment often find political office holders, including the military rulers, reneging on their promises. It has also been found that such tenacity of office has often led to catastrophic ends of such office holders. What is lacking in these political office holders-civilians as well as the military - more often than not, has been described by Awolowo as "the requisite sense of courage, dedication and self-sacrifice." The only exception that we have had so far is Goodluck Jonathan, who congratulated the incoming president, after him - General Muhammed Buhari - even before the declaration of the result by INEC. This is really commendable. Goodluck, has, indeed received massive accolades for this patriotic gesture.

Even Obasanjo, who handed over to Shagari, during the Second Republic, attempted a third term bid, after he had served as civilian president from 1999 to 2007. He was however stopped by his erstwhile Vice- Abubakar Atiku and other patriotic elements of the society. Obasanjo, for the reason of Atiku's non-cooperation, for his third term agenda, frustrated him in his several attempts at gunning for the office of the president. What I will like to recommend, to curb tenacity, is that successive governments should take a leaf from Goodluck Jonathan (who handed over power to General Buhari) and respect the wishes of the people by handing over power willy-nilly, without any prompting.

Also, there is the need to stop power enslavement, which has two faces - enslaving others through power manipulation and being slaves to power. Quite repeatedly, there has always been the tendency to use power absolutely and with impunity. The irony behind this is that such brazen display of power has always consistently led to dire consequences. Therefore, to forestall any ugly incident that may want to motivate the army to come back to power, in Nigeria again, politicians should learn always to play the game by the rules.

### 5.4. Conclusion and Summary

This paper is a product of an original study which sought to investigate the relative prominence attached to 5 issues discussed by Awolowo, as a commentator on three military governments, after retiring from General Yakubu Gowon's government as Vice President (General Gowon's, Murtala Muhammed and Obasanjo's Regimes). It examines Awolowo's experience as a courageous and patriotic voice of the people and his penchant for fighting for the masses, during the transition from military rule to civilian democracy, orchestrated by the military. It considers, as unacceptable, an ironic situation where authentic views from Awolowo, despite having being corroborated by empirical results, are still ignored. Thus, the paper submits that, as long as Nigerian researchers, governments and technocrats ignore unassailable contributions to positive change, coming from tested and trusted elder statesmen like Awolowo, so long will stability of democracy in Nigeria continue to be a mirage.

The paper attributes the major the problem of the study to the irregular regard for transition rhetoric in Nigeria and, especially, the word of wisdom coming from Awolowo, the most articulate politician of his time. Following this identified major problem is the study's central thesis that giving adequate attention to Awolowo's propositions for change, through massive research, will simultaneously expose the best in him, as a proponent of change, as well as make easy the appropriation of the legacy he left behind. The paper argues that it becomes imperative to get interested in Awolowo's propositions for change because several of his conditional prophecies have come to pass. It is, therefore, axiomatic to note that his yet-to-be-fulfilled propositions, on the polity, can be studied for possible confirmation, modifications, corrections and purpose-driven preparations.

In this connection, the study's general purpose was to analyse Awolowo's treatment of the five issues selected for study, viz, the economy, politics, socio-cultural milieu, international relations and education, as a commentator on the activities of three military governments, after exiting General Gowon's government as Vice President. There was the presupposition that a pragmatic and patriotic Awolowo would discuss the above five issues in relation to transiting effectively from military authoritarianism to Civilian democracy. The study's further speculation is that he would vary his prominence for the issues in accordance with the prevailing circumstances. On the basis of this speculation, it was

hypothesised that there would be a significant difference in Awolowo's reactions to the issues during the period of military rule after his exit from Gowon's Government. This alternative hypothesis was accepted at  $P < 0.05$  through the One-Way Factorial Analysis. Besides, with the posteriori method of multiple comparison, the conclusion was reached that Awolowo placed a greater emphasis on politics than either of the issues of international relations and education during this period and reacted to the issues of politics, the economy and socio-cultural milieu equally during this period.

This study becomes significant, now, when there is the need to address any positive change that has happened, in the polity that can be attributed to Awolowo's transition rhetoric of the 70s, as well as address any positive change anticipated, for the contemporary time, by dusting and using Awolowo's template for change. This is against the backdrop of discovering what happened in the past that calls for attention in the present, through the content analysis and information methods.

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