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FROM TRADITIONALISM TO DEMOCRATIC RADICALISM: A RE-EXAMINATION OF THE ILORIN TALAKA PARAPO PHENOMENON, 1954-1958

Ismail Salihu Otukoko, _____

Abstract

The period of decolonization in Nigeria (1950-1960) was characterized by diverse struggles at various levels. Among the most noticeable developments during the decade are party politics, electoral, political and other forms of struggle for power as well as separatist and minority agitations. Within the defunct Northern Region, the Ilorin emirate was the first to experiment with democratic local government. It therefore had its own fair share of the emergent contestations. In Ilorin town, the headquarters of the Ilorin Emirate, the unfolding events associated with the emergent struggles revolved around the colonial reforms aimed at democratizing the local government. The reforms, which started in the early 1950s, resulted in a struggle for the control of Ilorin between the hitherto privileged traditional ruling class and the underprivileged class of commoners. Within a period of five years, Ilorin was shaken to its very foundations by the phenomenal rise and fall of a commoners' movement known as the Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP)—a movement that emerged as a champion of "tradition" but ended up as a major "enemy" of Ilorin traditional institutions and their interests. In view of the confusing signals given out by the ITP at its inception coupled with Ilorin's peculiar circumstance both as a border territory between the North and South of Nigeria and as the only "Fulani Emirate" in Yoruba land, the ethnic conflict framework has dominated analysis of the rise and transformation of the Ilorin Commoners' movement. Such framework, however, ignores the multi-ethnic composition of Ilorin town and of the initial membership of the Ilorin Talaka Parapo itself. This paper argues that the ITP was not essentially an anti-Fulani movement by Ilorin Yoruba groups; that the party's initial commitment to tradition owed much to the local political situation in Ilorin town while its eventual advocacy for democratic radicalism was mainly a product of its transformation from a multi-ethnic based grassroots movement to a vehicle for Yoruba irredentism and ethnic nationalism that dominated the last decade of colonial rule in Nigeria.

Introduction

The emergence and collapse of the ITP, which in effect led to the termination of the first experiment in democratizing local government in Northern Nigeria, have received some scholarly attention. This is attested to by

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available works on the ITP, which have shed some light on various aspects of the movement.ⁱ It is observed, however, that some developments within Ilorin town, which would have helped to explain the phenomenon that was ITP, have not been adequately considered in virtually all the available works on the movement. These include its origin, initial 'ideological ambivalence', its sudden and, in Whitaker's words, "chameleon-like transformation" from "traditionalism" to "democratic radicalism". This paper revisits the ITP phenomenon during the period 1954-1958 through an analysis of those neglected issues and developments that were germane to the origin, traditionalism and transformation of the ITP from a supporter of "tradition" to an advocate of 'radical democratization' and a vehicle of opposition to the traditional ruling elite in Ilorin, which interest it had originally sought to protect.

Background to the Discontent of the Talakawa: Ilorin 1945-1954.

Though the ITP emerged in 1954, available evidence suggests that its origins are connected with developments within Ilorin town, particularly within the Ilorin Town Council (hereafter ITC) and Native Authority Council (NAC) between 1945 and 1954. The council was set up in 1939 with the major Ilorin traditional chiefs (the four Balogun, Magaji Are, Baba Isale and Magajin Gari) and eleven sub-ward heads) as members. It was charged with the supervision of town affairs.ⁱⁱ Between 1945 and 1954, there was further re-organization of the ITC. In 1945, fourteen non-traditional members were nominated into the ITC. Most of these were commoners; small scale business entrepreneurs.ⁱⁱⁱ They operated as councilors under the general supervision of the major town ward heads. In September 1952, twenty-four members who were mostly wealthy entrepreneurs were elected into the council.^{iv} Unlike in 1945, none of the traditional chiefs became a member of the elected council in 1952 either through election or nomination by the Emir's Native Authority Council (NAC), which had been given reserved power to inject any non-elected traditional member into the new Council'. Until the full implementation of the local government reforms by 1956, both ITC and NAC were purely advisory bodies with no executive powers.

The tenure of the elected ITC inaugurated in October 1952 was to terminate in October 1955.^{vi} In line with the on-going reform of local government in the emirate, the ITC, like other subordinate councils, was to serve as an electoral college for election of members into the Ilorin NAC in 1953.^{vii} While other subordinate councils returned mostly "traditional" members into the 70-member Ilorin NAC^{viii}, the Ilorin and Offa Town Councils returned six and two non-traditional members respectively. Nearly all the new councilors belonged to the emergent commercial class of wealthy entrepreneurs with no traditional office, title or "high birth". Specifically, the members elected from

ITC included four "Traders" (one of whom had been identified as a "money lender" in the list of Town Councilors elected in 1952), one "Lorry Owner" and one "Contactor".^{ix}

The above indicates that in both the ITC and NAC, wealthy members of the town were already gaining ground. This situation became a source of concern for the Colonial Resident because by the end of 1953, it had started to generate a considerable measure of discontent and an increasing demand for representation of the "commons" especially on the ITC.^x Available records show that the Igbo community in Ilorin was among the groups of taxpayers to raise the question of the representation of the "commons" on the ITC.^{xi} The genesis of the Ilorin Talaka Parapo as a political movement partly derived from representation on the ITC. At inception, the question of representation originally concerned the exclusion of Ilorin's traditional chiefs from the Town Council and the activities of the elected councilors, which the movement considered to be against the wellbeing of the common people and contrary to democratic practice. The movement's initial activities were given further impetus by the structural changes that attended the reform of local government. The reform, in effect, led to a struggle for power between the traditional chiefs on the one hand and members of the emergent business class on the Ilorin NAC by 1954-5, on the other hand.

The discontent of the *Talakawa*, (commoners) had its roots in a situation where wealthy individuals had come to dominate the ITC to the detriment of the *Talakawa* some of whom had previously been council members in the 1940s. Such wealthy individuals had reportedly constituted obstacle to equitable and effective tax assessment in Ilorin town up to the early 1950s when the commoners had borne the burden of incessant increase in taxation.^{xii} An additional cause for concern was the fact that, with the local government reforms, the advisory ITC was to be given more statutory powers and authority including the power to raise rates.^{xiii} This explains why representation on the ITC including its activities and the question of taxation dominated ITP's early activities.

Contrary to impressions given in previous studies of the ITP, it was the ITC and not the Central NAC that was ITP's original target of criticism at its inception. The eventual connection between the ITP and the Central NAC derived from the fact that those wealthy individuals, who had exerted much influence on the Emir's Council before 1953, had by 1954 become important members of the Emir's Full Council, as reformed. Such wealthy councilors were equally bent on reducing the powers and privileges of the traditional chiefs. This situation became a major source of concern for the traditional members of the NAC especially the Balogun. By late 1954 it had become evident that the reform proposals by C. W. Michie would bring about further reform of the local government (NA) system in the emirate and that much power would change

hand in effect. Part of the reform program was to decentralize the business and authority of the NAC (hitherto wielded by the traditional chiefs) through the establishment of sub-committees and the delegation of more powers and authority outwardly to such committees and downwardly to subordinate councils in the emirate.

