

UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN



THE SOARING EAGLE



**UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN AT 40:
THE SOARING EAGLE**

Editor-in-Chief
N.Y.S. Ijaiya

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University of Ilorin at 40: The Soaring Eagle

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FOREWORD

It is just like yesterday that the University of Ilorin was established along with six other Nigerian universities in 1975. The University began to fledge immediately after it was established such that a few years later, it was already soaring above its peers and competing with the stars of the Nigerian university system.

To the glory of God and in tandem with the vision of its founding fathers, the University of Ilorin today has transcended the level of being “one of the fastest growing second-generation universities”, as it was described 15 years ago by its former Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Shuaibu Oba Abdulraheem, during the 25th anniversary and 20th convocation ceremonies. Today, the generation the University belongs to has morphed into insignificance as it has become undoubtedly a foremost university not only in the country but also in the continent with verifiable evidence.

It is axiomatic that the progress of the University of Ilorin over the past 40 years is worth documenting. In other words, the success story of this great University is worth being told for the benefit of the current and unborn generations. After all, without the knowledge of the past, we cannot redeem the present and guarantee the future.

As T.S. Elliot once wrote, “Time present and time past/Are both perhaps present in the time future/and time future contained in time past”. It goes without saying that the success of the University today was based on its past and the future of the University is contained in its past and present. The past, the present and the future of the University are thus interwoven such that each tends to reinforce the other.

Based on the foregoing, this commemorative book is historical, current and futuristic all in one but everything still coalesces into the making a rapidly developing African university. I have no doubt that this will be a book that all stakeholders in the

University of Ilorin in particular and the University system in general will find eye-opening, edifying and stimulating.

If honour must be given to whom it is due, the credit for what the University is today belong to its founding fathers and the capacious captains who have piloted its affairs over the past four decades. By dint of hard work and single-minded commitment to excellence, they succeeded in building a formidable edifice that will continue to stand the test of time.

Through this book, in its tripartite parts, the University lays itself bare for self-appraisal and self-direction. It is my fervent hope that the book will inspire staff, students and other stakeholders to greater commitment in fulfilling the mandate of the University viz teaching, research and community service.

The effort of the team that produced this work, under the leadership of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor (Mrs.) N.Y.S. Ijaiya, is commendable. I congratulate them as well as the students, staff and stakeholders in the University, all of whom are acknowledged through contributions or through mention in the book.

At the time the University will be commemorating its golden jubilee even the centenary, I believe reference will still be made to this important book as one *magnum opus* of the essential University of Ilorin through the eyes of its own- students, staff, alumni, administrators and friends.

I urge the University to keep soaring like the eagle and continue to set its eyes on the light for the guidance of mankind with “the book”, symbolizing wisdom, as depicted in the University logo. And like the blue colour signifying peace, tranquility and purity, the University should remain what it is while it embraces gold always, which is superior quality and excellence, in all its activities.

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September, 2015.

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FROM AN ACORN TO AN OAK

Y.A. Quadri and I. A. Jawondo

Introduction

In 1948, the first University in Nigeria was to be sited in Ilorin given its longstanding tradition in Islamic learning but lack of infrastructure stalled it. No wonder, when the University was established it was mentored by Ibadan. That the University is ranked first in Nigeria now shows that it was truly the first ever contemplated (Belgore, 2014, p.1).

The development of any society has been dependent on the level of education adopted or acquired. Thus, nations the world over, have continued to concentrate on creating educational opportunities within their societies and for their citizens. Today, the gaps that exist between the poor and the rich in the society, and the division of nations into underdeveloped, developing, and developed are being attributed to the level of education acquired by individuals and the educational opportunities extant in nations respectively.

The scramble for Africa by the Europeans and the eventual colonisation of Africa were blamed on the low level of civilisation of Africa compared to that of Europe.

Consequently, decolonisation and the eventual independence of African states were hitched to the acquired education and exposure of African nationalists. Thus, since independence, African states have continued to struggle to improve on the educational opportunities of their citizens both at home and abroad.

