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REGALIA GALORE:

The Decline of Ankole Kingship

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Though largely overshadowed in public attention by the more dramatic overthrow of the Buganda monarchy, the kingdom of Ankole deserves more by way of an epitaph than a mere footnote in the obituary of its better-known neighbour. Incorporated into the Uganda political framework by the vagaries of colonial history, Ankole kingship faced many of the familiar strains and stresses following European colonisation in Africa. Traditionally the linch-pin of the social system, in this process the kingship of Ankole became confronted with the demands of an entirely different organisational framework, that of a colonial administrative state. Under the impact of these new arrangements, Ankole provided one more instance of the puzzles and perplexities which have accompanied the processes of change and adaptation of traditional patterns of authority; in time, these transformations considerably weakened the capacity of the monarchy to function as a meaningful institution and symbol in the Ankole political system. Yet even though the effect of these changes had been to make the monarchy largely obsolete, its abolition ultimately resulted from a challenge to the integrity of the wider Uganda polity of which it formed part; a challenge, moreover, which originated from outside the Ankole subsystem.

Nor is this the only factor that lends special interest to Ankole. That the abolition of the Ankole monarchy should have aroused few strong reactions is all the more intriguing considering the upheaval provoked under similar circumstances in Buganda. Part of the explanation lies in the processes of adjustment and interaction that have taken place over the years within Ankole as well as between it and the Uganda-wide political system. Far more complex than the changes involved in a one-to-one substitution of authority structures, modern for traditional, the social, political and geographical context of Ankole kingship was transformed at the same time that kingship itself was being restructured. At the turn of the century, when colonial rule was introduced, the formal boundaries of the kingdom underwent considerable geographic expansion, but these territorial gains were accompanied by severe political limitations arising from its

incorporation into Uganda. The implication of this last fact was that the very existence of the monarchy came to depend on policy considerations of an entirely different nature from what might have been the case had the kingdom been treated as a single political entity.

Moreover, various characteristics of the social structure of Ankole had a significant bearing on the changing role of kingship, particularly the ethnic division between Bairu and Bahima and the decline in influence of the traditional ruling clan, the Bahinda. In the wake of colonisation new patterns of relationship emerged among groups, and these in turn gave rise to new perceptions of the role of kingship in the system. In brief, it is plain that a rather complex set of factors must be taken into account if one is to understand the roots of this transformation. Before coming to grips with the central question raised in this essay — to what extent has the redefinition of kingship affected the capacity of the institution to operate as a meaningful element in the political system? — it will be advisable to examine the nature of popular reactions within Ankole to the abolition of the monarchy.

#### The End of an Era

Kingship in Ankole was formally abolished on September 8, 1967, following the ratification by the Parliament of Uganda of a new constitution proclaiming a unitary and republican form of government for the whole of Uganda. Together with the kingdoms of Buganda, Bunyoro and Toro, Ankole lost its semi-federal and monarchical status and henceforth was relegated to the rank of a district of Uganda.<sup>1</sup> Administrative offices and other institutions reminiscent of Ankole's monarchical heritage were disbanded or restyled in accordance with the pattern followed elsewhere in the country. Letterheads and placards bearing the name "Ankole Kingdom Government" were altered with remarkable speed and instructions were issued concerning the proper way of addressing the new district officials. The king (Omugabe), Rubambansi Sir Charles Godfrey Gasyonga II, was given a month's notice to vacate his palace. And when, at the end of September 1967, Ankole's royal drum, Bagyendanwa, was unceremoniously loaded onto a lorry to be taken to storage in a government warehouse, the last major visible attribute of Ankole kingship was officially consigned to oblivion.

These few events marked the end of an epoch whose origins lay hidden in the past. It is generally assumed that the roots of Ankole<sup>2</sup> kingship date back at least four or five hundred years. In common with other inter-lacustrine kingdoms, it presumably owed its mythical charter to the semi-legendary Bacwezi, yet it is possible that a state structure existed in Ankole even before the alleged sojourn of Bacwezi on earth.<sup>3</sup> At any rate, legend and lore connected with kingship had lingered on from olden days till the present and protocol and precedence remained matters of concern virtually till the last moment of monarchy.

Given the historical claims of the Ankole monarchy, it would be quite reasonable to expect its termination to signify a profoundly emotional clash of values. After all, few things are more powerfully symbolic of corporate existence than kingship itself. Kingship has been often the object of deeply affective values and in many instances has played a crucial role in shaping common political identities. Removing this capstone from a political structure might well leave an emotional vacuum not easily filled by alternative secular symbols. On the surface, the abolition of Ankole kingship would seem just another illustration of these conditions.

In fact, however, the operation did not carry such momentous implications. Naturally, most Banyankore engaged in lively discussion over the issue. More significant than the display of interest as such was the nature of attitudes in Ankole. While these varied from group to group, there was clearly no general expression of regret. The author was in Ankole in June 1967, when the first announcement of the proposed termination of kingship was made. Among the opinions sampled, some clearly indicated that the changes would upset Ankole. And, as a matter of fact, some people were upset. Others, however, did not hesitate to express their satisfaction over the fall of the monarchy, and one especially vocal group immediately staged celebrations in Mbarara, the district capital.

Nonetheless, both rejoicing and regret were, on the whole, atypical reactions, a much larger part of the population appearing basically indifferent to the whole matter. For this wider segment it made little difference whether there was an Omugabe or not, as life would presumably go on much as before. Theirs was a reasoning based on quite pragmatic grounds, largely devoid of emotive responses. Many people, for instance, argued that since the Omugabe was no more than a figurehead, neither his presence nor the office itself were of much consequence. Pros and cons

were also formulated on the basis of utilitarian grounds or considerations of prestige. Preference for abolition, for instance, was not seldom argued in financial terms, since many Banyankore considered the money used for the upkeep of the monarchy to be unnecessary and wasteful expenditure. Again, if a nostalgia for kingship was expressed at all, this was often not so much founded on any intrinsic merits, but rather on the idea that it had given Ankole more status and dignity than, for instance, the districts of northern Uganda.<sup>4</sup>

Few of these views fit the stereotyped notion of a traditional people intensely devoted to its overlord. Even the circles closest to the monarchy took the changes with remarkable detachment and restraint. The Ministers of the Ankole Kingdom Government were obviously concerned about the loss of their titles and the perquisites they had enjoyed, but that was roughly the extent of their concern. As one of them commented earlier, they cared little for either the person or the office of the Omugabe, but found the ministerial positions associated with Ankole's kingdom status quite gratifying. Another senior official, who was more intimately associated with the Omugabe, said that however much he personally deplored the termination of kingship, he had expected this to happen for the past twenty years and thus found reason to be thankful in the fact that it had lasted so long. The comment of the Omugabe was that if the Government and the people found it fit that he should go, then he would do so. "All that I am anxiously waiting for is an instruction from the Government on what to do next."<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, administrative officers who had been in the service of the Omugabe's government were dutifully engaged in obliterating the remaining vestiges of monarchism from the facade of the political system. The operation was smooth and unspectacular, as if it were merely a matter of disposing of an already superfluous appendage.

