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The Response of the Southern Iteso to Political Domination

IVAN KARP

I. There is a sizable body of literature on colonialism in Africa. A large portion of it is historical in nature and deals with the relationship between the colonizers and the metropolitan country. Another prominent historical theme is the examination of the development of colonial administration, either in colonies as a whole or in smaller regions. Mungeam's excellent book (1966) is an example of the first type of study in East Africa, and Barber's (1968) examination of British imperial policy in Karimoja or Ogot's (1963) survey of the development of administration in Central Nyanza District of Kenya are examples of the latter. The history of Europeans in Africa and the problems which confronted them are very well documented.

It is only recently, however, that the African response to colonialism has become an object for intensive examination. In Tanzania the "Dar es Salaam" school has pioneered in the study of indigenous reactions to and struggles against colonial and imperial agents (Kimambo and Temu 1969). In western Kenya we have recently seen studies of the Nandi wars against the British (Arap Ng'eny 1970) and an analysis of the cult of Mumbo as an anticolonial initiative (Wipper n.d.). These studies concentrate largely on the more spectacular features of indige-
nous responses to colonial domination. They are primarily concerned with violent reactions to colonial powers and the religious ideologies associated with the anticolonial initiatives.

For East Africa there have been very few studies of the effect of colonial domination on the political processes of those societies which did not react violently. Fallers (1965) and Sangree (1966) represent partial exceptions to this generalization. Their monographs are more concerned, however, with the development of administrative roles within the colonial political system. It is not their primary purpose to analyze the adaptations made by participants in precolonial structures to a new factor in their system. The same criticism may be made of the material on Central Africa. As Gluckman (1969) clearly demonstrates, the emphasis is on an analysis of the difficulties facing actors who occupy “interhierarchical roles,” which mediate between traditional and colonial political systems.

Analyses have failed to focus on the adaptations made by actors when political fields have been drastically and, very often, suddenly altered (except for those few cases in which the adaptive response took the form of violent opposition instead of accommodation).

This paper documents the political response of one society to the process of colonialization. Unlike most other studies, the perspective taken is that of the members of a polity which has suddenly lost its independence. In order to understand their response to this situation, I have found it necessary to distinguish between two aspects of the process of colonization: pacification and administration. My primary concern, however, is not to analyze the actions of the colonizers, but to understand the strategies followed by the people becoming colonized.

The research on which this paper is based was carried out over a two-year period (1969-1971) among the Southern Iteso of Kenya. The Southern Iteso are an Eastern Nilotic-speaking group (formerly called Nilo-Hamitic), who occupy a large portion of the border area of Kenya-Uganda between Mt. Elgon on the north and Lake Victoria on the south. They are found primarily in the northern part of Busia District of Western Province, Kenya, and Tororo County of Bukedi District, Uganda. Ethnically they represent an Eastern Nilotic intrusion into predominantly Bantu and Western Nilotic-speaking areas of Kenya and Uganda. They are surrounded by the Bantu Baluyia and Samia on the east and south, the Western Nilotic JoPadhola on the west, and Southern Nilotic-speaking El Koni or Sebei on the north. The Southern Iteso are part of the Karimojong cluster of Eastern Nilotes, but they do not share a border with any other group of that cluster. This spatial separation and the differences in language, custom, history, and social structure justify treating the Southern Iteso separately from the Northern Iteso, Uganda. Virtually all of the references to the Teso or Iteso in the literature refer to the Northern Iteso, but for the sake of convenience, when I refer to the Iteso, I shall mean the Southern Iteso exclusively.