The process of devolving the authority and business of the Ilorin NAC to sub-committees—a step that “seemed to [traditional leaders] to sap the very foundations of the Native Authority as they had known it”^{xiv}—started late 1954. By that time, the reorganized NAC had held four “Full” meetings and regular “Quorum” meetings. In the course of these meetings, a serious struggle for power ensued between the old, non-literate, non-elected traditional members, on the one hand, and the literate, elected and younger councilors on the other hand.^{xv} This situation represented the first major challenge to the powers and privileges of the traditional chiefs from the ordinary citizens albeit wealthy commoners. This pushed the Ilorin traditional elite into what has been described as the launching of “an indirect but decisive [counter] attack on the New Councilors” through their contacts with the Ilorin Talaka Parapo in late 1954.^{xvi} The ‘new councilors’ included those with whom the ITP also had scores to settle concerning the composition and activities of the ITC. Prominent among these were Saadu Alanamu, a member of the Balogun Alanamu family who was then the NA Chief Scribe, Chairman of the local NPC and one of the non-elected members of the NAC, Buari Edun (a money lender), Durosinlorun Isale Oja and Ibrahim Laaro (both transporters), Tafa Olodo (a trader) and Yahaya Adabata (a contractor).^{xvii}

The Founding of the ITP and its initial Traditionalism, 1954-56

The nucleus of the Ilorin Talaka Parapo was originally a group of purely commercial orientation known as *Ilorin Parapo* (Ilorin United) organized around early 1950s to run a bus transport service. Its members included some wealthy Ilorin businessmen involved in different commercial activities cattle trade, commercial transport service and general trading^{xviii}. This ‘club of business associates’ split into two rival factions on the question of political leadership when party politics and the Northern Peoples’ Congress (NPC—the only political party in Ilorin then) was introduced to its members by Sule Moyito. The two factions were led by Alhaji Busari Isale Oja, (a lorry magnate), and Moyito (a cattle dealer).^{xix} Though largely non-literate but politically informed, Moyito’s splinter group chose his residence at Isale Aluko, as opposed to Busari Isale Oja’s residence, as its meeting point before it formally became known as the “Ilorin Talaka Parapo” (Ilorin Commoners’ Union/Party or literally “Ilorin poor people united”) around late 1954.^{xx}

Although Moyito and a number of his initial supporters were among the wealthy in Ilorin then, available evidence indicates some reasons why the

splinter group added the term "*Talaka*" to its name. First, it seems that members of the group probably had some genuine concerns for the plight of the commoners. Secondly, the bulk of supporters which Moyito's splinter group attracted was made up of the unprivileged "commoners" as different from the "wealthy" and "privileged" (at least politically) that constituted the other splinter group, some of whom were members of the ITC and NAC as at 1954. As indicated in a *Waka* (traditional song) by one Dodo Oniwaka, Moyito seems to have been originally concerned with the suffering of the poor masses rather than in any tussle for leadership or chieftaincy. The song goes thus:

*Anu Talaka lo nse Moito, Anu Talaka lo nse Moito
Moito ko lo ba je, koloye 'du, anu Talaka lo nse Moito.*^{xxi}

Meaning:

'Moito only pities the wretched', (2ice). 'Moito never wishes to be king nor is he interested in any contest for chieftaincy: Moito only pities the wretched'.

There is also a report which suggests that ITP supporters believed that the party "looked after the interests of the common people [unlike] the earlier parties whose leaders knew only themselves and their kin".^{xxii} Some of the issues raised in the petition the ITP authored in 1955, as will be discussed shortly, buttress this assertion. It is, however, not impossible that Moyito might have decided to capitalize on the lot of the "*Talakawa*" to attract large following in the course of his initial struggle for political leadership of the Ilorin Parapo with Busari Isale Oja. Thus, by the time the Balogun decided to 'launch their indirect but decisive attack' by recruiting Moyito's group against some of the ITC councilors on the NAC who belonged to the other splinter group of the Ilorin Parapo, the ITP had already been formed, though not yet a formal political organization. It was then more or less a social organization cum pressure group that was obviously not uninformed about the local politics, at least in Ilorin Town.

In view of the power struggle on the NAC and the domination of the ITC by the wealthy members of the community, the Ilorin Balogun established contact with the Ilorin Talaka Parapo through one Olokoba Alanamu, a member of the group, "to help release them from the rapacious councilors' hook".^{xxiii} As available evidence suggests, this apparent intrigue of the privileged traditional chiefs with the unprivileged commoners against the emergent wealthy entrepreneur-politicians can be dated to late 1954.^{xxiv} The reported appeal of the Balogun to the Commoners Party, the root of its 'traditionalism', seems to aim at preparing the electorate (mostly *Talakawa*) through the ITP for the next elections into the Town Council later in 1955. The chiefs' move, albeit not without ulterior motives, was in line with the pre-election procedure set down in 1952 concerning the ITC. According to the instrument, the final elections into the Ilorin Town Council were to be "preceded by intensive propaganda

campaign arranged by members of the Emir's Council who would delegate people to go to each large compound or group of compounds in the town and explain to them the significance of the elections and what was required of them."^{xxv} Given the situation at the NAC, the apparent motive of the traditional chiefs was to ensure that the wealthy, troublesome businessmen-politicians on the reformed NAC were not re-elected into the ITC from where they had found their way to the Central NAC. Thus, following the tête-à-tête between the Balogun and the Talaka Parapo, several open air meetings were organized by the ITP in different parts of Ilorin in early 1955.

At its first open air meeting held at Balogun Alanamu's premises on January 27, 1955, the ITP reportedly explained that its "plan [was] for a party that would liberate the Traditional Rulers and the beloved Emir Abdul-Kadir from the New Councilors and their collaborators outside the Council who constituted themselves as cogs in the wheel of progress."^{xxvi} This account agrees with colonial reports that at inception, "[t]he Parapo's political objectives have not yet been fully defined but it is already clear they aim at restoring the former power and authority of the Emir and Chiefs" and at reducing taxation.^{xxvii} Similar open-air meetings were held at the compounds of other major Ilorin traditional ward heads between 30th January (*Balogun Ajikobi's*), 1st February (*Magajin Gari's*), 4th February (*Balogun Gambari's*) and 6th February 1955 (*Magaji Are's*). In his report, the Colonial Resident noted that attendance at such "many meetings" of ITP in Ilorin town "averaged a thousand persons" although that at Magaji Are's compound, according to another unofficial account, recorded the 'heaviest crowd attendance'.^{xxviii} These public political or party meetings (hitherto describes as a novelty in the whole of Ilorin Province in 1954) were held by the ITP in January 1955 and not early 1954.^{xxix}

It would appear that the impressive turnouts at those early public meetings organized by the ITP, which might be likened to "the intensive propaganda campaigns" preparatory to the Town Council elections^{xxx}, encouraged the traditional chiefs in their struggle with the councilors on the NAC following the acceleration of the local government reforms. In April 1955, for instance, the chiefs are reported to have "revolted" against the whittling away of their powers and privileges by the younger and literate councilors.^{xxxi} The immediate cause of the revolt was said to have been a proposal that only literate councilors should be appointed chairmen of committees and the decision that educated councilors would receive more salaries and allowances than the non-literate traditional leaders.^{xxxii}

Another major source of grievance both of the traditional chiefs and the Talakawa was the situation in which the wealthy councilors were awarding contracts of the Ilorin township water projects to themselves. This development further pushed the traditional chiefs into spurring the ITP into more political actions. As noted in the 1956 Annual Report, "[a]t that time [April 1955] there is

no doubt that some of the important traditional members of the Council temporarily cast their lot with the then conservatively-minded Ilorin Talaka Parapo".^{xxxiii} Thus, the chiefs' "revolt" in April 1955 was followed by two important events namely the formal transformation of the ITP into a political organization on May 1st 1955 and, exactly a month later, its petition to the Native Authority demanding the dissolution of the ITC as then constituted.^{xxxiv} The petition, ITP's first major action after its transformation to a political organization, abundantly indicates that the party had up till then been mainly an Ilorin town based movement that was loyal to the traditional authorities. It also indicates that the movement essentially directed its major attacks against the ITC and not the Native Authority or the "oppressive" traditional ruling elite as given in some of the previous examinations of the origin and transformation of the movement.