In Nigeria, successive governments realising the importance of creating educational opportunities for their citizens, pursued this to enhance the all-round development of the citizenry. The opportunities provided spanned the strata of education. The focus of this chapter is to document the origin, growth and development of the University of Ilorin as it grew from an acorn to an oak.

Planting and Nurturing the Acorn

In meeting the dictates of the Third National Development Plan, which aimed at providing expanded educational opportunities to Nigerians, the Federal Military Government by a decree established seven universities in Nigeria in August, 1975, to be located in Calabar, Jos, Maiduguri, Sokoto, Kano, Port-Harcourt, and Ilorin. The University of Ilorin is hosted by the ancient city of Ilorin, Kwara State in the North Central geo-political zone of Nigeria. The historic town is about 451 kilometres by road via Bida from Abuja, the Federal Capital. Ilorin is a transitional zone and a geographical and cultural confluence of the Northern and Southern Nigeria. The University has a large land mass. Akinkugbe (2010) observed that “the land size was 15,000 hectares. The huge terrain was going to be the largest university permanent site in all of Africa... this scenic expanse of territory with the River Oyun traversing it in its northerly course towards the River Niger” (p.126).

The University took off in 1975 as a University College affiliated to the University of Ibadan. Professor T. N. Tamuno, the Head of Department of History at the University of Ibadan, was appointed the pioneer Principal, a position he occupied from September to December 1975 when he became the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ibadan. He was succeeded by Professor O. O. Akinkugbe, who was until then, the Dean, Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ibadan. A three-bedroom chalet located at No.5 Forest Road, G.R.A. Ilorin served as the first “Campus” of the University where administrative work of the nascent institution commenced in March 1976. The then Military Governor of Kwara State, Colonel Ibrahim Taiwo, facilitated the accommodation.

By July 1976, the University Administration had moved to a block of offices at Sabo-Oke as the initial building could no longer accommodate the growing number of staff. The support enjoyed by the young University continued under a new Military Governor of the State, Brigadier General George Innih, who gave a section of the Kwara State College of Technology at Agbo-Oba Area to the University to serve as its temporary site. In addition, the governor gave the 10 hectares of land on which the University GRA quarters are currently located. The Principal started with four members of staff comprising two Administrative Officers, one driver and one Clerk /Typist. Subsequently, other principal officers were appointed for the University. They were the Registrar, Mr. Olu Daramola, the Bursar, Mr. I. A. Oyawoye, and the Librarian, Mr. B. A. Oni-Orisan. The Director of Works was Engr. R. A. Imohiosen. By 1977 the total staff strength of the University was 615. This has risen to 3,476 by the 2013/2014 academic year. In 1977, the College was upgraded to a full-fledged University and the Principal became the pioneer Vice-Chancellor.

Growth in Student Enrolment

On Saturday, October 23, 1976, 200 of the candidates who passed an entrance examination conducted by the University College became the foundation students. They were admitted into residence that day. On Monday, October 25, academic activities began after the Principal's maiden address at about 10.00a.m. in the Africa Hall. This was followed by registration of the students into the three foundation faculties, namely: Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Education and Faculty of Science, headed by Prof. O. Awobuluyi, Prof. J.O.O. Abiri, and Prof. M.O. Olofinboba respectively as Deans. The distribution of the 200 foundation students is as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Foundation Students' Enrolment, 1976

Faculty	Enrolment		
	Male	Female	Total
Arts	57	4	61
Education	92	16	108
Science	26	5	31
Total	175	25	200

Source: Academic Support Services' Records

The initial student population of 200 in 1976 has increased to 18,488 by the 2000/2001 session. The many factors responsible for this feat include the good name the University has made for itself, the high quality of the graduates produced, the tradition of maintaining a stable academic calendar, high moral standard coupled with academic excellence and the University's beautiful and serene environment. It has become the most preferred university by candidates seeking university admission in Nigeria for some years now. It is remarkable to note that the University has been able to attract students from all the States in the country

including the Federal Capital Territory except Zamfara State. In addition, in line with the University's internationalisation policy, it has also been able to attract students from foreign countries. Indeed, right from its inception, 2 of the 200 foundation students were foreigners.