The traditional political system of the Iteso can be described as a version of the general Karimojong type (Dyson-Hudson 1966; Gulliver 1953). It was organized on the basis of the interaction of groups formed on three principles: (1) territoriality, (2) agnation, and (3) stratification by age. These are described below.

a. The Iteso organized into a series of Etem (plural: Itemwan) [discrete territorial groups]. There were possibly twelve in all, and following Dyson-Hudson (1966), I call these groups “sections.” Each section was under the authority of an elected official called the Lok-tem (an officeholder who adjudicated disputes, organized the section for warfare and defense, and appointed subordinates to oversee the constituent parts of the section). These constituent parts were also called Etem. However, because their leaders were appointed by the section leader and were not elected, they were clearly subordinate to the section leader. Therefore, I refer to these components of the section (usually about four) as subsections and their leaders as subsection leaders. The duties of the subsection leader toward his subsection were the same as those of the section leader toward his section. These leaders were chosen from among a group of prominent adult males who had large followings.

Very often segmentation was precipitated when a competitor who had failed to achieve the office of section or subsection leader decided, together with as many followers as he could gather, to pioneer a border area and thereby establish a new section. Competition among leaders for office and followers provided an arena in which the segmentation process operated. The pioneer groups were made up of coevals from neighboring sections who were related through ties of kinship. The leader’s following was generally composed of distantly related junior agnates and his affines.

The pioneering was done at the expense of neighboring tribes among whom the Iteso had a fearsome reputation. Prowess in warfare was a prerequisite for aspirants to the positions of section and subsection leader. The member of a section or set of neighboring sections terrorized
The traditional system, as described above, no longer exists in any form.
in Iteso-Padhola areas of Bukedi, such as Iolwa, men in their sixties claim to be JoPadhola while their sons claim an Iteso identity (Southall 1957).

Finally, to the east there was the emergence of the Nandi as a military power after the dispersal of the Uasin Gishu Masai. Except for occasional raids, the Nandi pressure on the Iteso was indirect. Iteso expansion to the east had been primarily at the expense of the Babukus. Nandi raids on the eastern edge of Babukusu territory forced the latter to unite against the weaker of their foes and they drove the Iteso out of a considerable part of their original territory (Were 1967b: 156–184).

A particularly severe blow to the Iteso was their enemies' acquisition of firearms from Arab traders. The Iteso had no history of Arab trade at a time (circa 1890) when other groups were involved in this kind of exchange. Ogot cites Samia-Bagwe traditions which indicate that the Iteso were defeated only after the Samia-Bagwe acquired guns from Arab traders operating out of Buganda (1967: 118–119). Ogot refers to the effects of the Iteso defeat as a “reverse migration” (1967: 119).

Although these events were not simultaneous, the Iteso experienced a succession of severe military setbacks. I suggested above that the section was an organization suited for “predatory expansion” (Sahlins 1967) and not really conducive to defense. The interethic climate, in which the section as an organization thrived, changed radically during the period just prior to colonial rule. It is possible that the emergence and increasing significance of prophets among the Iteso at this time was a response to the changing military situation, but the sacred and eternal nature of the office of prophet makes it difficult to evaluate Iteso oral tradition on this score. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the position of the prophet as a ritual leader of a number of otherwise discrete territorial sections made him a natural focal point of common organization.

The Iteso were subjugated and pacified by the British in 1894–1895. Murunga, the half-brother of the Wanga King Mumia, was sent by agents of the British East Africa company with a command of Swahili soldiers to the Iteso area. He rounded up a number of the section leaders and had them shot. There is also evidence that some Iteso were guilty of complicity in this pacification. Omerikwa, a very famous warrior and section leader, was among those killed by Murunga. Omerikwa’s son, Obure, was still living in 1970 and he told me that Murungu captured and killed Omerikwa with the aid of Omerikwa’s own father. He said that the Iteso aided Murungu in their own defeat because Omerikwa refused to desist in organizing raids which brought severe retaliation on the Iteso. The Iteso on the Uganda side of the border were said to have been the victims of a number of raids led by William Grant, the subadministrator for Busoga.

This evidence suggests that the Iteso were becoming aware that the section and its organizational pivot, the section leader, were no longer politically viable. The death of a large number of section leaders was surely a severe blow and it would appear that succession to the position of section leader would not have been thought desirable. Without a leader, the section could not be an effective political or jural unit, and thus it readily disappeared. Because the age system, through its rituals, was tied to the section system, the performance of rituals (which was the major age-system activity) became meaningless and structurally irrelevant without the section system.