In the five-paragraph petition dated June 1, 1955, the ITP leveled five major allegations against the ITC councilors. Topping the list is the submission that all the people in Ilorin had, during enquiries concerning the local government reforms, "unanimously agreed and decided" to have all the Ilorin principal ward chiefs (the four Balogun, Magaji Are and Magajin Gari) as members of the ITC. This, they claimed, was not what the ITC members had presented to the commission of enquiry, an attitude they described as "intentional gross misrepresentation".^{xxxv}

The ITP also accused the town councilors of corruption (profiteering) with regards to water supply to the township. The party alleged that contrary to the sale of water at Government approved rate of "two tins [of water] for half a penny", the councilors had contracted the water supply to themselves "at the rate of one tin for half a penny thus, making 100% profit on the already over-burdened Talakas in the township".^{xxxvi} As already noted, some of the ITC members were "contractors" and "money lenders" and as such, it is not impossible that both the traditional chiefs, the Talakawa and some other wealthy members of Ilorin felt cheated both in terms of the award of contract and unnecessary burden imposed on the common people. This development provided an additional opportunity for the chiefs to win the sympathy and also garner the support of the ordinary people as represented by the ITP in their 'counter-offensive' action against the businessmen-councilors on the NAC who could now be labeled as enemies both of tradition and common people of Ilorin.

Furthermore, the ITP alleged that the ITC members had unilaterally decided to increase NA Court Fees from 3/6d to £2.1.6d and would probably have gone ahead to implement it were it not for the opposition of the Native Authority (traditional rulers). Other allegations included the relocation of the Welfare Centre from the people's reach to a remote area as well as lack of prior consultation with, and accountability to

their constituencies (the *Talakas*) in all their dealings.^{xxxvii} In the preamble to the petition, the ITP had summed up the people's experience with the Town Councilors by alleging that, since its inauguration: the deliberations of the present council had not in any way be (sic) in the interest of the *Talakas* in the township and that the members of the Town Council had been having things done in their own ways to suit their whims and caprices without the slightest consideration for the interest of the *Talakas*.^{xxxviii}

The ITP observed that "[r]eally this is not *DEMOCRACY IN PRACTICE*" (emphasis as in the original petition) and therefore demanded for the dissolution of the ITC and fresh elections into a new Council. The ITP concluded the petition by registering their "unalloyed and unreserved loyalty to the Native Authority, Ilorin."^{xxxix} This corroborates the report that the ITP movement was initially "timid and traditional in outlook, resisting the demands of the directly elected, anti-NA Ilorin Town Council" and that by November 1955 ITP were still strongly and unrepentantly pro-traditional chiefs in opposition to NPC officials of the NA.^{xl}

It is pertinent to note that, apart from the President, Alhaji Sule Moyito and the Acting Secretary, Saka Koro Sayodun, two other representatives from each of the six wards in Ilorin endorsed the petition. Out of a total of twelve signatories, at least six were clearly among those identified as the foundation members of the ITP.^{xli} This indicates that the membership of the ITP at inception and up to 1955, cuts across the entire Ilorin people rather than being 'a largely Yoruba' movement as it has always been described. The 'hosting' of the above mentioned public meetings of the ITP by and in the premises of the major traditional ward heads strongly suggests that the movement initially received the backing of the major Ilorin traditional chiefs and not just the two Yoruba Balogun as usually asserted.^{xlii} Thus, up till November 1955, there was a considerable degree of understanding and rapport between the ITP and the Ilorin traditional chiefs and this was undoubtedly a major source of ITP's initial traditionalism.

In its consideration of the petition, the NAC advised the ITP to wait till the election time when they would have chance to elect new councilors of their choice.^{xliii} About the time of the petition, an NA sub-committee on local government had already recommended the dissolution of the ITC and its replacement by a partly indirectly elected and partly nominated Council. This was equally reflected in the demands of the ITP in their petition. This seems to suggest that the ITP probably got inspiration for its demand for the dissolution of the ITC and recognition of the traditional chiefs' membership of town council from sources inside or close to the NAC although the petitioners claimed that

they were "not prompted by any ill motive on behalf of any one nor... against any particular personages in the Town Council".^{xliv}

There is no doubt that a possible dissolution of the ITC as demanded by the ITP in June 1955 would have affected the composition of the NAC (which tenure was to end in 1956). Such dissolution would have required the resignation of the six ITC councilors on the Emir's Full Council and the reconstitution of another Town Council as recommended by the NA ad-hoc committee. This would have provided the traditional members with opportunity to reposition themselves on the ITC. It would also have allowed the chiefs to secure their own election or the election of people of their choice into the Central NAC from the Town Council. In this way, they would have been able to protect their powers and privileges within the Ilorin NAC which had been their exclusive jurisdiction since the dawn of colonial rule and of the ITC between 1939 and 1952.

It is, thus, within the context of the above developments that the ITP's initial "appeal" and dogged commitment to "tradition" should be interpreted. In this regard, part of the tradition appears strongly to be the pre-1952/3 situation in which the four Balogun, Magajin Gari and Magaji Are had until 1945, together with eleven sub-ward heads (Magaji), constituted the ITC. It also refers to the period between 1945 and 1952 when the six chiefs had formed a 'separate chamber' of the council in which the Talakawa (petty traders) had formed a considerable part of the membership^{xlv}. This fact was evident in the ITP's initial rejection of direct election to the ITC and its campaign for non-elective seats for the principal ward heads prior to June 1956^{xlvi} as it had been before the dawn of local government reforms. After June 1956, ITP's campaign for the elimination of traditional members from the primary and secondary electoral stages and especially from the Town Council still excluded the six senior traditional ward heads that the ITP were willing to be allowed to constitute a second chamber of the Town Council.^{xlvii} The chiefs whose participation the ITP opposed at this point in time and especially at primary and secondary electoral stages were the Magaji, the sub-ward heads in the town. This was aptly expressed in ITP's popular saying "*oro Magaji aofe, aogba*", meaning 'we reject the issue of Magajis'.^{xlviii}

The Magaji's participation in the Town Council became an issue only after the ITP had won a slight majority at the first of the three stages of the Town Council election. The injection of the Magaji at that point must have been perceived as an attempt to prevent an anticipated ITP outright majority on the Town Council. The said Magaji had, in the pre-reform period, participated in the Town Council as nominated members while in the subsequent electoral arrangements, the instrument had provided for a 37% and 31% injection of traditional members in the primary and secondary electoral stages respectively.^{xlix} The implementation of these provisions, to the ITP, now under

the influence and pressure of the Action Group, meant denying them the advantage of a slight majority derived from a tenuous margin of victory they had won at the primary stage. To the traditional leaders, a non-implementation meant sacrificing "the electoral advantage conceded to them in the instruments and which had been agreed to by a large majority"ⁱ in February 1955. This was a few months before ITP became a formal political organization and when a considerable degree of understanding still existed between the movement and the Balogun. There is, therefore, no evidence suggesting conclusively that the ITP's traditionalism "connote a demand for political change, a demand based on an image of an antecedent, pre-Fulani, traditional order".ⁱⁱ In spite of the suggestion that "tradition" was then "ambiguous", Whitaker contends that in their appeal to tradition, "the ideological sights of the peasantry were fixed on a "return" to the political ideals antedating the Fulani coup d'état [i.e. of c.1823/4], on a reinstating of the earlier traditional order", rather than "affirming the status quo". This interpretation is not applicable to the original ITP that emerged in 1954 and spurred into political action by the Balogun.