In order to increase access to higher education, the University introduced Remedial programmes in its Arts and Science disciplines through which candidates who have the potentials for university education are assisted to remedy the deficiencies in their entry qualifications. Apart from further increasing students' intake, this has also assisted in addressing the issue of gaps in access to higher education for youths from the educationally disadvantaged areas of the country.

Postgraduate studies commenced in the University in 1978, precisely in the Faculty of Science which enrolled 2 students for the M.Sc degree programme in the Department of Biological Sciences. Since then, other departments in the University have been running Postgraduate Diploma, Master and Ph.D degrees in academic and professional disciplines. The University established the Postgraduate School on 8th November, 1983 to coordinate all postgraduate activities and ensure the effective training of postgraduate students that would lead to the expansion of the frontiers of knowledge and enhance national development.

Growth of the Faculties

From three faculties at inception in 1976, the University in 2000 metamorphosed into an eight-faculty citadel of learning. They evolved as shown in Table 2:

Table 2: Growth of Faculties, 1976-2000

S/No	Faculty	Year of Establishment
1	Arts	1976
2	Education	1976
3	Science	1976
4	Health Sciences	1977
5	Engineering & Technology	1978
6	Business & Social Sciences	1981
7	Agriculture	1982
8	Law	1983

Infrastructural Development

The University soon realised that the section of the College of Technology ceded to it by the State Government was inadequate to meet its ever-increasing student and staff population and the requirement of space for administrative, teaching, and learning purposes. It therefore, embarked on the physical development on the Temporary Site. Consequently, a new administrative block, lecture halls, students' hostels, staff offices, clinic, works yard, recreational facilities (gymnasium, football pitch, basketball court, etc.), students' cafeteria, staff club, staff quarters were built along with the expansion of an existing library and the construction and upgrading of internal roads. Other structures developed were the Bakery, Guest House, the University Press, and a Petrol Station to boost the University's Internally Generated Revenue (IGR). Simultaneously, the University embarked on the provision of accommodation for staff on the piece of land donated to it by the Kwara State Government in the Government Reservation Area (GRA) of the town. Within the same period, the Muslim and Christian communities built a Mosque and a Church, respectively, on the Temporary Site.

The municipal services were inadequate to meet the needs of the University. Therefore, it had to develop and maintain additional facilities to augment the existing ones. These included the construction of the power station, and water tanks, as well as the acquisition of water tankers.

The University in the 1977/78 session engaged the services of a consortium of professionals, Messrs Concarplan-Enplan Group, to design a master plan for the physical development of its main campus. The turning of the first sod took place in 1977 by Brigadier George Innih, the Military Governor of Kwara State after which construction of physical structures commenced. These included blocks of lecture rooms, staff offices, teaching laboratories, lecture theatres, students' hostels and the access road to the University from the town, which served as the nucleus of the University's physical infrastructure. By December 1981, the construction of eight blocks of students' hostels and the buildings for the Faculties of Science, Engineering and Technology (Blocks 1-10) on the site had been completed. Consequently, these faculties moved to the site in 1982, and the University started operating a dual-campus system. The Faculties of Agriculture and Law were built on the site in 1985 and 1996 respectively.

The University library was opened in 1976 at the Temporary Site. Later in 1977, it was restructured and it housed the initial library holdings comprising 7,314 books, 594 journals made up of 1,500 volumes, and 63 Government Publications. The University Library was built on the Main Campus in 1990.

The library benefitted from the kind gesture of some corporate bodies and individuals who donated materials to boost its collections. Some foundation staff who donated books included Prof. J.O.O. Abiri, Prof. I.A.B. Balogun, Prof. M.O. Olofinboba, Prof. E.H.O. Parry, Prof. T.O. Aro, and Prof. M.O.

