

**ILORIN IN THE HISTORY  
OF NIGERIA**

*A Collection of  
My Addresses*

**1987 - 2011**

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*By*

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AMBALI (OFR, FISN)**

## DEDICATION

The author, deservingly dedicates this book: **Ilorin In The History of Nigeria** to his good friend, Alhaji Mudi Adebayo Gold in appreciation of his commitment to the development of our fatherland, Ilorin. Alhaji Mahmud's unparalleled patriotism reflects in his active participation in planning and executing all programmes and projects of development embarked upon by Ilorin Emirate Descendants Union. He remains very involved in the Union's progressive activities when many of his colleagues have promoted themselves to the Union is elder statesmen.

In our days of Ilorin Descendants Students Union, he was one of those dynamic and forward-looking members who championed the founding of Ilorin Grammar School, in 1967. Similarly, he was in the front line of the champions of establishing Ballah Community Secondary School, in Asa Local Government of Kwara State by the umbrella organization for all the development-oriented organizations in the Ilorin Emirate. Under Mr. Gold's leadership as the President of the mother Union, Ilorin Comprehensive High School, Ilorin came to life.

Today Mr. Gold plays the role of a pivot to revive and sustain Ilorin Solidarity Club. He is our indefatigable and all in all Secretary as he was a star member of defunct Okemale Social Club, Ilorin. Mahmud was a co-founder of the Center for Islamic Enlightenment. The catalogue of Alhaji Mudi's patriotic involvements cannot be exhausted. His love of our people demonstrates the words of Allah: **Say, continue to struggle, Allah will soon recognize your efforts, so is His Apostle And the faithful (the public at large) Quran. 9:105.** Mr. M.A Gold, we salute your love for Ilorin. Mr Gold you have written your name in gold.

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## FOREWORD

I consider it a great privilege to be asked by the scholarly **Abdulmuttalib Ahmad Ambali** OFR to write a foreword to the book **Ilorin in the History of Nigeria - a collection of my addresses 1987-2011**. The book is a compendium of speeches delivered at various for a between the year 1987 and 2011.

In chapter one of the book, the writer dealt with the topic 'Western Education in an Islamic Town, Ilorin, Prospects and Development'. In a very classic manner, he made an analytic exposition of the history, growth and development of Ilorin as a small village under the suzerainty of old Oyo Empire until it became the great Islamic city that it is today. Fascinating deed is the account given about the various Alafins of Oyo, their iniquitous acts, and unjust treatment of their people and the nobility led to the decay and decline of the old Oyo Empire. He opined that while the influence of Oyo continued to wane, Ilorin on the other hand with the military and religious support it had from Sokoto and Gusau in the North of the country, Ilorin continued to wax stronger and stronger and in no time became a citadel of Islamic scholarship, knowledge and learning largely due to the combined efforts of the pious Sheikh Alimi and his Jama'a as well as the other Yoruba Alias like Sholagberu.

Of great interest, however, is the discourse made by the author on the critical introduction of Western Education to Ilorin. In the course of his discourse, the author not unexpectedly made a throng critique of what appeared to him to be a sell-serving form of education, introduced by the colonialists and the imperialist in order to achieve their own selfish end. This last but thought provoking exposition in chapter one of the work will undoubtedly give readers food for thought.

In chapter 2 of the book, the writer dealt with the topic 'Ilorin Descendants Progressive Union (IDPU) and the Challenges of our time", and gave a chronological account of the history, and development of the union right from inception to date. He catalogued the various achievements recorded over the years and identified those short comings and lapses which have been a hindrance and a draw back in the march

to progress and development especially in the area of education and pursuit of knowledge. He boldly drew attention to and made a comparative study of institution founded by the Union or related organizations and on balance held that the I.D.P.U needed to do more to catch up with rival organizations and associations, and threw up challenges and proffered solutions which would make the I.D.P.U the pride of the people.

The third chapter dealt with the topical issue of "Arabic contribution to contemporary Nigerian Literature: The Ilorin legacy". This paper which was delivered by the author under the aegis of Association of Nigerian Authors is very unique in the sense that it tells not only the history of some great Islamic teachers, and scholars but also their invaluable contributions to scholarship, Arabic poetic thoughts, and Quranic exigencies. Much emphasis was laid on the work of that outstanding historian of all times Ahmed Ibn Abubakar (of Ile Itakoro) and the scholarly teacher who modernized the study of Arabic, Sheikh Muhammad Kamalud-deen who because of the profundity of the knowledge and erudition was described by sheikh Adam Al-Ilory as the 'miracle of his time'-UjubatuzZaman.

Sheikh Abdullahi Al-Ilory himself was also acknowledged by the author to be a scholar of no mean repute, a prolific writer of Arabic prose and an outstanding historian whose contribution of Islamic knowledge, learning and scholarship, like the two before him, is unquantifiable. In sum, chapter three of this book is a must read for all those who thirst for knowledge.

The last chapter of the book zeroed on the "Socio-cultural economic and Educational challenges of Ilorin Community Today". It is a summation of the historical, cultural, economic, social and educational challenges, development and achievements of Ilorin as an original traditional Yoruba settlement till it became a powerful emirate made up of Yorubas, Fulanis, Hausas, Nupes, Baruba, Kanuris et al. The author drew attention to the influx of people from the North and South of the country which diluted the culture of the original inhabitants, and impacted on their social, religious

and economic values in a manner that clearly turned Ilorin into unique society. The writer observed that in the past, the people of Ilorin apart from being great Muslim scholars were also known to be outstanding craftsmen and tradesmen and tradesmen, such that the changes brought about by the cultural hegemony with their "guests" undoubtedly had a costly toll on the economic and social well-being of her people.

In the area of education, the writer gave commendation to patriotic indigenes of Ilorin and the distinguished guests of the community "for their steadfastness in the promotion of education, particularly to the founding of Ilorin United School (Primary)" -He also appreciated that both groups did not allow 'differences in religious beliefs to distract them from pursuing and achieving their common lofty goal". No doubt this is a great lesson for us all.

The writer did a good job in identifying other well meaning indigenes, groups and associations like the Ilorin Descendants Students Union (IDSU), and the Ilorin Native Authority who pioneered the establishment of Ilorin Grammar School in 1967 and gave kudos to the Ilorin Descendants Progressive Union for establishing six secondary schools in the Emirate in 1980. And so, during the Chairmanship, of Mudi Gold when the IDPU in 1995, the umbrella organization (IDPU) founded the Ilorin.

Characteristically, the writer in the closing chapter of his work threw up challenges to the elites, the leaders of our society, Local Government administrators, the IEDPU and other stake holders, to initiate programmes and plans which would ensure speedy and far reaching developments in the area of works, education, health services, library, market etc. he also advised on the re-invigoration of the I.E.D.P.U, and/or the establishment of an alternative organization that is capable of arresting the deteriorating situation of the times. He concluded that the local government should also be re-vitalized to perform better than they are doing now.

On the whole, this book contains minefields of information on the history, growth, achievements, and development of Ilorin emirate. It is a product of a fertile

mind. So, I recommend it to all those desiring their store of knowledge of Ilorin and its people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M.M.A. Akanbi', written in a cursive style.

**Hon. Justice M.M.A. Akanbi CFR, PCA(Rtd),**

*Wakili Ilory and Chairman, Mustapha Akanbi Foundation*

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