A few Iteso also assert that the colonial administration forbade the performance of the rituals of the age system. If this is true, it was probably because the colonial model of age organization was derived from the Masai, for whom age and military organization are interrelated. This repression of ceremonies would certainly have helped speed up the loss of the age and territorial organization.

II. The pacification of the Iteso did not result in the immediate establishment of an externally imposed local administration. Instead, the most important consequence of pacification was the suppression of all large-scale Iteso political and military activities by the colonial officials responsible for the North Kavirondo area.

Early attempts at local administration of the Iteso failed completely. There were a number of reasons for this failure. The most important was that the Iteso were the tribe most distant from any administrator. The two officials with authority over the Iteso were Hobley in Mumias and Grant at Jinja. Both were more concerned with the Wanga and Basoga of their immediate area. Administration in the peripheral areas (and the Iteso were the most peripheral) was virtually nonexistent. The main concern of C. W. Hobley at Mumias was to ensure the safety of caravans along the road to Uganda (Munegam 1966: 88). He did not appear to be interested in bringing the outlying areas under his control, even if that were possible. Munegam (1966: 90) describes this early administration as “a limited control developed by a few isolated individuals in strategic

3 The material given after this point refers only to events occurring east of the Malaba River in what eventually became Kenya. I do not think that the history of the Iteso to the west of the Malaba was significantly different. However, I do not have reliable or extensive information for the area.
In December, 1906, fought the Ketosh and tried to hold up a govt. safari under A.D.S pdt. of Police (Kenya National Archives n.d.a., "Character of chiefs").

Have a playful way of killing people on road between Iteso area, that any kind of administrative control began to be exercised, and even that was tenuous. 5

Between 1895 and 1910, a number of attempts were made to administer the Iteso directly through African agents, none of whom were Iteso. No effort was made to utilize Iteso leaders as administrators. Of the first three chiefs appointed over the Iteso, one was killed by the Iteso, another fled from office, and the third was removed for gross corruption and is said to have died in jail. Finally, in 1910, administration was officially turned over to the capable hands of Murunga, the man who had originally pacified the Iteso. Iteso informants clearly indicate that Murunga had, in any case, been the dominant figure in the area for some time.

Murunga’s base was in Kimilili on the western edge of Iteso territory but among the Babukusu whom he also administered. Although Murunga appointed official Iteso headmen, both archival and oral evidence indicate that he almost completely ignored them. Instead he “administered” through bands of personal retainers whom he kept about his camp. Murunga appears to have carried out two policies. First, he violently suppressed any large-scale (that is, visible) political and military activity and second, he extracted, on an ad hoc basis, labor corvee to build roads, or “volunteers” for mission training, as his superiors required of him. The instruments of his policy were bands of retainers. As a large number of his retainers were Iteso, he was probably well informed about Iteso activities. None of this information, however, appears to have filtered through to the European officials. Murunga’s activities, while successful, were viewed by the District Administration as temporary. However, he remained in this “temporary” capacity for twenty years. By then, the Iteso had developed leaders who had enough administrative credibility to protest the actions of Murunga and his followers.

The major colonial agent to the west of the Malaba River was Oguti Ipaade. Oguti was a remarkable man in a number of ways. He died in harness and managed to escape being removed by colonial officials despite his reputation as a corrupt predator. Unlike Murunga and the Baganda general Semei Karungulu, Oguti was able to remain a government official until long after they were removed. As an indication of his remarkable authority and tenacity, he is supposed to have been poisoned by his sons who felt they had been kept from their patrimony for far too long. He is also said to have owned over 50,000 head of cattle, a figure so enormous that I find it difficult to believe. Oguti’s career was also remarkable for the way in which he shed tribal allegiance at will. He was a very fearsome figure for the Iteso. They imagined that he was not subject to any kind of moral rule or restraint. His authority was felt to derive from his skill as an Ekaacudan [wizard]. His death was said to have been an occasion for rejoicing by all the Iteso. According to Southall (1957), the precolonial wars of Oguti completely depopulated the plain between the Malaba River and the town of Tororo.