If one takes the view that affective loyalties are a necessary ingredient of kingship, then the behaviour of the Banyankore in 1967 may well seem inexplicable. Certainly, the argument that the people of Ankole refused to express their innermost feelings out of fear of penalisation cannot withstand critical examination. Remarkably candid discussions had appeared in the press prior to the enactment of the new constitution, followed up in the course of public debate, and whoever wished to publicly state his support of the monarchy had been quite free to do so.<sup>6</sup> Hence, the question remains as to why the Banyankore reacted so indifferently. Our assumption is that there is no reason to dispute the genuineness of the

opinions expressed in Ankole, and indeed that there was a certain logic to these views. Evidently, then, in 1967 kingship had little meaning for the average Munyankore, either as a symbol or an institution. While there is no gainsaying that Ankole kingship served as a major focal point of political cohesiveness prior to the introduction of British rule, the effect of the transformations brought in the wake of colonisation must thus have been to make the institution increasingly redundant.

The present essay is concerned with this process and will try to account for the conditions which turned a once meaningful institution into a largely superfluous appendage of the Ankole political framework. To this end, we shall first analyse the traditional position of kingship in Ankole and then contrast this with the role it was accorded after the establishment of colonial rule.

#### The Traditional Roots of Ankole Kingship

A major feature of the setting in which Ankole kingship functioned was the pronounced ethnic cleavage between Bahima and Bairu. The Bahima-Bairu division, which has a certain analogy to that between Batutsi and Bahutu in Rwanda and Burundi, had also existed in neighbouring systems such as Karagwe and Toro, but virtually nowhere had it remained as clearcut as in the Ankole area. Until the present day in Ankole, the two ethnic groups have kept their distinct features and much of their distinctive ways of life. Bahima life has been traditionally centered around their famed long-horned cattle, which were not only a source of food but also a symbol of wealth, power and prestige. The Bairu, on the other hand, have been generally cultivators and in an earlier era did not own productive cattle. The Bahima, who were relatively small in numbers (at present about 5% of the population, though in traditional times more numerous), constituted the social and political elite, whereas the Bairu, who were in the majority, had a subordinate status.

According to a rather widely held assumption, the Bahima migrated into the Ankole area some four or five centuries ago and then established the state structures which have been handed down through time.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the inauguration rites of the Omugabe of Ankole included some rather un-pastoral ceremonies, such as the planting of millet seed, which might indicate the existence of kingship in an era before the Bahima assumed political control.<sup>8</sup> It seems possible that the Bahima-dominated state

structure has been projected back into history in order to establish a claim as to its origin. On a mythological plane, meanwhile, the royal clan of Ankole, the Bahinda, supposedly had an origin which was distinct from that of both Bahima and Bairu.<sup>9</sup> This did not alter the fact that in known history the Bahinda led essentially the same type of life as Bahima and generally identified themselves with Bahima interests. Normally, the Bahinda are also considered as a Bahima clan, although a somewhat special one. Ankole could thus be called a Bahima state,<sup>10</sup> notwithstanding the references to the myth of origin which Bahima often made. The function of this myth was basically a legitimising one as it purported statutory equality between Bahima and Bairu. This sought to conceal the social distance between these two groups even if, at the same time, it recognised the supremacy of one section of the Bahima, the Bahinda.

It suggests itself that Ankole was not only a state of the Bahima, but also primarily for the Bahima. Some Bairu were subservient to Bahima, and in general Bairu had fewer rights and privileges than Bahima. But there can be little doubt that a good proportion of the Bairu lived a fairly autonomous existence, and it appears even more certain that the political life of the kingdom revolved around matters that were almost the exclusive concern of Bahima, such as warfare, cattle raising, litigation and the like.<sup>11</sup> Some Bairu were required to provide produce and services to the Omugabe and other senior Bahima, and at times such requisitions may have been rather arbitrary, but there is little indication that there was a pervasive and continuous exercise of political control over all of them. Thus, while in a general sense Bairu were a subject category, their lack of participation in the political process may in part be explained by the nature of the Bahima state, which was especially geared to the requirements of pastoralism. The Ankole framework, therefore, basically comprised two distinct types or levels of political relationships. Between Bahima and Bairu, relationships tended to be intermittent and hierarchical, based on a premise of inequality.<sup>12</sup> Within the Bahima stratum, relationships were more frequent and basically those between freemen.<sup>13</sup>

In this setting, the Omugabe was the pivot around which the system was organised. To most Bairu, he was the ultimate embodiment of legitimate power and, in principle, the supreme arbiter of conflicts among men.<sup>14</sup> In fact, however, the office was far removed from day-to-day Bairu affairs.



While the Omugabe clearly stood as the central figure in the political system and his position no doubt inspired considerable awe to most Bairu, the ties that linked them to the Omugabe were not especially conducive to strong affective identification with the political system. For the Bahima, on the other hand, the Omugabe was the centre piece of their political relationships. They certainly enjoyed a much more intimate relationship with the Omugabe than did the Bairu. He was centrally involved in their affairs and in fact used to move camp with his cattle as did other Bahima. Not only was his way of life much the same as theirs, but he was regarded as the protector of their interests. Due to the ethnic division, therefore, the traditional Ankole system differed in a fundamental way from, for instance, traditional Buganda with its more homogeneous population structure. Contrary to what its mythology would imply, traditional Ankole was not a system in which Bairu and Bahima were basically united in a mystical identification with its kingship.