It is equally arguable, based on the above analysis, that a largely non-literate and conservative organization that the ITP was before June 1956 could have, in its "appeal to tradition", meant "a political re-orientation and a profound structural change steeped in democratic representative governmental values and norms" as presumed by Bello.ⁱⁱⁱ What is fairly certain is that, politically, the ITP began more or less as a break-away or splinter party from the NPC and eventually became 'radicalized' when educated elements mostly from the then Western Region and its Action Group and their allies in non-metropolitan parts of Ilorin emirate were involved in Ilorin politics. It would, therefore, seem that both Whitaker and Bello viewed the ITP movement from the spectacles of the other members of the Grand Alliance which original ambitions and ideological orientation were quite different from those of the Ilorin Talaka Parapo, at least before its formal alliance with the AG in August 1956. Tradition, as ITP and majority of its Ilorin supporters knew it before 1956 was that of respect and loyalty to the traditional chiefs including their positions, legitimacy, privileges and authority over NA affairs prior to the full implementation of the democratic reforms and not the pre-Fulani political situation in pre-19th century Ilorin. At least, Whitaker concedes to the fact that "all observers seem to point to the events surrounding the 1956 electoral contest for control of the Ilorin Town Council as the occasion, if not the cause, simultaneously of a decisive internal fission and of an outward ideological crystallization of the ITP".ⁱⁱⁱⁱ

The ITP: From Traditionalism to Democratic Radicalism, 1956-7

Before August 1956, the ITP's political orientation was towards Kaduna, Headquarters of the NPC, and the dominant party in the old Northern Region. Its party slogan and logo indicated a strong pro-Islamic and northern

orientation. The party's slogan was "*Nasarallahi!*" ("Allah's Help") while its logo was a wooden slate (Yoruba: "*Wala*"; Hausa: "*Alo*"^{liv}) used in teaching Muslim children in the Quranic school. This was in line with the existing tradition of Ilorin's strong association with Islam, the Sokoto Caliphate and Northern Region. This historical and political tradition and the earlier understanding between the Balogun and the ITP informed the movement's initial application for affiliation with NPC Kaduna in August 1955. The ITP, in doing this however, bypassed the local NPC because the leadership of both the local NPC as well as the Ilorin Native Administration was in the hand of Saadu Alanamu and others with whom the Parapo and their backers (traditional chiefs) had grievances.^{lv}

The negotiations with Kaduna were facilitated by Yahaya Madawaki, then Northern Regional Minister of Health, an NPC member, a friend of Sule Moyito (ITP leader) and a personal and political rival of Saadu Alanamu both at the local level of Ilorin NAC and NPC party level.^{lvi} Both political rivals had been instrumental in the introduction of the NPC and party politics to Ilorin in the early 1950s and were among the three "major political "gateways" to Ilorin".^{lvii} However, while Saadu Alanamu belonged to a chieftaincy (Balogun Alanamu) family, Yahaya Madawaki belonged to the commoners (*Talakawa*). The latter had, however, become prominent due to his educational career and service to the community as Head Master of the Ilorin Middle School and nominated member of Emir's Council in the aftermath of the 1936 abortive "Baba Isale Coup".^{lviii}

With Yahaya Madawaki's support, the ITP therefore secured NPC Kaduna's initial approval for an affiliation. The alliance lasted from August 1955 to April 1956 when the rivalry between Saadu Alanamu and Yahaya Madawaki eventually brought about its abrogation by the NPC National Executive.^{lix} The explanation that the parent NPC out rightly rejected the ITP^{lx} is not supported by evidence. It was only after much pressure from NPC Ilorin that the NPC National Executive told the ITP to reconcile with the local NPC, as it "could not expect to deal with the "father", i.e. the central NPC, if it would not deal with the "son", the local branch".^{lxi} Yahaya Madawaki was also accused of supporting the Parapo against the leadership of the Ilorin NPC and was given three days to declare his stand. While the Madawaki chose to continue his sympathy and support for the Ilorin Talaka Parapo, Saadu Alanamu's camp including one S. Nagode, the Ilorin NAC secretary "resolved not to compromise with the ITP or Yahaya Madawaki".^{lxii} By this time the ITP had leveled criticisms against the Saadu Alanamu-dominated Ilorin NA and had inspired a 90% effective boycott of the Ilorin Urban Water Supply scheme.^{lxiii} The Ilorin NPC-led administration had announced that the people had to pay for the supply of pipe borne water while the ITP insisted that it must be free of charges. The proposal to make the people pay the water rate indirectly by embedding it into

the tax was equally rejected by the ITP as any increase in taxation was seen as additional hardship on the *Talakawa*^{lxiv}. Thus, the undisguised antagonism between the two camps continued until it led to the rejection of the ITP by Kaduna and Yahaya Madawaki's loss of his ministerial post.

The abrogation of the ITP-NPC Kaduna alliance altered the course of events from April 1956 to May 1957 when the commoners came to power and thereafter till August 1958 when the ITP\AG-led NAC was dissolved by the Northern Regional Government. Up till April 1956, the ITP still had supporters and sympathizers among the traditional ruling elite and Islamic scholars. In addition to the Balogun, Emir Abdul-Kadir (1919-1959) is also said to have sympathized with the plight of the ordinary *Talakawa* as he was opposed to the imposition of additional burden on the people through the water levy or increased taxation to cover the cost of water supply.^{lxv} To suppress the ITP opposition, the NPC and NA leadership in Ilorin began the persecution of ITP leaders through the arrest and detention of a number of prominent ITP members. To win the traditional elite to its side, the NPC orchestrated intensive propaganda to discredit the ITP which it labeled an Action Group (AG)-inspired movement.^{lxvi} The AG, it was stressed, was "a party without respect for the [traditional] chiefs".

The AG had initially made overtures to the ITP in August 1955 and had tended to influence a split of the Parapo into the pro-NPC faction and an anti-NPC, anti-NA faction.^{lxvii} But then ITP's association with the Ilorin traditional leaders and the resultant "traditionalism" was still very strong that leading AG members like J. S. Olawoyin saw no difference in the two factions^{lxviii} or any wisdom in forming alliance with the new movement. This was because, as O' Hear observes, the ITP "initially gave out confusing signals, its apparent objectives being ambivalent, even in some part conservative and traditionalist".^{lxix} The 1956 Annual Report further notes that "[t]he pro-NPC faction [of ITP] was anxious to remain within the NPC fold but found itself more and more at odds with the leaders of the local branch of the NPC who were also the leading officials of the Ilorin NA".^{lxx} Eventually, with the abrogation of the NPC Kaduna-ITP alliance followed by the intimidation and victimization of prominent members and leaders of ITP by the Ilorin NA and the need for protection, the Parapo were forced to enter into secret negotiations with the AG and possibly the NCNC.^{lxxi} By August 1956 a formal alliance was concluded with the AG, which aimed at using the ITP as a vehicle for its political penetration of the Northern Region, the stronghold of its rival NPC and to bring about the transfer of Ilorin to the Western Region.^{lxxii}

From August 1956 till the collapse of the ITP\AG Alliance-controlled Ilorin NA in August 1958, the AG not only supplied all that the ITP had lacked such as literate young men, experienced political organizers, transport and fund^{lxxiii} but also determined or greatly influenced the Parapo's sudden change

from 'traditionalism' to 'democratic radicalism'. As Dudley rightly observed, ITP's shedding of traditionalism for radicalism "was not the result of a conscious re-orientation. It was forced on the ITP by circumstance".^{lxxiv} An indication of the situation in which ITP found itself was provided in the sudden domination of its original party slogans of "*Nasarallahi!*" ("Allah's Help") by the AG's "*Awo, Awo*". The ITP had adopted "*Nasarallahi!*" ("Allah's Help"—derived from a verse of the Holy Qur'an) in 1955 (as against NPC's slogan of "*Salam*" ("Peace"—from the Muslim greeting)) on its delegation's successful return from NPC headquarters at Kaduna after it had secured Kaduna's initial recognition in spite of stiff opposition from NPC Ilorin.^{lxxv} In addition to AG's party slogan, there was also incessant AG's press reports and campaign slogan of "*Ilorin Belongs to the West*", although not all ITP members and sympathizers within Ilorin subscribed to such an irredentist campaign.^{lxxvi}