The Iteso remember this period as one of anarchy and uncertainty. In addition to the traditional difficulties posed by the workings of the feud and the danger of attacks from traditional enemies, there was the very

Iteso remember this period as one of anarchy and uncertainty. In addition to the traditional difficulties posed by the workings of the feud and the danger of attacks from traditional enemies, there was the very
real chance of being victimized by one of Murunga’s or Oguti’s well-armed bands of agents. Today one of the most popular of Iteso songs is “The Stranger Killed Eroni,” which recounts the murder of a number of tax resisters by one of Murunga’s roving bands.

As a major result of this political uncertainty, the high rate of spatial mobility that existed among the Iteso was increased and its geographical pattern was changed. Iteso movement had generally been in a southeasterly direction toward their expanding frontier. The first consequence of pacification was a freezing of the existing frontiers. This was an advantage for the Iteso, because the extent of the territory they occupied had begun to shrink. During this period Iteso household movements began to take on a random character as many Itesodesperately sought a safe place to live. The only regularity in this new pattern of household movements was that they were generally away from an unsafe border area.

The increased rate and arbitrary pattern of household migrations had a number of interrelated consequences. Decisions to move were taken on a much more individualistic basis so that groups of contemporaries no longer moved together. This meant that the clusters of agnatic kin, who formed the residential core of subsections, began to break up. This does not mean, however, that there was complete dispersal of agnatic kin. That has never been true for any point in the history of the Iteso. Furthermore, agnates who were already spatially separated were not prevented from moving together. Given the number of moves any household head was likely to make during this period (as many as six or seven), he probably did attempt at some point to live with agnates. Finally, as a related consequence of this higher mobility rate, it became more important for household heads to make use of nonagnatic kinship ties to acquire a place to live that was safe from marauders, tax collectors, and the feud.

The general political results of the pacification and early administration of the Iteso can be summed up as follows: (1) political action that involved relatively large numbers of people was ruthlessly and violently suppressed; (2) incumbents of the traditional political office, the section heads, were eliminated; (3) activities associated with territorial sections were punished; and (4) in a climate of danger and unease, residential patterns became highly unstable and thus leaders could no longer rely on agnates who would either form the stable core of a following or form the basis for a new residential group by pioneering in a new territory.

III. The previous section describes the political environment which accompanied the disappearance of the institutionalized political leader, the section head. These factors, coupled with the military reversals the Iteso suffered prior to the coming of the Europeans, indicate that the position of section leader was not politically viable and that the Iteso may have been losing faith in the institution. Certainly the rapidity with which the Iteso abandoned ritual activities associated with territorial sections indicates that this is true. In any case, one fact is clear: those section leaders shot by Murunga in 1894–1895 are described by Iteso as the last of the Luk’etem.

It remains now to describe the nature of leadership during this transitional period and its relationship to present-day patterns of local-level leadership. In this section I shall pay particular attention to the continuities that existed between precolonial and colonial leader-follower relationships.

The word used by Iteso to describe leaders during this period is lok’auriaart [the one of the cattle resting place]. This is the same term that was used to describe the effective competitors for the office of section leader in the precolonial period. The Iteso describe the person who was called a lok’auriaart as being very much like his precolonial namesake. He was a man of exceptional achievement – brave in battle and skilled as a warrior, rich in cows, the possessor of many wives, and forceful in public and judicious in his opinion.

The major distinguishing characteristic of a lok’auriaart, however, is that he was possessed of a following who would do his bidding in return for protection and economic support. Iteso were universally agreed that no matter how excellent and qualified a man might be, if he did not have a following, he was not a lok’auriaart. For this reason, I choose to translate the term as “patron.”