#### The Two Faces of Kingship

Analysis of the traditional political system of Ankole<sup>15</sup> is hampered by a conceptual problem often encountered in the study of historic African states. When glancing through the available literature, or talking to the reputedly knowledgeable members of the societies concerned, one of the more consistent images which is presented holds that the traditional ruler had absolute powers. Further queries may well yield an entirely different picture. A consideration of the distribution of authoritative functions, or of the consultations, bargaining and conflicts involved in the political process, not seldom suggests a far greater dispersal of power than might have been anticipated.<sup>16</sup>

This ambivalence of interpretation is characteristic of much of the literature on Ankole. On the one hand, the Omugabe figures as omnipotent and despotic, as a ruler who wields unlimited powers and who has an absolute, autocratic sway over his kingdom. On the other hand, he emerges as essentially a primus inter pares, a mediator between conflicting interests, and an instrument in the settlement of disputes. More intriguing still is that both images sometimes coexist within the same source, leaving the reader at a loss to reconcile one with the other.

The absolutist view of Ankole kingship appeared first in the work of John Roscoe, the first writer to give a detailed account of Ankole society. Roscoe reported in 1923 that "The government of the country of Ankole was autocratic and the power was in the hands of the Mugabe or ruler, whose rule was absolute and his decision on any matter final."<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, Roscoe asserted, "The Mugabe had the power of life and death over all his subjects, and it was believed that his people held their property solely through his clemency, for he was the owner of all the land and all the cattle."<sup>18</sup> This last point was again re-emphasised in an official publication in 1938, which stated that "The Omugabe laid claim to all the cattle in the country, being as much the ruler of cattle as he was of men. This claim, furthermore, was no idle one, for the Omugabe could and did take whatever cattle he wished from whomsoever he pleased ..."<sup>19</sup> A few years later, in 1940, Kalervo Oberg expressed himself in much the same vein as Roscoe had done, suggesting that "The position of the Mugabe was exalted, his authority supreme, his leadership all-embracing." Oberg further concluded that "Power, ... both physical and spiritual, was the inherent quality of kingship."<sup>20</sup>

These views have been echoed virtually until the present day. For instance, in an essay prepared some years ago by the Ntare History Society, it is claimed that "Before the British brought in democracy, the type of government which prevailed was ... despotic. The king's powers were unlimited. He could, with a word, prevent or make a man's fortune."<sup>21</sup> Another illustration is provided by Vansina. Having constructed a typology of African kingdoms on the basis of a scale of decreasing centralisation, i.e. from the most centralised structures on one end to federative structures (in which the king is "only primus inter pares") on the other, Vansina goes on to characterise Ankole as a 'clear case' of the first type, namely a "despotic kingdom" in which "the king appoints all other officials and wields absolute power in practice and in theory."<sup>22</sup>

These examples could be multiplied, but for our purposes they suffice to indicate one persistent trend of thought according to which the traditional monarchical institutions of Ankole were synonymous with those of a "despotic" state. At the root of this misrepresentation lies a confusion between the actual and ideal aspects of authority vested in the Omugabe. But, on the face of it, there was much in the traditional political culture which seemed to support the idea. In monarchical

ideology, the Omugabe was seen as possessing extraordinary and divine faculties, unequalled in other human beings. He was known, for instance, as Rubambansi, "He who stretches the Earth",<sup>23</sup> which clearly stressed his omnipotence; as Rugaba, "The Giver", meaning that it was he who gave (or could withhold) prosperity and wealth; as Omukama, "He Who Gives You Milk", again typifying him as the benefactor who supplied his people with food; and as Nyakusinga, "The Victorious", who overcomes all enemies. Moreover, as Omugabe, "The one who has been given authority",<sup>24</sup> he posed as the direct descendant of the Creator Ruhanga, which again exemplified his supernatural powers. In the ritual he engaged in and the ceremonial with which he was surrounded, these aspects were all symbolically expressed. On his accession, for instance, he would purify the country, and when disease came to the land he would curse it to dispel it. In the night, it was believed, he could not turn or he would turn his kingdom over.<sup>25</sup> Finally, the Omugabe could not die a natural death, but was obliged to take a poison when his powers began to fail him.<sup>26</sup> When this happened, the word for death was not used, but it was said that "heaven has fallen" or "fire has gone out". Again, his body was not buried, but taken to a place where his spirit would reincarnate itself into a lion.

All these notions thus seem to underscore the supreme and exalted position of the Omugabe. In practice, however, the Omugabe's powers to impose his will were severely restricted. A variety of groups and individuals participated in the making of decisions and their influence could not be easily circumvented by the Omugabe. We should first note here the position of the Omugabe's mother and sister, who were consulted on many major issues and whose opinion carried great weight. But of special importance in this respect were the Bakungu, or senior chiefs, who were in control of territorial divisions and who also served as the Omugabe's counsellors. Decisions were discussed at great length in the assembly of those chiefs, usually until a consensus emerged which would then be articulated by the Omugabe. The duality of functions of the Bakungu had significant consequences, for it meant that the officials involved in formulating major decisions were also responsible for their implementation, while the Omugabe had no other administrative instrument to override their influence.<sup>27</sup> Although the Bakungu were expected to spend a good deal of time paying court to the Omugabe, and while this obligation might conceivably have prevented them from asserting their independence from the

centre, the reverse side of the coin is that they were thus given the opportunity to gain considerable influence over the Omugabe. Various early travellers have in fact referred to them as the "power behind the throne".<sup>28</sup> Moreover, despite their involvement at the political centre, it appears that the Bakungu retained considerable freedom of action in their own areas. The missionary Willis, for instance, who was in Ankole when the British assumed their overrule, and whose refreshingly naïve journal affords many useful insights into political relationships during his time, commented in 1901: "Hitherto each chief had done what he liked ... " (and added: "Now there will be a settled, responsible government.")<sup>29</sup> But while the Bakungu were thus relatively autonomous vis-à-vis the Omugabe, within their own territorial jurisdictions they were themselves restricted in their powers. Roscoe stated it quite strongly: "The authority of a Mukungu in his own district was limited, for he had no control over the movements of the subordinate chiefs and other people who might take up their residence or pasture their cows there ... There was no animosity between the Mukungu and the subordinate chiefs in his own district, but the latter were quite independent and only acknowledged him as their superior when some dispute arose among them and required authoritative settlement."<sup>30</sup> Thus, political power was not only dispersed spatially, but also did not reach down very deeply.