As observed by Sklar, shortly after the ITP-AG alliance, the ITP's "criticisms of the [Ilorin] Native Administration became more vigorous and its ideological line diverged irrevocably from traditionalism to radicalism." Sklar also notes that the issue of transferring Ilorin to the Western Region and the negative record of AG's harsh treatment "of old-style natural rulers" possibly repelled the Balogun and other members of the traditional elite who had had sympathy for the Parapo. As a result, the chiefs "turned away from the Commoners' Party"^{lxxvii} and apparently turned to the NPC, which some of the wealthy members of the Ilorin Parapo had joined in order to "protect their business interests". It was undoubtedly the issue of Ilorin-West merger that made the supporters of the Emir and chiefs to begin to sing thus:

Alanamu t'Oba ni, Are Ago t'Oba ni;
Parapo to lo Wesi (Western Region)
yio wo'na Oluwa.^{lxxviii}

This means "*Alanamu belongs to the Emir, Are Ago belongs to the Emir: any Parapo who goes to the West will end up in God's hell fire*". In this, the supporters would be seen to have considered the Ilorin-West merger move as 'a grave sin', which, within the context of Islamic religion, attracted a punishment in Hell Fire. Thus, both in the two Councils' deliberations and among the people in Ilorin town, while the pro-merger agitators continued to stress ethnic factor—that 'Ilorin people were Yoruba', the anti-merger campaigners emphasized religion (Islam) and apparently interpreted the move to be a form of apostasy—a step towards becoming converted to paganism. Many of the people, Islamic scholars and traditional chiefs in Ilorin seem to have shared this view. For instance, at a meeting of the Ilorin Town Council held on 20th January 1958, one Alhaji Sambo and Balogun Ajikobi argued and clearly interpreted the merging of Ilorin with Western Region as being "converted to pagans". The Magaji Are, head of the Afonja lineage in Ilorin, supported the argument by Ajikobi (another

leading Ilorin Yoruba chief) in his opposition to the Ilorin-West merger motion on the floor of the ITC.^{lxxix}

From the time of the alliance with AG, therefore, the ITP's ambitions and actions as well as its future in Ilorin were bound up with those of the AG and other northern minority ethnic socio-political organizations that made up the Grand Alliance namely the Egbe Igbomina Parapo (EIP) and the Ekiti Federal Union (EFU). These are reflected in some of the issues that dominated the power struggle between the traditional chiefs and the ITP\AG councilors especially on the Ilorin NAC. Such issues, among others, included the membership and leadership of the Town Council by traditional chiefs, the Ilorin-West merger as well as the issue of whether or not to congratulate the Egbe Omo Oduduwa. In August 1956, for instance, when the contest for the control of the ITC became deadly serious, the ITP had threatened to boycott the remaining elections if its demand for "the elimination of all nominated traditional members from the primary and secondary electoral stages and of all but the six senior traditional ward heads from the Town Council" was not conceded. The party had come to realize that the inclusion of the nominated members together with the six principal ward heads in the Council would not only result in "a marriage between them and the chiefs" as Whitaker puts it, but would also neutralize or close up the tenuous margin of victory the ITP had won at the first stage of the primaries.

The realization by both sides that the control of the Ilorin Town Council would determine who would eventually control the Ilorin NAC made the traditional chiefs, on the one hand, bent on invoking the instrument as noted above while the ITP, on the other hand, remained opposed to such. This development and the resultant stalemate in the contest for the ITC consequently led to an intervention by the Northern Regional government which sent two ministers to consult with the ITP and NPC on the composition of the Council. At a meeting convened in August 1956, the representatives of Ilorin NAC led by the six ward heads objected to the presence of AG advisers at any such meeting with the ITP while the latter refused to sit without their "political advisers". Thus separate negotiations were conducted.^{lxxx} What Whitaker calls "an extremely rapid and basic, indeed chameleon-like transformation of a political organization"^{lxxxi} therefore belonged to and was no doubt largely informed by the ITP's new association with the AG, its funds, lawyers and organizing secretaries or political advisers. By that time also other individuals and interests had joined the hitherto largely conservative and non-literate-dominated ITP as a vehicle for political ascendancy. A prominent figure in this regard was Ibrahim Laaro, an educated and wealthy Ilorin businessman-politician whose entry in 1956 and exit in 1957, respectively marked turning points in the rise and fall of the Ilorin Talaka Parapo.^{lxxxii} Ibrahim Laaro reportedly "enlightened the ITP on how to handle the NPC" (from which he had decamped) and also helped the ITP

to pursue the issue of the rejection of Magaji's membership of Ilorin Town Council.^{lxxxiii} After his suspension from ITP, it was also Laaro who helped and led the NPC opposition together with the traditional chiefs to fight the ITP\AG to the logical conclusion of the dissolution of the NAC in 1958.

The ITP's final shedding of traditionalism for radicalism was part of its strategy to mobilize and win wider grass root support in the remaining stages of the election. This involved the extension of its attentions and tentacles to the metropolitan districts of the emirate then under members of the Ilorin traditional elite—areas that had been quite politically inactive.^{lxxxiv} There was also the condemnation of such customs or practices as payment of "*Isakole*" (tributes payable to the traditional fief holders), "*Aroja*" (market dues) and *Babakekere* system. These contrasted sharply with issues that had dominated ITP's activities in 1954-55 as analyzed above.

The above discussion suggests that the alliance with the AG Headquarters, the EIP, EFU and the Ibolu branch of AG as well as the admission of educated elements from both within and outside Ilorin into the ITP were important developments in the ideological transformation of the movement from conservatism and traditionalism to radicalism. The AG, for instance, was to the NPC and the Northern Region, "a special threat" both to the "unity of the north" and the NPC's ambition to power at regional and national levels. This derived from AG's undisguised advocacy for the dismemberment of the Northern region and its alliances with the major opposition and minority parties within the Region as elsewhere.^{lxxxv} In addition, the EIP, EFU and Ibolu AG represented the interests and ambitions of the people in the non-metropolitan area of Ilorin. Such people are explained to have hated Ilorin rule since the pre-colonial era and had persistently been involved in various "rebellious and subversive activities" in order "to assert themselves or to help the effort to bring about Ilorin's downfall". According to Bello, the main goal of such rebellious activities was to break "the vicious chain of bondage which tied them to the Ilorin overlords".^{lxxxvi} The alliance with the ITP, which had by 1956 become a force to reckon with in the local politics of Ilorin town, provided additional opportunity not only for such political ascendancy but the realization of such age-long ambitions of the Yoruba of Western Region and their kith and kin within the emirate.

The clash of such diverse interests with those of the Ilorin traditional leaders and their supporters including Islamic scholars particularly on the issue of Ilorin-West merger brought about sharp divisions in the movement—a division that the traditional elite was to exploit to bring about the downfall of the commoners' movement. In April 1957, a Staff Reporter of the *Nigerian Citizen* reports *inter alia*:

It can be revealed that not all is well with the ITP-AG set-up. Many prominent Members of the ITP feel that their

identity has been swallowed up by the Action Group and that all authority has been taken out of their hands. They recall that they never formed their party with an intention of quitting the North, but merely to manage Ilorin's domestic affairs. There is, in fact, growing resentment among members that they are being exploited by the Action Group for the Western party's own ends.^{lxxxvii}

By May 1957, a major crack had become noticeable in the ITP. Then, some Ilorin members of the ITP dissociated themselves from the Ilorin-West Merger issue and sent a memo to the Northern Regional delegation to the 1957 London Conference demanding that the merger issue should not be discussed at the conference. The signatories to the memorandum included three foundation members of ITP who had endorsed the 1955 petition to the Native Authority as well as Ibrahim Laaro, one of the elected ITP town councilors whose eventual exit from the ITP negatively affected the political fortune of the movement in Ilorin.