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Fawole. Corporate donors in Nigeria included Lambo Foundation, the Central Bank of Nigeria, Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), and the National Universities Commission (NUC) while international donors included the British Council, World Health Organisation (WHO), the World Bank (10,618 volumes), and Books for Africa (5,211 volumes).

The dual-campus system had implication for the running of the University. First, staff and students had to commute between the mini and main campuses for the purposes of teaching, learning and administration. The University, therefore, had to acquire vehicles to ease movement. Occasionally, this posed a challenge to the University in the form of student unrest and agitation.

The second implication of the dual-campus system was inadequate students' accommodation, which became rather impossible for the University Administration to cope with. This was in spite of the Federal Government's policy that universities were required to accommodate 20% of their students' population. Although the University was able to accommodate all the students in its halls of residence, it was compelled to introduce an off-campus system in the 1980/81 session. To address this problem, the University embarked on an appeal mission to corporate organisations and individuals. Among those that responded to this call were the Kwara State Government, the Central Bank of Nigeria, Alhaji Sulaiman Akande (Onward Fisheries Nigeria Limited), Dr. Wale Babalakin (SAN), Mallam Yusuf Ali (SAN), and Alhaji Raimi Oladimeji all of whom donated hostel blocks to the University.

Staff Capacity Development

The University attracted both academic and non-academic staff from virtually every part of Nigeria probably because of its central geographical location and the deliberate

efforts of the Administration. In order to achieve the acclaimed universal concept the University engaged the services of the Inter-University Council (IUC) London Office to assist in recruiting foreign world-class academics.

At inception, the University embarked on rigorous capacity-building through its robust Staff Development Programme. Junior academic staff were encouraged to pursue higher degree programmes at any University in Nigeria and overseas. Several of them took advantage of this opportunity. This enhanced the quality of teaching and learning in the University. There was also a provision for the development for non-academic staff. In addition, staff in the two categories benefited from sponsorship to attend conferences and workshops locally and internationally, in order for them to be current in their respective disciplines.

Staff and Student Welfare

The University has been able to retain its quality staff and sustain excellence as espoused in its mission statement. It has consciously provided the necessary conducive environment and demonstrated commitment to staff welfare. The University ensured the promotion of staff when due and provided facilities for their total well-being. The needs of families of staff, in terms of the education of their children/wards and health issues, were prioritised. Security of life and property of staff was guaranteed while recreational facilities and municipal services were also extended to them at moderate charges.

Similarly, the welfare of the students was given priority by the University. For instance, the Student Affairs Unit was created in the Vice Chancellor's office while the Students' Welfare Committee was put in place to sustain and improve students' welfare. At the beginning of every session, the Student Affairs Unit would organise an orientation programme

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for new students. This largely ensured peace and tranquility on the campus.

It was mandatory for all the students' clubs and associations to register with the Student Affairs Unit to ensure the proper monitoring of their activities. In an attempt to bridge the gap between the University Administration and students and to inculcate leadership ability in the students membership of some committees was extended to the students. Such committees included Students' Welfare, Sports, Students' Disciplinary and Ceremonials.

Leadership Succession, 1976-2000

The mustard seed of the University of Ilorin planted in 1976, no doubt, has blossomed into an oak. The following had in succession between 1976 and 2000, been at the helm of affairs of the University in various capacities and contributed immensely to the realisation of the dreams of its founding fathers:

Visitors to the University

1. General Muritala Mohammed (1975 - 1976)
2. General Olusegun Obasanjo (1976 - 1979)
3. President Alhaji Aliyu Shehu Shagari (1979 - 1983)
4. Major-General Muhammadu Buhari (January 1984 – August 1985)
5. Major-General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida (August 1985- August 1993)
6. Chief Ernest Shonekan (August 1993 – November 1993)
7. General Sanni Abacha (November 1993 – June 1998)
8. General Abdulsalam Abubakar (June 1998 – 1999)
9. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (May 1999 – May 2007)