In these conditions, there was not much the Omugabe could do to enhance his influence, except through his personal leadership qualities. Many senior chiefs were Bahinda, and while they had pledged their loyalty to the Omugabe, the latter was in no small respect dependent upon their continued support. His obligation to cater for their interest was perhaps even stronger since in Ankole, contrary to Bunyoro and Toro, special functions of heads of the royal clan which were distinct from the office of the monarch had not been developed.<sup>31</sup> This indicates smaller political role differentiation in the Ankole situation and suggests that, in times of crisis, the office of the Omugabe would be one step further removed from demands by the royal clan than was the case in Bunyoro or Toro. Moreover, although formally all senior chiefs were appointed by the Omugabe, these appointments tended to confirm, and in a sense disguise, hereditary succession to office. Roscoe wrote that "When one of these [Bakungu] chiefs died, the king appointed his successor who was generally, though not

necessarily, his heir."<sup>32</sup> The Omugabe may have been able to demote one of them, as Audrey Richards has suggested,<sup>33</sup> but then most probably not without the backing of the other Bakungu. There was always the possibility of a chief withdrawing his allegiance, which had to be countered by concession or punitive measures depending upon the amount of countervailing strength available. Some Bahinda were in fact potential rivals to the Omugabe. The succession of kingship was commonly determined in a contest between warring factions of princes, in which victory fell to the one who succeeded in taking possession of Bagyendanwa, the royal drums. "The choice, therefore", commented a senior prince, "was by spears. Spears are in fact the nation, they indicate where the will of the nation lies."<sup>34</sup> It was possible, however, that even if one contender had come out victorious and had been installed as Omugabe, rival factions would continue their opposition and consider his as Ekyebumbe, a usurper. Full legitimacy was therefore not bestowed upon an Omugabe until all fighting had subsided.<sup>35</sup> The potential challenge which came from the Bahinda was also exemplified by the rule that the Omugabe's chief advisor, the Enganzi, could not be a member of the royal clan, since a Muhinda might conceivably use his position to seize power. The office of Enganzi was filled either by a Muhima of a non-royal Ankole clan, by a member of a royal clan of a neighbouring kingdom, or even by a Mwiru.<sup>36</sup> These various arrangements are tokens of real or potential limitation to the exercise of power by the Omugabe. If, therefore, as Richards has argued, "In Nkore there seems to have been little conflict between the hereditary principle and that of appointment",<sup>37</sup> this was appearance rather than actual fact, achieved through a delicate balance of forces in which the tension between these principles was contained. Basically, the traditional political structure of Ankole was highly fragile, and its kingship served to provide it with a sense of unity.

Some aspects of the jurisdiction attributed in theory to the Omugabe accordingly present a very different picture in practice. For instance, whereas it was claimed that the Omugabe was the owner of all land, in actual fact this title had little or no bearing on the way land was allocated. In principle, a man could occupy a vacant plot unless someone else had an earlier claim to it. In cases of dispute, the issue would be settled by the chiefs. Again, if people desired to move into an area which had not been their traditional habitat, the chief would commonly allocate a stretch of land to them.<sup>38</sup> All these tenure arrangements were naturally of importance

to the Bairu cultivators. For Bahima, however, land was traditionally of little concern. Not only was it relatively plentiful, but since Bahima were constantly moving with their herds of cattle, there was little reason for them to submit claims to any particular piece of land.<sup>39</sup> The Omugabe's "ownership" of land, therefore, rather than connoting any strictly defined property relationship in a Western legal sense, was primarily a symbol of ultimate control by which legitimate authority over the system, and perhaps particularly the Bairu, was claimed for Ankole kingship.

Similarly, the Omugabe's claimed ownership of cattle contrasted in significant respects with reality. In theory, it will be recalled, all cattle belonged to the Omugabe and he "gave" it to Bahima in reward for their loyalty, particularly in times of war. In practice, however, the relationship was basically the reverse. Bahima enjoyed virtually unrestricted use of the cattle under their control and paid tribute to the Omugabe through the gift of cows, in return for which they could expect protection from the political centre.<sup>40</sup> The prevalence of this arrangement can also be seen from the fact that the Omugabe had his "own" herds, which were taken for grazing by his herdsmen in various parts of the country. For such cases the term "clientship" would seem the proper description and here the "giving" did indeed initiate with the Omugabe.<sup>41</sup> However, as this by no means applied to all cattle, and as other senior chiefs similarly entered into such clientship contracts, this contradicts the view that ownership of all cattle in any concrete sense rested with the Omugabe. The Omugabe's theoretical claim to all cattle should be seen rather as a symbolic device to assert the political unity of the Bahima of Ankole, which had little to do with actual control and usufruct arrangements.

Again, the pervasive political role attributed to the Omugabe contrasts sharply with his actual function. As noted, the theoretical claims to absolute rulership need considerable modification in view of the involvement of the Bakungu and other specialised office-holders in decision making. More specifically, it seems that the function of the Omugabe was largely a judicial one. Most of the meetings of the assembly of chiefs were concerned with the settlement of disputes between Bahima litigants, ranging from cases of theft and murder to various other infringements of rights and privileges.<sup>42</sup> At times this court also heard appeals by Bairu about their treatment by the Bahima. Willis observed the workings of this council in 1902, and it seems a reasonable assumption that the essence of this

description also applies to the immediate pre-colonial period:

"The Native Council ... is a most amusing affair, and so delightfully informal ... The King and Katikiro sit at one end ... and all the chiefs are arranged in more or less order of precedence, down two sides, the poorer people thronging near the door. There is no attempt at any formal opening: no one stands up to address the rest, for all are speaking at once. In the midst of business anyone who likes strolls up, bows down, and salutes the King in a loud voice. Most of the business consists of hearing (!) cases, for the Council is a rough and ready Court of justice. Witnesses are of course entirely unnecessary. Two scantily clad men, unannounced, come in: each begins accusing the other violently to the King. In the midst of it he turns to me, and asks "Can you understand what they are saying. Do you know what they are saying. Do you know what it means? What is it in English?" and so on, quite oblivious of the fact that he is hearing the case. So the claimant, finding the King otherwise engaged, looks anxiously round for someone who appears to be listening and shouts at him. By this time the discussion has become general, and everyone is talking at the top of his voice: no one hears anyone, for everyone is shouting. The marvel is that out of the hubbub, a verdict emerges, given quite decisively and without hesitation. I can only suppose they catch a good deal more of what is said than one would have thought possible. But all was perfectly friendly, no disturbance, no violence."<sup>43</sup>