This describes the phenomenon very well indeed because the word implies a number of outstanding figures who are in competition for followers. Each patron, in order to obtain a following, had to attract his clients from some other patron. To do this he provided those followers with the use of his wealth in cows and with protection. Also, he had to be continuously successful as a patron. This meant his clients could not be readily harrassed by the government chiefs or be too vulnerable to attack from other Iteso. Fear of retaliation from the patron should have prevented other Iteso from attacking his clients or starting a feud with them. In addition, the wealth of the patron had to be sufficient to sustain clients during a period of agricultural famine and also to support new clients while they establish their households under his supervision.

In return for this, the patron was granted authority, prestige, and the tribute of communal labor on his fields. But this lasted only so long as he was successful. Failure to provide a relatively safe and comfortable
environment for his clients meant those clients would move under the authority of another patron who was better able to provide those things. The clientele of a patron was a mixture of different kinsmen. They included distant agnates and younger full brothers, sisters' sons, sisters' daughters' husbands, daughters' husbands, sons, and sisters' husbands. Wives' brothers and half-brothers were rarely included. Both the normative structure of kinship relations and competition over scarce resources precluded the possibility of some types of kinsmen becoming clients. In addition, some of these clients were able to attract clients of their own.

Agricultural activities in the area were under the general direction of the patron. He told followers when and where to farm. Their land could be prepared for sowing only after his land had been prepared. I do not think it is fair to say that the patron "owned" the land used by his followers. This implies that he could transfer it to another patron for a consideration or that his sons could inherit his rights to transfer the land. This was not so, because land was a relatively free commodity. I would say rather that the patron controlled the distribution of land. He had the right to withdraw the initial grant of land, but this right was only exercised in the case of suspected wizards. Continued residence, however, transferred the right to grant use of the land to its occupiers. The death of an adult household member on the land confirmed that the usufructuary rights had been transformed into rights of ownership.

The position of patron provides some sharp contrasts with the position of section leader, and these can be seen by comparing the connotations of the two indigenous terms for these leaders, lok'etem and lok'auriaart. The term lok'etem is derived from the Iteso word etem [hearth] while the term lok'auriaart is derived from the word auriaart [a place where cattle rest during the day]. The auriaart is not the aujo [a kraal inside the boundaries of the homestead where cattle are kept during the night]. The group associated with a hearth is a domestic group, in which membership is determined by common residence and acknowledgement of the authority of the household head. This group is distinctly separated from other similar groups and the authority of the household is an ascribed jural status. The auriaart, however, is an ad hoc collection of cattle and the men who happen to be herding that day. Leadership in this group is based on force of personality rather than any precisely defined rights. The use of the word etem in the official's title implies, in its application to the people of a section, jural authority over a precisely defined group of people. The use of auriaart, on the other hand, suggests something rather different. It connotes a voluntary type of association or coming together. Thus the authority of a patron is symbolized by a group, in which leadership is neither institutionalized nor backed by specific sanctions. The authority of the section leader, by contrast, is institutionalized through his incumbency of an office and backed by ritual sanctions which could be imposed through the curse of the retirement set. The distinction is between a leader who is an officeholder and one who is simply primus inter pares. Another contrast which must be noted, there may be only one section leader within a section at any given time while in a patron's area the number of leaders is limited only by pragmatic considerations.

This change in the pattern of leader-follower relations had important structural consequences. In the preceding section, the consequences of pacification on Iteso political structure were described. It was demonstrated that a system of territorial sections and subsections organized around an agnatic core could not be maintained in the face of the pacification policies followed by the British and their agents. There emerged a flexible pattern of leader-follower relations which were better adapted to the changing political situations. Associated with this change in leader-follower relations was the emergence of a new form of territorial organization which I call a neighborhood.