Chancellors

1. HRH Umar Sulaiman (Emir of Bedde) (1978-1981)
2. HRH Shekarau Angyu Masa-Ibi II (Aku Uka of Wukari) (1981-2000)
3. HRH Justice Ambrose Allagoa (Amayanabo of Nembe) (2000-2006)

Pro-Chancellors

1. HRH Justice Ambrose Allagoa (1978-1982)
2. Mr F. O. Ihenacho (April 1983-December 1983)
3. Alhaji A. R. Zayyad (1984-1986)
4. Prof T. M. Yesufu (1986-1990)
5. Prof C. O. Taiwo (1990-1993)
- 6 Alhaji Abdu Gusau (1993- 1994)
7. Dr N. E. Nwauwa (1994-1997) (Acting)
8. Alhaji M. B. Karfi (Wazirin Bauchi) (1997-1999)
9. Lt. Gen. Salihu Ibrahim (2000-2004)

Principals

1. Prof T.N. Tamuno (September –December 1975)
2. Prof O. O. Akinkugbe (December 1975- October 1977)

Vice-Chancellors

1. Prof O. O. Akinkugbe (October 1977-October 1978)
2. Prof A. O. Adesola (1978-1981)
3. Prof S.A. Toye (1981-1985)
4. Prof A. Adeniyi (1985-1992)
5. Prof J. O. Oyinloye (1992-1997)
6. Prof S.O. Abdulraheem (1997-2002)

Deputy Vice-Chancellors

1. Prof A.F. Ogunsola (1980-1981)
2. Prof O.O. Ogunremi (1985-1988)

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- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 3. Prof I.E. Owolabi | (1988-1992) |
| 4. Prof M.O. Fawole | (1992-1997) |
| 5. Prof I.I. Ihimodu | (Admin 1998-2000) |
| 6. Prof O.O. Balogun | (Acad. 1998-2000 & Admin 2000-2002) |
| 7. Prof F.L. Bello-Ochende | (Acad. 2000-2002) |

Registrars

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. Mr Olu Daramola | (1976-1985) |
| 2. Mr A. O. A. Alao | (1985-1997) |
| 3. Mr M. T. Balogun | (1997 -2002) |

Bursars

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| 1. Mr I.A. Oyawoye | (1976-1980) |
| 2. Mr I.A. Adeniran | (1983-1985) |
| 3. Mr O.O. Fajimolu | (1985-1995) |
| 4. Mr J.O. Adewuyi | (1995-2001) |

Deans of Faculties /Postgraduate School/ Student Affairs

Faculty of Agriculture

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1. Prof L.B. Olugbemi | 1983-1985 |
| 2. Prof D.S. Adegboye | 1985-1989 |
| 3. Prof O.O. Balogun | 1989-1993 |
| 4. Prof J.O. Babatola | 1993-1997 |
| 5. Prof R.O. Fadayomi | 1997-2001 |

Faculty of Arts

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Prof O. Awobuluyi | 1976-1980 |
| 2. Prof I.A.B. Balogun | 1980-1984 |
| 3. Prof Ade Obayemi | 1984-1987 |
| 4. Prof Oludare Olajubu | 1987-1992 |
| 5. Prof P.A. Dopamu | 1992-1996 |

6. Prof Sam A. Adewoye	Oct. – Nov. 1996
7. Prof Y.A. Quadri	1996-1998
8. Prof Akanji Nasiru	1998-2000
9. Prof E. E. Adegbija	2000-March, 2001

Faculty of Business and Social Sciences

1. Prof S.O. Onakomaiya	1981-1984
2. Prof J.O. Oyebanji	1984-1989
3. Prof I.I. Ihimodu	1989-1991
4. Prof A.A. Ogunsanya	1991-1995 & 1998-2000
5. Prof I.O. Taiwo	2000-2004