The nature of the cases dealt with by this court was no doubt more varied than those before any ordinary modern court, covering issues which would now be regarded as matters of administration, politics and religion, as well as more narrowly defined "legal" issues. As Oberg suggested, in all the cases brought before them, "The function of the Mugabe and his chiefs lay more in giving judgements than in meting out punishments."<sup>44</sup> Moreover, "there was no police organization to guard life and property." Thus, in cases of murder, for instance, "the Mugabe would grant the right of blood revenge, which, however, had to be carried out by the members of the injured extended family." Prima facie, this role seems to re-emphasise the limitations to the Omugabe's powers. However, its significance should not be underrated. As with kingship in ancient times, the essence of Ankole kingship was law-giving. Law-giving was not carried out by the promulgation of sets of abstract regulations to which behaviour would henceforth need to conform. This would only have made sense if there had been a body of specialised agents to whom the task of applying such rules could be delegated. In Ankole, where the Bakungu were involved in the law-making process, such a body was lacking. Law-giving in traditional Ankole was rather a matter of articulating the considered opinion of leading members of the society on questions of social behaviour for which the solution was either not quite

obvious or involved such drastic action to settle that higher sanction was necessary. In either case, recourse was taken to what was intuitively known as the law of the land and it was this to which the Omugabe finally gave expression. Ankole law was a living code, and its function was perhaps even more important than that of law in a society with more specialised organs of government. Nothing less than the cohesiveness of the political community depended largely and directly on the meaningfulness of the judgments passed on the relationships between its members.

It is thus clear that, while in theory the Omugabe was all-powerful, in reality his powers were quite limited. In theory, he was the supreme decision-maker, but in practice the system depended heavily on reaching agreement among the political elite. Again, in theory the Omugabe could rely on coercion to have his will followed, but in practice he depended largely on voluntary compliance with the judgments he pronounced. These apparent contradictions can be considered in terms of a variety of explanatory models. Easiest, but most erroneous, would be to regard them as mutually exclusive interpretations of which one must be necessarily wrong. The Omugabe was not either the mighty Rubambansi or the more humble primus inter pares; from Ankole tradition we learn that somehow he was both. Instead, it is more meaningful to recognise both notions as valid and try to account for their co-existence and interrelationships. Several approaches suggest themselves if the two notions of Ankole monarchy are treated as different perceptions or different aspects of kingship. Either can be further distinguished into conflicting or complementary notions.

Let us first consider these images as different perceptions. The idea that the Omugabe was omnipotent versus the idea that he was no more than a mediator might then reflect the contrasting ways in which the power of kingship was perceived by different social strata or territorial groups. It seems beyond doubt that perception of the office of the Omugabe varied according to the level of the stratification structure. Historically, Bairu are more likely than the Bahima to have regarded the Omugabe as a despotic and powerful man. Again, in newly subjugated areas the power face of kingship may have appeared more in evidence than in the core of the kingdom, since people commonly attribute domination to its leadership.<sup>45</sup> Such different perceptions, then, would be conflicting if one holds that there is only one "true" nature of the object, i.e. kingship, and that it only allows a single definition. On the other hand, they are complementary if one takes the view that they illuminate equally valid perceptions on



the institution from different vantage points in the system. Nevertheless, it should be noticed that different perceptions giving rise to varying interpretations may well have originated with the people who recorded the evidence. While this factor is more difficult to control, the various backgrounds, training and interests of scholars, and also the points in time at which they conducted their research or time periods on which their studies were focused, may have influenced foci and conclusions just as much as differences in perception among the members of the system under study.

Different perceptions of analysts also cause emphasis to be placed on different aspects to explain the functioning of the system. As aspects of the same structure, the notions of the Omugabe as the powerful Rubambansi or as the more common primus inter pares can also be seen as conflicting or complementary. They conflict if one holds that the system does not function on the basis of a single governing principle, but that there is an underlying ambivalence between two contradictory criteria which have roughly equal relevance. One particular form of such ambivalence, a tension between semi-feudal and bureaucratic elements, has been suggested by Audrey Richards as applicable to the interlacustrine area as a whole. Richards argued that:

"[in] all these tribes, kings and kinglets [sic] seem to have felt the need to bolster up their powers as against the hereditary elements, not only the princes, but also the different clan authorities who formerly ruled in semi-independent fashion over their people. The followers or clients whom the rulers appointed as administrative heads over districts or groups of villages, or to executive posts at the capital were the men on whom they began to rely for support. It is in fact the balance of power between these two elements, the hereditary and the appointed, which makes for the variation in the pattern of these conquest states."<sup>46</sup>

If this dichotomy is applied to Ankole, the two existing notions of the political structure would be explicable by reference to structural tension between, on the one hand, an Omugabe who seeks to impose his command on the system and, on the other, a number of more or less autonomous hereditary power clusters which resist this. The Rubambansi idea would stress the powers of the state, while the primus inter pares notion emphasises the influence of hereditary elements.

A somewhat different way of looking at the two notions as conflicting aspects of the power structure would be to consider them not, as in the above, as real opposite forces pulling in other directions, but to identify the Rubambansi aspect as the ideal one and the primus inter pares aspect

as the actual. This would conform with a kind of distinction made by anthropologists since Malinowski, especially with Leach's formulation.<sup>47</sup> In this view, inconsistency and conflict between the two notions would be recognised, conflict occurring between what is ideally prescribed on the one hand and the way matters are actually worked out on the other. Specifically, against the background of this distinction, the Omugabe would appear a politically rather frustrated man, continuously making appeals to the Bakungu to recognise the supreme powers he was granted and to comply rather than interfere with his commands.

For complementary aspects, the model at hand is that of Dahrendorf in which the two pictures of the Ankole political structure correspond roughly to two postulated faces of social structure: coercion and integration.<sup>48</sup> It is true that no political system is solely maintained on the basis of power and domination. And no system exists only by virtue of freely given support. While in some systems the coercive aspect is more salient than in others, all essentially feature both aspects. In this perspective, the contradiction would result from ideological or scholarly preferences emphasising one or other of the two aspects of social structure which are inherent in any organisation. Projected onto Ankole, the Rubambansi notion would represent the coercive aspect, and the primus inter pares notion the integration aspect of the political structure.