It should be noted that there were also three signatories from the predominantly Yoruba Magaji Are ward—the ward being administratively headed by the descendants of the supposed Yoruba founder and first ruler of Ilorin. While noting that the primary aim of the ITP was to “ask Regional Government for improvement and development of Ilorin town and division as a whole”, the authors of the memo reiterated that “We have to state categorically that we are still members of the Ilorin Talaka Parapo in alliance with the Action Group, but we are opposed to the Ilorin-West merger issue now.” The insistence of the ITP-AG alliance on pursuing the Ilorin-West merger thus polarized not only the ITP but also Ilorin people. This division coupled with the opposition of the Ilorin traditional elite and the Northern Regional Government brought about the sudden collapse of the ITP-AG controlled NAC and ITC and eventually of the ITP as a political movement. Thus, while ITP's rise was associated with advocacy for issues bordering of the privileges of Ilorin traditional elite and those of general concern to the welfare of all Ilorin irrespective of ethnic affiliation, its eventual advocacy for issues concerning only the Ilorin Yoruba (especially the Yoruba in non-metropolitan areas) alienated non-Yoruba groups, members and other supporters of the ITP.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussions show that the phenomenon that was the ITP in the period between 1954 and 1958 was in part a product of the re-organization and reform of the Ilorin Town Council between 1945 and 1953. It was equally partly an outcome of the intrigue of a wing of the privileged traditional ruling class with the commoners against the emergent wealthy Ilorin politicians. There was also the issue of jealousy and personal-political rivalry among the leading

Ilorin politicians who happened to be divided into the privileged or chiefly and commoners' classes. As the analysis of available evidence above shows, the ITP movement was not originally a Yoruba movement neither did it begin "purely as a reactionary group" or "opposition" to the traditional ruling elite. Rather, it was a movement spurred into action by a wing of the traditional elite in their struggle for power, or more importantly in their desperate move to protect their traditional powers and privileges, being whittled away by the new councilors on the Ilorin NA and Town Councils. Hence, the ITP's initial targets were the emergent businessmen-politicians (councilors) on the Ilorin Town Council whose activities represented serious challenge to the powers and privileges of the traditional chiefs as well as additional economic burden on the *Talakawa*.

The ITP's initial commitment to "tradition" was, therefore, in the defence of the privileges and powers of the traditional ruling elite being threatened by the emergent wealthy politicians, some of whom they also had personal-political scores to settle with. The collapse of the ITP was brought about by the way in which the ITP and its allies particularly those from the non-metropolitan areas of the emirate and their advisers and lawyers from the old Western Region sought to use the political power conferred on them by their electoral victory in 1956. It also resulted from the sudden overshadowing of ITP's original concerns (i.e. the plight of the Ilorin traditional elite and the *Talakawa*) by the AG's irredentist desire to have Ilorin Province transferred to the Western Region. Thus, while the ITP's association with the AG had marked its transformation from traditionalism to radicalism, its conversion from a purely conservative mass movement for the protection of the privileges and authority of traditional chiefs and then the emancipation of the *Talakawa* into a vehicle for Western Region's Yoruba irredentism alienated most of ITP's supporters and sympathizers including the traditional elite and prominent Islamic scholars all of who seem to have cherished their Islamic-Muslim identity and tradition more than primordial ethnic affiliations. This, among other reasons, explains why the ITP never rose from its sudden, unexpected fall after its sudden unexpected rise to power.

End Notes and References

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- ¹ These include Whitaker C. S., *Politics of Tradition, Continuity and Change in Northern Nigeria, 1946-1966* (New Jersey, USA, 1970), chapter 3; Ann O'Hear, *Power Relations in Nigeria: Ilorin Slaves and their Successors*, (University of Rochester Press, 1997) chapter 7; Fatai Bello, "Politics of Protest: A Study of the Ilorin Talaka Parapo (ITP), 1954-1966 (M. A. Dissertation, History Dept. University of Ilorin, 1986); S. Y. Omoiya's "Oppression as Unifying Factor of a Culturally Diverse Polity: The Ilorin Talaka Parapo Example in the Twentieth Century", *LAPAI Journal of Central Nigeria History*, pp27-35; Jimoh L. A. K., *Ilorin: The Journey So Far*, (Ilorin: Atoto Press: 1994) and Ahmad Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History of Ilorin Emirate*, (Ilorin: Sat Adis Press, 1992).

- ii For the developments that led to the formation of the Ilorin Town Council and subsequent involvement of the commoners as nominated and elected councilors, see Salihu Ismail, "The Contest for Ilorin: A Study of Political Struggles for Ascendancy and Supremacy in the 19th and 20th Centuries" (unpublished M. A. dissertation submitted to the Department of History, University of Ilorin, 2004).
- iii These included those identified as General Traders (4), Butchers (2), Petty Traders (1), Food stuff Sellers (1), Native Cloth Sellers (1), Lodging House Keepers (1), Shop Keepers (1), Motor Owners (1), Bird Sellers (1) and Sarkin Bojuwa and Sodore (1) See NAC\412\ Ilorin Town Council, Constitution, Membership and Standing Rules, 1939-1959: Enclosure titled "Re-Organization of Ilorin Town Council" from the Emir's Office to the Office of the District Officer Ilc Ilorin, 29 June 1945.
- iv These included those identified as "contractors" (3), "lorry owners" (3), "cattle traders" (3), "traders" (3) "money lender" (1) and "shop keepers" (4) and represented 70.8% (17 out of 24 elected) while the *Talakawa* ("weavers" (3), "letter writer" (1), "bicycle repairer" (1), "embroiderer" (1) and "Koranic Mallam" (1)) constituted a minority (7 out of 24) and representing 29.2%.
- v The N. A. Council was empowered to appoint the Council's President and to retain the power of nomination to ensure that some traditional elements became members if not elected by their wards. See NAK NAC\412\ Enclosure No. 3908\83 of September 26 1952; ADO 21\5\1952, par.2; Government Publication Kaduna: *Progress Report on Local Government in the Northern Region, Nigeria* 1952, par. 27.
- vi See *Progress Report on Local Government*, op. cit.
- vii The Central Native Authority (Emir's) Council had witnessed similar re-organization between 1947 and 1952 bringing about the inclusion of representatives from the non-metropolitan areas of Ekiti, Igbomina and Offa. For these developments, see for instance: Ibiloye E. A., "Igbominaland Under Ilorin Imperialism, 1830-1949", (M. A. Dissertation, History Department, University of Ilorin, 1992), Adeyemi E. A. "Protest and Agitation in Igbomina, 1933-1952" (M.A. Dissert., University of Ilorin, 1984), Jimoh O. Julius "Struggle for Identity: Offa-Ilorin Relations, 1823-1960" (M.A. Dissertation, University of Ilorin, 1988)
- viii The Council was made up of 49 elected, 13 nominated and 8 co-opted members. The 'traditional' members elected included 10 District Heads, 24 Village Heads, 1 Court Scribe, 2 Court Members, 1 Road Inspector, 2 Unspecified while the others 9 non-traditional members included six from Ilorin Town Council, 2 from Offa Town Council and 1 from Obo-Eruku. See NAK ILORPROF PLT\37 Ilorin Native Authority Council Election 1953, enclosure No. 27403\293.
- ix NAK ILORPROF NAC\412\ Ilorin Town Council Constitution, Membership and Standing Orders, 1939-1959: Enclosure No. 3908/33 "Ilorin Town Council" from the District Officer, Ilorin Division to The Public Relations Officer, Public Relations Office, Northern Region, Kaduna and Enclosure titled "Elected Members for the Emir's Full Council", 1953. One of the elected traders was identified as a "money lender" among those elected into the ITC in 1952.
- x Provincial Annual Report, Ilorin by Delves-Broughton, 1953, par. 5. The Resident observed that the membership of the NAC was "largely confined to the wealthy or otherwise privileged [members of the society] and cannot be said to represent the tax-paying community as a whole".
- xi In July 1953, the Ibo Union petitioned the Emir of Ilorin requesting for Ibo representation on the ITC on the ground that the "Ibo constituted a large number of the tax-payers in the community" and that other towns in the Northern Region had provided for such on their town councils. In its response, the NAC argued, among others, that representation on the ITC was "by ward and not