Faculty of Education

1. Prof J.O.O. Abiri	1976-1980
2. Prof Segun Adesina	1980-1984
3. Prof J.B. Ipaye	1984-1986
4. Prof A.D. Olutola	1986-1989
5. Prof A.A. Adeyinka	1991-1994
6. Prof Aliyu Abdullahi	1994-1996
7. Prof M. Lasun Emiola	1996- 1998
8. Prof A.I. Idowu	1998-2002

Faculty of Engineering & Technology

1. Prof V.O.S. Olunloyo	1978-1980
2. Prof I.E. Owolabi	1980-1984
3. Prof B.J. Olufeagba	1984-1988
4. Prof S.O. Adeyemi	1988-1989
5. Prof J.S.O. Adeniyi	1990-1994
6. Prof F.L. Bello Ochende	1994-1998
7. Prof K.C. Oni	1998-2001

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Faculty of Health Sciences

1. Prof E.H.O. Parry	1977 – 1979
2. Prof Adeoye Adeniyi	1979 – 1984
3. Prof O. O. Ogunremi	1984 – 1985
4. Prof O. K. Alausa	1985 – 1985
5. Prof Ayoola Olatunde	1985 – 1986
6. Prof O. Ogunbode	1986 – 1990
7. Prof Funsho Komolafe	1990 – 1994
8. Prof B. A. Onile	1994 – 1996
9. Prof M. A. Araoye	1996 – 2000
10. Prof A. O. Soladoye	2000 – 2004

Faculty of Law

1. Prof J.O. Oyebanji	1994-1997 (Coordinator)
2. Prof M.T. AbdulRazaq	1998-2000
3. Prof A. Zubair	2000-2001

Faculty of Science

1. Prof M.O. Olafinboba	1976-1980
2. Prof J.O. Oyinloye	1980-1984
3. Prof V.L.A. Yoloye	1984-1988
4. Prof M.A. Mesubi	1988-1992
5. Prof S.O. Oduleye	1992-1996
6. Prof O.S. Adegboye	1996-2000
7. Prof S.O. Akande	2000-2002

The Postgraduate School

1. Prof M.O. Olofinboba	1983-1984
2. Prof T.O. Aro	1984-1986
3. Prof M.O. Fawole	1986-1991
4. Prof M.A. Ibiejugba	1991-1995
5. Prof A. A. Adesiyun	1995-1999
6. Prof I.A. Awogun	1999-2001

Student Affairs

1. Prof M.O. Fagbule	1987-1989
2. Prof S.O. Oyewole	1989-1993
3. Prof Olu Obafemi	1993-1997
4. Prof O.A. Ogunsaju	1997-2001

Librarians (1976 - 2000)

1. Mr B.A. Oni-Orisan	1976-1990
2. Mr Dokun Fadiran	1990-1991 (Acting)
3. Mr R.A. Ukoh	1992-1994 (Acting)
4. Mr S.O. Fowowe	1994-2001

Directors of Works

1. Engr Imuoshen, R.A.	-	Director of Works 1976-1978
2. Engr Sen. Gupta (Indian)	-	Ag. Director of works 1978
3. Engr Owoeye, S.A.	-	Officer-in-Charge 1978-1981 Ag. Director of Works 1981-1983 Director of Works 1983- 1985 (Feb)
4. Engr Kumar S. (Indian)	-	Officer-in-charge Feb 1985-1986
5. Engr A.A. Adesiyun	-	Officer-in-Charge 1986-July 1987
6. Engr P.K. Oyatoye	-	Director of works July, 1987-July 2004

Conclusion

The University of Ilorin began humbly as a university college and today has attained the status of a world-class citadel of learning. It is clear from the above presentation that for an acorn to become an oak, quite a number of things are required. In the case of the University of Ilorin such things included an enabling environment, right thinking and purposeful leadership, which the successive leadership of the University provided. It must be said that the different qualitative academic programmes and the stable and predictable academic calendar were no mean attractions to prospective students. The high sense of duty and dedication demonstrated by the staff and the maturity and determination of the students to succeed also contributed immensely towards making an oak of the University of Ilorin.