Thus, we have a variety of models available with which to interpret the role and apparent paradox of Ankole kingship, each of which might teach us something useful. Each model focuses on a particular facet of the reality situation, which is inevitably complex and inconsistent.<sup>49</sup> Real societies are not blueprints, but over time a variety of designs may have gone into their building. Hence, different, at times even contradictory, images of real system are obtained, depending on the focus and indicators applied in the analysis. But while there is no gainsaying the validity per se of any model, some clearly are better equipped to elucidate the key characteristics of a system than others. For the Ankole case, the models we have seen are not sufficiently adequate to explain its special features. For instance, to interpret the traditional Ankole system on the basis of a hereditary-appointive dichotomy is not 'wrong', but is directed at only one and not necessarily the most relevant aspect of the system. Similar limitations are inherent in the other approaches. The distinction between ideal and actual powers of kingship, seen as conflicting aspects, is quite legitimate, but there is no evidence that tension along these lines lay at

the heart of the political process in Ankole. Again, while basically appropriate, the coercion-integration hypothesis is too general to illuminate the distinctive features of the Ankole political system.

Considering the characteristics of Ankole kingship, we might more fruitfully turn to another model which combines some of the above elements in a new fashion and focuses on a structural relationship not touched upon in the other models. This model also involves postulating the two images of the Ankole system as complementary aspects. However, these aspects should not be regarded as two faces of one coin, as in the Dahrendorf model, but as each other's functional complements. While this is related to the idea of ambivalence of principles on which the political structure may be based (as in the hereditary-appointive or ideal-actual distinctions), one should not a priori assume conflict between the criteria. The assumption is rather that the Ankole system was able to function the way it did, and perhaps to function at all, because of the way in which the two notions of power complemented one another. Let us look at this somewhat more closely.

We have seen that the Ankole system was highly vulnerable to fragmentation due to the claims of Bahinda and other Bahima. The absence of a cadre of officials solely loyal to the political centre meant that integration of the system could only be maintained by invoking higher values to sanction decisions which had been arrived at through debate and majority opinion. At the elite level there was widespread participation in the decision-making process, which had to cope with conflicting interests and fairly autonomous political strongholds in the system. Inevitably, therefore, two closely related problems presented themselves when decisions were being made. Firstly, if they were to be believable, it was essential that decisions should have an aura of higher sanctity than would be normally associated with the opinion of a body of individuals, even if these were leading members of society. If justice and law were to be more than a bargain, they had to be characterised by universalistic and transcendental qualities which would be able to command acceptance. If the Omugabe had been actually an absolute ruler, presumably he would have been considered as embodying these qualities. But as he was not, the attribution of omnipotence and ultimate benevolence which was bestowed upon him still served to sanction the communis opinio which it was his prerogative to articulate. Secondly, once a decision had been taken, the problem was to secure adherence to the judgment passed. In the absence of machinery for

implementation, compliance basically rested with mechanisms of social control. Here, too, the exalted notion of the Omugabe as a political giant wielding unlimited powers came in, not to conflict with, but to complement the characteristics of the political structure. Decisions carried weight because they were ordained in the name of high authority, even if this authority was symbolic and did not involve effective direct control over subordinates. The coherence of the political community depended critically on maintaining this myth, which was its main antidote to centrifugal tendencies. The myth's personification, the Omugabe, who transposed elite deliberation into state law, constituted the major formal institution of the Bahima state. Indeed, he had more literal grounds than Louis XIV on which to claim "l'état, c'est moi". Hence, it was towards and through the validation of this myth that an effective synthesis between two seemingly contradictory notions of kingship was obtained. The relationship between the distribution of political power and values about authority thus formed a very central axis in the traditional Ankole system.

The impact of colonial rule upon this system was drastic. Five crucial transformations, causing a redefinition of the role of kingship, followed in its wake, namely: (1) the expansion of scale of Ankole, (2) the incorporation of Ankole into Uganda, (3) the reduction of Bahinda influence, (4) the restructuring of the position of the Omugabe, (5) the transformation of the ethnic status hierarchy.

#### The expansion of scale of Ankole.

After the redrawing of the kingdom's boundaries, early in this century, the Ankole monarchy ruled an area several times that of the 19th century kingdom of Nkore.<sup>50</sup> This spectacular expansion was the result of conquest as well as of colonial policy. Spheres of influence had always fluctuated in the interlacustrine area, but during the latter half of the 19th century, Nkore's role in the region was considerably enhanced. This 'imperialism' of Ankole was inversely related to (and largely attributable to) the decline of its northern neighbour Bunyoro, and reached its peak during the rule of Ntare V, shortly before the arrival of the British. Several smaller neighbouring kingdoms such as Igara, Buhweju and Buzimba, were made to recognise Nkore's paramountcy and to pay tribute to its ruler. Then, at the turn of the century, the British assumed control over the entire region and subdued additional areas, including Bunyaruguru and a large section

of Mpororo kingdom. These, as well as the areas over which Nkore had begun to claim suzerainty, were then more firmly amalgamated with Nkore. Formal expression was given to these annexations in the Ankole Agreement of 1901, although Kajara was not added until 1914. Nominally, all these areas were placed under the rulership of the Omugabe of Ankole, which fact should be remembered when considering the claims on tradition made in connection with Ankole kingship. Evidently, from that moment on, the Nkore dynasty had few traditional roots, if any, in over half its domain. This does not necessarily mean that kingship per se was an alien element. In historic times the fluctuating balance of power had often caused rulership to change; as the local expression had it, "it does not matter who takes over, they are all kings." But a kingship which was to be put to the test of generating new meanings and functions would find its task made even more difficult by this lack of direct historical roots.

#### The incorporation of Ankole into Uganda

Simultaneously with the British-sponsored expansion of Ankole, the kingdom was brought into the wider orbit of Uganda. This had equally far-reaching consequences for its monarchy since, from that moment, the perpetuation of Ankole kingship rested no longer on internal factors, but depended basically on considerations of political expediency which were extraneous to Ankole. These considerations were mainly of two kinds, one being the familiar strategem of employing traditional structures of authority, if only in rudimentary fashion, as a convenient means to gain colonial control. The second reason for preserving kingship gradually eclipsed the former in importance and retained its relevance even in the independence period. This was inspired by some special problems of the political situation in Uganda, particularly the Buganda issue. In contrast to Ankole, the kingdom of Buganda constituted a powerful unit within Uganda, and its integration with the rest of Uganda posed serious problems in turn to colonial officials and national politicians. For a long time, in fact, it was felt that Buganda could not be dethroned from its dominant position without provoking serious repercussions for the viability of Uganda as a whole.<sup>51</sup> The solution adopted to contend with Buganda was essentially to try and balance its influence by symbolically and otherwise enhancing that of the smaller kingdoms and even the districts of Uganda, which hence were all turned into minor replicas of Buganda. Inasfar as possible, the traditional and quasi-traditional rulers of these divisions were put at

par with the Kabaka of Buganda, and this effort contributed in no small part to the would-be exaltation of offices such as that of the Omugabe of Ankole. Again, the immediate motive for terminating kingship throughout Uganda resulted from policies pursued in regard to Buganda. When, in 1966, the Buganda crisis came to a head, the Uganda Government decided to use this as its opportunity to dismantle the Buganda stronghold. Following an open clash with the armed forces of Uganda, Buganda monarchism was destroyed and its Kabaka fled the country. With Buganda kingship eliminated, the smaller kingdoms instantly lost their raison d'être as seen from the national centre; moreover, their abolishment was positively useful because it sweetened the pill for Buganda.