The neighborhood differs from the section or subsection in a number of ways. It is not a corporate group. Its boundaries and membership are not rigidly defined. Members of the neighborhood are not constrained to interact with one another on the basis of laws, the violation of which will result in the imposition of jural and ritual sanctions. Instead, and in accordance with the contractual nature of patron-client relations, relations between neighbors are voluntary (Abrahams 1965). The sanctions imposed on persons who violate the norm of neighborly relations are diffuse rather than specific. Thus, the leadership institution of the patron and the variety of kinship ties, by which followers were linked to him, led to the emergence of a local territorial group (a neighborhood) of mixed agnatic composition, in which unilineal descent was irrelevant as an organizing principle.6

6 I must add here that although agnation was not directly related to the composition of neighborhood groups, there was a tendency for there to be a fairly large number of agnatically related people living in any one area. This would be especially true if two neighboring patrons were members of the same subclan. The consequence of large numbers of agnates living close by would be to provide a large number of people available for the performance of rituals and for aid in the event of a feud. Also exogamous subclans tended to be localized in four or five distinct areas with some members randomly distributed over the rest of the Iteso area.

This pattern of agnatic clustering is the probable result of the influence of two factors. First, Iteso waver between maximizing one of two opposing kinship options: (1) living with agnates who are jurally bound to ego but among whom there is an atmosphere of
Despite the changes in the norms of leader-follower relations and the structural consequences of these changes, the Iteso maintained considerable continuity of political action and personnel between 1890 and 1930. A large number of those leaders who set themselves up as patrons in a neighborhood were either former subsection leaders or aspirants to that position. In other words, they were the very class of people who had been called *lok'auriaart* in the precolonial system. Furthermore the deeds which made aspiring leaders become contenders for positions of leadership remained essentially the same. A leader acquired followers through a combination of judicious action, bravery, and the use of cattle wealth. Followers were attracted to a leader for the protection and economic support that he could offer. A leader and his following composed an ego-oriented "quasi-group" (Mayer 1966) in which political support was given to the leader in return for economic and political benefits. This "quasi-group" was recruited by the leader on the basis of a mixture of agnatic and nonagnatic kinship ties. The competitors for the leaders were likely to be closely related agnates. This meant that some potential followers could choose between competing leaders and were thus able to maximize their demands by playing one leader off against another. Finally, aspiring leaders who were losers in the political game had one of two choices. They could either become the followers of a more successful competitor or attempt to recruit a following and pioneer an unsettled area. This was a pattern continued from the precolonial period.

All of the above constitute a description of the content of political processes relating to competition and the recruitment of followers, which remained constant despite the radical changes in political environment that occurred between 1890 and 1930. Thus, from the perspective of the political actors, the resources in followers, the means by which followers were obtained, and the identity of the competitors did not change appreciably. The changes that did occur were not in the "who" or the "what" of politics, but in the "where." The structural locus of competition and recruitment changed from the territorial section and subsection to a much more ill-defined area made up of a number of neighborhoods. This means that while the scale of corporate political action decreased, the scale (perhaps scope would be a better word) of individual political action increased in terms of the options available to people.

IV. The real impetus to the establishment of a genuine colonial presence in the Iteso area was the completion of the Uganda railroad as far as Malaba on the Kenya-Uganda border, where a station was built in 1921. Greater official knowledge of events and personalities among the Iteso meant the end of the period of anarchy that characterized the early colonial period. Outbreaks of feud were severely punished as were the few attempts at intertribal warfare. In addition, the more direct attempts at exploitation by government chiefs began to come to the notice of British officials. Ilukoli, one of the first Iteso subchiefs with any genuine authority, was quickly removed from office when his arbitrary confiscation of cattle came to the notice of colonial officials at Mumias. Also at this time, according to the archival accounts, Murunga began to lose interest in the Iteso; and although he was to remain as their chief for some time, his authority was virtually nil (Kenya National Archives n.d.b.). Genuine local authorities began to emerge at this time. In what were later to become North and South Teso locations, respectively, two chiefly dynasties established themselves. These were the Seme in the south and Omudek in the north.

The most significant consequence of the establishment of an administrative apparatus was the decline in influence of the patron. There were a number of reasons for this change. The patron was a noninstitutionalized competitor with two other types of influential people; the latter two were able to utilize resources that were not available to the patron, while the power of the patron derived entirely from a local base and he had only his personal qualities and wealth in cattle as resources. The first of these other two influential people was the mission catechist, who served as a focal point for the distribution of mission services. The second was the local government official, who did not have many resources to distribute (at that time). Instead he was able to reward his followers by not applying government demands as stringently to them as to others. In this way he could also punish his enemies.