[by] tribe". See NAK ILORPROF 3786 Petition from Ibo Union, Ilorin enclosed in NAC/412/I Ilorin Town Council, Constitution, Membership and Standing Orders, 1939-1959, op. cit. The petition dated 21st July 1953 was titled "Petition to the Emir, Ilorin by IBO Union, Ilorin for Representation in Ilorin Town Council".

^{xii} The Annual Reports from the 1940s indicate that the rich in Ilorin town were not paying tax according to their income while the Emir's Council had either found it difficult or was not interested in 'dealing' with such. See, for instance See NAK ILORPROF 2/1 Acc. No.1 Ilorin Division, District Note Book, 1944: Approved Tax Incidence (1944/5) cited by Ann O' Hear *Power Relations*, op. cit. p. 109; Annual Reports for 1949, paragraph 66(3); 1950 (par.11); 1952 (paras.11, 13); 1953 (par.2) and 1955 paragraphs 8 and 9. See also and Annual Report 1956, par. 19.

^{xiii} See Annual Report, 1954, par. 4.

^{xiv} See Provincial Annual Reports 1953 and 1954 paragraphs 2 and 3 respectively.

^{xv} Provincial Annual Report, Ilorin Province, 1955, paragraph 3

^{xvi} Cf. Adisa-Onikoko, op. cit. p.37 who dates the development to late 1953; Annual Report 1956, par.3

^{xvii} See Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*. Cf. Annual Report, 1955, par. 5

^{xviii} Members of the Ilorin Parapo had included such Ilorin businessmen as Alhaji Busari Isale Oja ("a lorry magnate"), Alhaji Sule Moyito ("a cattle dealer"), Mallam Ibrahim Laaro ("a lorry owner") and others like Dende Alatare, Isa Lasinmi, Salimanu Sasu and Mustafa Idiagbede. See Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History* pp 32-33 and Jimoh L. A. K., *Ilorin: Journey So Far*, pp524-5 for details.

^{xix} Adisa-Onikoko, op. cit. pp 32-33.

^{xx} See Jimoh L.A.K., *Ilorin: The Journey So Far*, p. 265 and Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, op. cit. See also Provincial Annual Report, Ilorin 1955, par. 5 and Ann O' Hear, *Power relations in Nigeria*, Chapter 7, page 281..

^{xxi} Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, pg. 49.

^{xxii} Ann O'Hear, *Power Relations in Nigeria*, pg. 145.

^{xxiii} Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, pp 35 and 39. Omoiya S. Y. "Oppression as Unifying Factor of a Culturally Diverse Polity", op. cit. identifies Olokoba Alanamu as one of the 'prominent members' of the ITP.

^{xxiv} Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, page 37 dates the development to December 1953 but this appears inaccurate.

^{xxv} See NAK ILORPROF NAC/412/I Ilorin Town Council, op. cit. see enclosure ADO 21/5/1952, par. 8

^{xxvi} Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, p. 40. The author reports that the ITP's first meeting was held on January 15, 1954 with Saadu Alanamu as a major item on the agenda. He, however, dates the first open air meeting to January 27 1954 (page 39) as against January 1955 which the Annual Report corroborates.

^{xxvii} See Annual Reports 1955 (par.5) and 1956 (par.5). cf. Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, p42 which gives four other objectives of the ITP apparently after the party had "fully" of fairly defined its objectives.

^{xxviii} Annual Report 1955, op. cit. Cf. Adisa-Onikoko op. cit. Fatai Bello "Politics of Protest", p.53 only explains that the ITP initially attracted the "sympathy and backing" of some groups of traditionalists. He cites the Baloguns Alanamu and Ajikobi as well as the Magaji Are and Baba Isale all Yoruba chiefs in Ilorin. Perhaps, his perception of the movement right from inception as 'largely Yoruba-dominated' informed this but as Onikoko argues, the ITP was indeed 'inspired' and actually

enjoyed the patronage and support of all the Ilorin chiefs including the Baloguns Fulani and Gambari as well as the Magajin Gari (also a Fulani) before things fell apart in 1956.

xxix It was in late 1954 that Government expressed its determination "to uphold the right of all reasonable persons to freedom of speech and freedom of assembly and to use force if necessary to maintain that right against irresponsible elements" See Annual Report 1954, paras 2, 31 and 32. Cf. Annual Report 1955, paras 2 and 3. The latter report describes the "growth" of the ITP as "perhaps one of the more significant local political developments of the year" in addition to references to "several meetings of the movement during the year."

xxx See NAK ILOPROF NAC\412\I Ilorin Town Council: Constitution, Membership and Standing Orders, 1939-1959, Enclosure ADO 21\5\1952, paragraph 8.

xxxi Provincial Annual Report 1956, paragraphs 3 & 4 cf. Annual Report 1955 paragraphs 11 and 12.

xxxii Provincial Annual Report 1956, paragraph 3. Cf. Whitaker C. S. *The Politics of Tradition*, p. 141 quoting, according to him, from the Provincial Annual Reports 1956, writes "The fact that educated young men must be paid more than the traditional leaders is causing great strain in the local body politic..." By this time, only Balogun Ajikobi was literate among the traditional members of the Council.

xxxiii Provincial Annual Report 1956, par. 3

xxxiv See the Report of the Minority's Commission, op. cit. p.77 for a reference to this petition, which it refers to as "a letter to the Native Authority, dated June 1 of that year [1955]". For the petition, see NAK ILORPROF NAC\412\I Enclosure No. 3908\54. The petition titled "Demand for Ilorin Town Council Dissolution" was dated 1st June 1955.

xxxv Ibid, ITP petition to the Resident, Ilorin Province, Paragraph 3 (a).

xxxvi Ibid, Paragraph 3 (b). See also Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, op. cit. pp 36-37,

xxxvii Ibid, paragraphs 3 (c) and (d)

xxxviii See the ITP petition to the Resident, Ilorin Province, paragraph 1.

xxxix See the ITP petition to the Resident, Ilorin Province, op. cit. paras. 3(e) and 5 respectively.

xl See Provincial Annual Report 1956 paras. 5 and 6

xli See Adisa-Onikoko, op. cit pp 39-41. cf. Sklar R.L. *Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Nation* (New York: NOK Publishers Ltd., 1963) pp 351-2. Those who signed the petition included Alhaji S. Moyito, Saka Koro Sayodun, Bodunrin Balogun, M. Yahaya Kannike, Yakubu Ayinde, Salimonu Balogun, Salau Gegele, Salau Atanda, Adebayo among others who affixed their right thumb impression.

xlii For this explanation, see Dudley B.J. *Party and Politics*, op.cit. p. 99; Fatai Bello "Politics of Protest", op. cit.

xliii NAK ILORPROF NAC\412\I Enclosure: Extracts from the Minutes of Ilorin NA Full Council meeting of 14th -15th June 1955, par.10.

xliv Ibid Enclosure No. 3908\54 of 8 June 1955 addressed to The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local government, Northern Region, Kaduna by the Resident, Ilorin Province. See also the petition by the ITP, op. cit. par. 4

xlv See Salihu Ismail, "The Contest for Ilorin", op. cit. pp 121-124.

xlvi See Provincial Annual Reports 1955 and 1956 paragraphs 5 and 8 respectively. See also Sklar, R. L. *Nigerian Political Parties*, p. 352.

xlvii Sklar, R.L. *Nigerian Political Parties*, p. 352.