Until then, the configuration of national politics may have provided temporary justification for the maintenance of the Ankole monarchy; but its continuation by the grace of Uganda-wide politics was not the sole reason for the loss of legitimacy of the monarchy as evidenced at the time of its abolition. For the institution might conceivably have retained, or developed, functions which would have tied it more closely to Ankole society, despite the fact that its continuation ultimately depended upon extraneous factors. The possibility of successful adaptation has been shown in the case of a few European monarchies and there seems to be no particular reason why this pattern could not have repeated itself in Africa.<sup>52</sup> Thus, while Ankole's incorporation into Uganda entailed severe restrictions to the exercise of monarchical authority, the redundancy of Ankole kingship in terms of popular orientations remains a problem to explore.

#### The reduction of Bahinda influence

Early in the 20th century the position of the monarchy was affected as a result of the elimination of a large part of its traditional entourage, the Bahinda clan, as a political force. This was the outcome of rivalry in which the Bahinda had long been engaged with the Bashambo, another leading clan. The Bahinda-Bashambo strife became increasingly prominent as a result of the incorporation of annexed territories into Ankole as well as the introduction of colonial rule. The British had a golden opportunity to gain control in Ankole by exploiting this clan conflict, but it is not certain that they anticipated this possibility. The Bashambo, however, readily took advantage of the British presence. And as their interests coincided largely with those of the British, the result was basically the

same as it would have been if the British had taken the initiative to manipulate the clan conflict.

It is not surprising that the struggle between Bahinda and Bashambo took a decisive turn during those years which immediately followed the introduction of British overrule. The Bahinda, it will be recalled, formed the royal clan of Ankole, whose members had exclusive title to the Omugabeship and various senior chieftainships. The Bashambo were the royal clan of the neighbouring kingdom of Mpororo, of which parts were incorporated into Ankole at the time of British intervention.<sup>53</sup> In the 19th century the Bashambo had gained ground as rulers in various other areas which came under the suzerainty of Ankole, and certainly the Bashambo had to be counted with as a force of significance in the expanded Ankole kingdom. It so happened that since shortly before the signing of the Ankole Agreement the Enganzi (the 'favourite chief' of the Omugabe, in later times called 'prime minister') was a Mushambo, Nuwa Mbaguta.<sup>54</sup> Mbaguta was almost as long on the scene as the Omugabe Kahaya, but after an apparently cordial relationship during the first years of their tenure, that is, immediately around 1900, the four decades that followed were marked by mutual rivalry and hostility. In the eyes of the British, Mbaguta was cooperative, interested in innovations, eager to follow their instructions, and he asserted himself throughout as a shrewd and powerful potentate. From the point of view of Protectorate officials, therefore, Mbaguta was the ideal kind of native authority. It was through him that many administrative measures were introduced and implemented in Ankole and this earned him many laudable commentaries in the records of British officers. As he was an effective and reliable instrument, his influence was in no small way promoted by the administration. Almost unnoticed, the office of Enganzi was raised in accordance with the stature of the occupant, imparting to Mbaguta a preeminence unequalled by any of his predecessors. In fact, only one pre-1900 Enganzi seems to be vaguely remembered in Ankole, as against several generations of Abagabe.<sup>55</sup> And so, Mbaguta, the 'brightest star near the moon', in the original meaning of the word 'Enganzi', came to eclipse even the Omugabe in actual influence.

Being an outsider to the traditional establishment of Ankole, Mbaguta was a more neutral and more easily manipulable agent of transformation than might otherwise have been the case. As the leader of a clan which was engaged in continuous rivalry with the royal clan of Ankole, Mbaguta was keen to exploit all possible opportunities to curtail Bahinda prominence

and to further Bashambo interests. As a key contact man of the British, several such chances were offered to him. The establishment of colonial administration, which necessitated considerable accommodation on the part of the senior chiefs, mostly Bahinda, was by far the major of these opportunities. The traditional chiefs were incorporated in an administrative command system which not only imposed specific duties but also implied considerable restriction to their exercise of authority. The Bahinda chiefs soon felt that the objectives of bureaucratic control would encroach much further upon their scope of freedom than was desirable to them, and their reactions to these innovations accordingly varied between reluctance and resistance. Early in the century this resulted in incidents which had quite significant implications. The government took strong action against Igumera, the leader of the discontented Bahinda, and his followers. For some years after the death of Ntare V in 1895, Igumera had been the strongest chief and virtual ruler of Nkore.<sup>56</sup> Upon the establishment of British control he was relegated to the position of a county chief and more generally found his influence severely curtailed. These restrictions caused him to rebel, after which the British exiled him to Buganda, a measure highly favoured and promoted by Mbaguta. Several other senior chiefs were dismissed during the early years of this century. In fact, with only three exceptions, all county chiefs were replaced in the period up to 1908. The effect of these measures was to leave Mbaguta's power virtually unchallenged among the Ankole elite. Many Bahinda took refuge in Buganda and elsewhere, and this evacuation was even accelerated after the murder of a British officer, St. Galt, in 1905. The background of this murder has by and large remained a mystery, although according to one assumption its motivation originated directly from the Bahinda-Bashambo conflict.<sup>57</sup> In any event, suspicions and sanctions levelled by the British against the traditional elite caused many of the latter to leave Ankole.