Very often a man would combine the identities of mission servant and government official into the same person, although not necessarily at the same time. The most successful example of this career history is the ex-government chief of the Iteso, Alexander Papa. When it became clear that his elder brother Enyusat was grooming him for the position of chief, he made a dramatic appearance at the recently established Mill-Hill...
Mission in Amukura in 1937 and converted to Catholicism, renounced all of his four wives, and in a Catholic ceremony married a daughter of the government chief of Bukhayo. This was a very clever strategy for a number of reasons. Papa obtained the support of the Europeans most familiar with the Iteso, the missionaries. He established a "progressive" image for himself, which contrasted strikingly with the "traditional" image of Enyusat, who was then chief and who was regarded by the missionaries as an old beer-drinking, marihuana-smoking reprobate. Finally, Papa reactivated the precolonial Iteso-Bukhayo alliance and used this tie as a basis for claiming to be the natural successor to Enyusat.

After Chief Alexander was forcibly retired at the time of Independence in 1963, he married three additional wives. It is interesting to note here that a daughter of Enyusat was married to a son of Omudek, the most powerful subchief in what was to become North Teso location. Thus, as political figures began to occupy administrative posts, they solidified their positions by establishing marital alliances with other figures.

An example which is typical of the Protestant areas of the Iteso locations is the career of Bartholomew Olo. He was originally trained as a reader for the Anglican Church, but he switched his allegiance to the Salvation Army Mission when it was established in 1925. Most of the people of his sublocation followed suit. He became the equivalent of what would now be a subchief in 1925 and resigned his church position. His younger brother succeeded him in 1935 but died a few years later. Bartholomew then reentered the office, now called *Mlango* [Swahili for ‘door’]. He retired a wealthy and respected old man in 1960. He continues to serve on church and school committees.

It is important to be specific about the changes in leadership pattern that I am describing. Leaders became part of extra-Iteso structures and, in fact, were leaders because of the outside resources that they could command. These leaders controlled much larger areas than the patron. As a consequence of this, the scale of leadership expanded and the content of leader-follower relations became more specifically political. The relationship between leader and follower decreased in intensity. The content of the relationship during the patron period was, in Gluckman’s phrase, “multiplex” in that it was kinship-based, economic, residential, and political. The new leadership pattern was territorial only in the sense that leader and follower were very often members of the same governmentally defined administrative unit. The relationship was primarily a political one with economic overtones. Kinship continued to play an important role in the ideology of politics in that leaders and followers often used the values of kinship to justify an already existing political alliance.

A further examination of leader-follower relations is not really germane to the problem I am concerned with in this section, which is the emergence of certain kinds of territorial organization. I have been attempting to document the decline of the patron as a type of leader. I might add that the genuine followers of the present seem to serve as middlemen between the leaders and the great mass of Iteso. They are essentially notables without power or authority. Their importance lies almost entirely in their political connections and their relative wisdom and experience. Their followings are ephemeral and difficult to determine, but they are a focus of sociometric choice within and between neighborhoods.

I have described in some detail the decline of the position of patron. The word *lok’auriaart* [patron] is another one of those Iteso words that has disappeared. Presently, leaders are called by Iteso adoptions of the words for their titles. The location chief is called *echiefu*, the subchief, *esubchiefu*, and so on. It is important to ask what the consequence was of the decline of the patron for the definition of neighborhoods. I suggested above that neighborhoods were originally oriented to individual patrons and that neighborhood identity was a function of political following, in that the followers of a patron were also coresidents that he had gathered around him. Iteso described the original formation of neighborhoods in just this fashion. The people who lived over there, they say, were *itunga k’Omuse* [the people of Omuse] if Omuse was the name of a patron. Thus defined, the patron’s neighborhood becomes a kind of residential quasi-group. Mayer has defined quasi-groups as “fundamentally different from the group and the association” because they are “ego-centered, in the sense of depending for their very existence on a specific person as a central organizing focus” and secondly because “the actions of any member are relevant only in so far as they are interactions between him and ego or ego’s intermediary” (1966: 97–98). The political aspect in the formation of the patron’s neighborhood is crucial for understanding its activities and also qualifies it preeminently as a territorial quasi-group.