^{xlviii} Oral interview with Alhaji Ajao Aladie, Isale Aluko Ilorin; Alhaji Amuda Gbalasha, Oke Ebo Alaso, Ilorin and Alhaji Adisa-Onikoko, Adeta Ilorin who makes a brief reference to this on page 63 of his *A Short History of Ilorin*.

^{xlix} See Provincial Annual Report for 1956, Ilorin Province by C.W. Michie, par. 8.

ⁱ Provincial Annual Report for 1956, Ilorin Province by C.W. Michie, paragraphs 8 and 9

ⁱⁱ Whitaker C. S., *Politics of Tradition*, pp 140

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid. Whitaker C. S., *Politics of Tradition*, pp 140 and 158 respectively cf. Fatai Bello "Politics of Protest", op. cit. p. 70 who posits that "the ITP appeal to 'tradition' appeared not to be synonymous with the re-affirmation of the status-quo. ...[but] presumably be regarded as a clarion call for a political re-orientation and a profound structural change steeped in democratic representative governmental values and norms".

ⁱⁱⁱⁱ Whitaker C.S. *The Politics of Tradition*, p. 143.

^{liv} See Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, op. cit pg. 42

^{iv} Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, pp 35, 37 and 39. Cf. Annual Report 1956, par.3.

^{vi} See Dudley B.J. *Parties and Politics*, p.100 and Whitaker C.S. *The Politics of Tradition*, p.142

^{vii} See John N. Paden, *Ahmadu Bello Sardauna of Sokoto: Values and Leadership in Nigeria*, (Zaria: Hudahuda Publishing Company, 1986) page 326.

^{viii} See Salihu Ismail Otukoko, "The 1936 Baba Isale 'Coups' and Its Aftermath: A Historical Analysis of an Intrigue in the Struggle for supremacy in Colonial Ilorin", *FAIS Journal of the Humanities Vol. 5 No 2*, July 2011, pp 49-72

^{lix} See John N. Paden, *Ahmadu Bello Sardauna of Sokoto*, op. cit. p. 326. On the earlier approval of the ITP's application for affiliation with NPC Kaduna, see Sklar R. L. op. cit. note 52 citing a Press Release by NPC Kaduna Headquarters Ref. No. NPC N.H. 214/28 of 8 August 1955. In addition to the Press Release, Onikoko reproduces a letter purportedly from the office of the Premier, Northern Region dated November 9, 1955 and signed by the NPC's General President on the ITP-NPC Kaduna alliance. See Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, pp 43-44.

^{lx} Omoiya S. Y. "Oppression as a Unifying Factor", op. cit.

^{lx} See Whitaker C. S., *The Politics of Tradition*, page 142; Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, op. cit. pg 51 where the author attributes the statement to Sir Ahmadu Bello and also list the names of ITP members who met the Sardauna of Sokoto at Kaduna.

^{lxii} See Dudley B. J., *Party and Politics*, page 100

^{lxiii} See Annual Report 1956, paragraph 6

^{lxiv} Oral interview with Alhaji Yahaya Baboko, Olori Compound, Baboko, Ilorin

^{lxv} Oral interview with Alhaji Yahaya Baboko, Olori Compound, Baboko, Ilorin

^{lxvi} Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, pp 52-53

^{lxvii} Dudley B. J., *Party and Politics*, op. cit. and Annual Report 1956, paragraph 5.

^{lxviii} Before ITP\AG alliance, J. S. Olawoyin of the AG is said to have remarked on the ITP thus "*ati aaya dudu, ati aaya pupa, okan naa ni won*" meaning that 'both the dark and light-skinned monkeys are one and the same'. Oral interview with Alhaji Saadu Laofe, Center Igboro, Ilorin

^{lxix} See Ann O'Hear, *Power Relations*, pg. 145

^{lxx} Annual Report 1956, paragraph 5

^{lxxi} Before the ITP-AG alliance, an NCNC lawyer was instrumental in the release of Saka Olumo, one of ITP members reportedly detained by the NA. Oral interview with Alhaji Ajao Aladie (who claimed to be one of the delegates to Ibadan in 1956) and Alhaji Amuda Gbalasha who was once an ITP member but later crossed to the NPC. See also Jimoh L.A.K., *Ilorin: The Journey*, pp 265-6

and Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, op. cit. pp 34, 52-4. Adisa-Onikoko describes Saka Olumo as one of the literate members that the illiterate ITP founding fathers later scouted for. Others included Nasiru Oniyangi, Ibrahim Laaro, Raimi Akande and A. K. Joseph. See page 40

lxvii See Dudley B.J. *Party and Politics*, p.100 and Sklar, R.L. *Nigerian Political Parties*, p.352.

lxviii Annual Report 1956 par. 5. Onikoko identifies three of such political organizers whom he called "secretaries" but ITP members preferred to call "lawyers" as Adebayo, Adeniyani and Fagbemi. See *A Short History*, page 54.

lxix Dudley B. J. *Party and Politics*, page 99

lxx Oral interview with Alhaji Yahaya Baboko, Olori Compound, Baboko area, Ilorin

lxxi Annual Report 1956, paragraphs 4-8. See also Schwarz A. O. Fredrick, *NIGERIA: The Tribe, the Nation or the Race—The Politics of Independence* (London, the M. I. T. Press, 1965), p. 91.

lxxii Sklar R.L. *Nigerian Political Parties*, page 352

lxxiii See Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History of Ilorin*, p. 46. Oral evidence from Alhaji Ajao Aladie, Isale Aluko Ilorin and Alhaji Amuda Gbalasha, Oke Ebo Alaso, Ilorin.

lxxiv See Minutes of the 15th Ilorin Town Council Meeting held on 20th January 1958.

lxxv Provincial Annual Report 1956, Ilorin Province by C. W. Michie, paragraph 8. See also Whitaker C. S., *Politics of Tradition*, pp 143-4

lxxvi Whitaker C. S., *Politics of Tradition*, page 139

lxxvii For his roles, see Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, pp 49-50, 58-9; Jimoh L. A. K., *Ilorin: The Journey*, p. 266 and Annual Report for 1957, Ilorin Division by Mr. J. G. Davies, pp 11-12 and minutes of the meetings of the Ilorin Native Authority Full Council, 1957-8.

lxxviii See Adisa-Onikoko, *A Short History*, op. cit. pp 49-50

lxxix Dudley B.J. *Party and Politics*. See also Annual Report 1956, par. 8. The 1955 Annual Report says, "Whether or not the Parapo can extend its influence outside the walls of Ilorin Town has yet to be seen"—a strong indication that by the end of 1955, the ITP was still a movement largely based in Ilorin town.

lxxx See John Paden, *Ahmadu Bello*, pp 155-6 and 411

lxxxi See Whitaker C.S., *Politics of Tradition*, p. 126 and Fatai Bello, "Politics of Protest", op. cit. pp. 76-77

lxxxii See "FUTURE OF ILORIN IS AT STAKE" by Staff Reporter Olaleye Adedoyin, *Nigerian CITIZEN*, No. 513, Saturday, April 6, 1957, page 1.