The decline of the significance of the patron meant, however, that the neighborhoods were no longer oriented to one particular ego and his own idiosyncratic history. This is certainly the situation that exists today. For any household head a neighborhood is a group of coresidents with whom he and a few other important alters interact in more significant fashion and with greater frequency.

Thus, under modern conditions Iteso neighborhoods have become less bounded and there is less agreement on the exact composition of each neighborhood. Therefore, although there is an indigenous term for the neighborhood, there is rarely any uniform consensus about who the mem-
bers of that neighborhood are or even what the name of that neighborhood is. There is, however, pattern and consistency in neighborhood organization. If a network grid of relations between contiguous household heads were to be constructed, it would be seen that there were groups of households between which social relations were more intense and frequent than others. It is just such a group that I call the neighborhood. In Gulliver’s terminology, the present-day Iteso neighborhood should be called a “cluster” rather than a quasi-group. A cluster is a group whose members “over a period ... tended to cooperate with one another in collective action more than with other neighborhoods,” and is distinguished from a quasi-group in that interaction is not oriented to a “focal ego” (1971:243-244).

V. This paper has been concerned with an examination of the relationship between a colonizing polity and a traditional polity during that often brief period between initial contact and the establishment of an administrative organization. This intermediate stage in the process whereby previously independent societies became absorbed into larger entities has been largely ignored in the literature on colonialism in Africa. One reason for the neglect of this transitional period has been that much of the research on the African response has been done in societies which cooperated vigorously with colonial officials. In western Kenya, the Wanga Kingdom under Mumia was such a society.

A general examination of African responses during the transitional period must await further research. At this point, however, two types of responses can be seen in societies which were not organized on a hierarchical basis and were pacified instead of cooperating in their own colonization. The first response was to hide the true nature of the political system from the superordinate groups and to put forward surrogates for those people who were the genuine political or religious officials. Such a response was made by the Gogo of central Tanzania, where ritual leaders of territorial groups hid their identities from the early German officials (Rigby 1971).

The Iteso provide an example of the second response, in which some traditional political and religious institutions were quickly abandoned under external pressure in order to protect the interests of the indigenous leaders. It is not possible at this stage to identify easily the factors involved in this differential response of the two societies. Some comparisons can be drawn, however. The Gogo Wutemi [ritual leaders] were primarily religious functionaries (Rigby 1969), whereas the Iteso section leaders were secular political officials. The religious dimension of the political system was located in the institution of retirement sets. Therefore, the Iteso could not have felt any obligation to protect their section leaders as sacred figures.

In addition, there is no evidence that the Gogo had experienced the number of political failures that the Iteso had faced just before pacification. The viability of the political system was not being questioned as it was among the Iteso.

Finally, the hiatus between pacification and actual administration appears to have been very short in Ugogo. The Gogo experienced a local form of repression of their political activities rather than the external repressions that characterized the Iteso situation. Iteso were concerned primarily with protecting themselves from unpredictable and overwhelming political forces rather than with hiding political figures from agents of the administration.

Whether or not the preceding analysis of the different responses is valid, the data clearly indicate that both societies succeeded in maintaining important dimensions of their political system through their readiness to alter other arrangements. In the Gogo case this flexibility was indicated by their utilization of surrogate political officials in order to protect religious leaders. Iteso leaders, on the other hand, retained or salvaged their status as leaders by reducing the scale of their ambitions and maintaining a low profile. However, they continued to recruit followers in much the same way and their competitors for leadership were very much the same people. To use Dyson-Hudson’s terminology (1966), the “politically significant” interests of Iteso politics, kinship, and household variability remained constant. It was in the alterations of “political” interests from territorial section to neighborhood that changes occurred.

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