To date, Ankole historiography has remained surprisingly inexplicit about this entire episode. Yet one can see how crucial it was from the fact that by far the larger part of the Bahinda aristocracy fled Ankole, fearing punitive sanction by Mbaguta and the British. So widespread and lasting was this evacuation that in the 1930s it necessitated a special recruitment effort in Buganda to find an eligible Muhinda candidate to succeed the Omugabe Kahaya. This was Gasyonga, virtually unknown in Ankole at the time, and whose claim to the Obugabe<sup>58</sup> has been disputed. The more immediate consequence of these developments, meanwhile, was that of the



ranks of Bahinda, only the Omugabe, Kahaya, and very few others remained behind in Ankole. A number of the positions which fell empty were taken by Bashambo and other Bahima, and a good many chieftainships were filled by Baganda recruited by Mbaguta. Divorced from his Bahinda kinsmen, Kahaya thus came to stand in isolation and, where possible, Mbaguta did not fail to by-pass him even further. Clearly, an important departure from the traditional political structure was effected with the elimination of the Bahinda stratum. The severance of the links with the Bahinda aristocracy was an inevitable source of uneasiness and frustration to the Omugabe, leaving him little of the traditional frame of reference to hold on to in defining his place. By the same token it can be presumed that, had the Bahinda retained their influence in Ankole, a much greater conflict of conceptions of authoritative institutions, focusing particularly on the kingship, might have marked the years of colonial rule. As it was, after the initial abortive resistance, the British design for the administration of Ankole did not meet effective opposition and as a result was only more easily implanted.

#### The restructuring of the position of the Omugabe

No matter how farreaching the changes effected in the geographic, social and political context of the Ankole monarchy, the central transformation lay in the restructuration of the position of kingship itself. The colonial bureaucracy impinged heavily upon the authoritative and symbolic roles of Ankole kingship, eroding its traditional functions and causing it to lose its essential meaning. For an analysis of this role transformation in greater detail, it is useful to briefly sum up the ingredients of the traditional system. Structurally, we have found that the system was characterised by dispersed powers and collective decision making, while normatively it featured strongly hierarchical values about authority. Moreover, these two aspects were critically interconnected, since the hierarchical values made sense primarily in relation to the participant style of decision making. In this context, the role of kingship was unmistakably meaningful.

Colonial government fundamentally changed these characteristics and their interconnections. Even if exercised with the utmost benevolence, colonial rule in the early self-confident period was basically authoritarian. It established a bureaucratic state in which all actions originated as a result of orders sent down by higher officials to their subordinates and

in which elaborate reporting at all levels placed further controls upon the execution of policies. Its prevailing tone was of the briskness between sportsmanship and military style.<sup>59</sup> Its values were rational and concrete and centered upon law and order. Its lines of command comprised colonial officers as well as African chiefs; while the distinction between these ranks was strenuously maintained, both had to observe comparable criteria of hierarchy and administrative competence. These qualities applied in Ankole as much as they did elsewhere. The dispersed power structure of the traditional Ankole system was replaced by a hierarchical framework, while concrete and pragmatic values were substituted for the metaphysical authority notions of the traditional system. The link between traditional values and the traditional authority structure was lost altogether in the process and the effect was to eliminate the role of kingship 'old style'. A semblance of continuity was kept up, for the Omugabe was retained and old values were still referred to. But the essence of the change was to turn the Omugabe into an instrument of bureaucratic hierarchy, and to relegate traditional values to the level of folklore. In later times, the institution was adorned with a thick overlay of new ceremonialism, and new distinctions developed between the ideal and actual powers of kingship. However, contrary to the traditional situation these lacked any complementarity; what finally emerged was a caricature of the traditional institution, leading to further erosion of the affective sentiments it had once inspired.

The colonial apparatus in which the Omugabe's office was fitted developed from quite humble beginnings. In Ankole, as in most other cases, British presence was established by sending down a man, not an army. A former Governor of Uganda described the usual process in this fashion:

"a British officer could arrive at some remote place, as I have myself done, accompanied only by a couple of native policemen and perhaps a clerk or two, and carrying with him a union jack, uniforms and rifles for the score of local policemen to be enlisted, and the requisite stationary and books, and in a few weeks have some sort of government functioning ... [If] there was acquiescence, as was usual, there was ready to hand a piece of machinery which might be primitive, but was in working order."<sup>60</sup>

From that point onwards, there was generally a steady expansion and consolidation of the administration framework; almost invariably, the machinery showed itself capable of coping with a rapidly increasing number of tasks. Boundaries were drawn and redrawn between administrative divisions and sub-divisions, administrative ranks of county, sub-county and

village chiefs as well as a host of other positions were created, and in a never-ending flow of directives the tasks of all these officials were specified in more and more detail. The result of it all was that the whole district was turned into a single system of command. At the pinnacle of this structure stood the District Commissioner (in the very early days the 'Collector') in whom executive authority within the district was vested. To him an elaborate cadre of civil servants, African and European, was made responsible. This meant, in fact, that "Not only must the District Commissioner supervise the 'Chiefs'; his responsibilities extend to the conduct of every minor official down to the village clerk or constable."<sup>61</sup> The "Bwana D.C." on tour of the district became a familiar sight and reputedly was always expected to outpace the Africans accompanying him as a way of asserting his prestige. To the District Commissioner were added Assistant District Commissioners, police, law and public works officers, and as time went by an increasing number of specialised officials were put in charge of agriculture, forestry, health, veterinary services, marketing and social welfare. The District Commissioner was accountable, always through the Provincial Commissioner, to the Governor of Uganda, and final responsibility for the conduct of affairs in the Protectorate rested, of course, with the British Colonial Secretary. Taken together, the establishment of this whole complex amounted to the creation of an administrative state, which in some sense could be said to have been superimposed upon the traditional framework, but which should more properly be viewed as replacing it. Only much later, in the period after the Second World War, did a policy of delegation of administrative functions introduce important changes in this structure. An expanding number of administrative tasks was then devolved onto African local authorities, themselves in large part new creations. But the question posed at the establishment of colonial rule was what to do in this hierarchically assembled piece of machinery with institutions of traditional authority such as that of the Omugabe of Ankole.

In the Ankole Agreement of 1901, the British had promised the Omugabe and other senior chiefs the right to nominate their successors in order to facilitate their entry into the system.<sup>62</sup> In addition, the chiefs were to enjoy amenities such as a share of the revenue collected, land grants, and various other fringe benefits. Under the Agreement, the "Chief" Kahaya was "recognised by His Majesty's Government as the Kabaka or supreme chief" of Ankole; it was further stipulated that "so long as the aforesaid

Kabaka and chiefs abide by the conditions of this Agreement they shall continue to be recognised by His Majesty's Government as the responsible chiefs of the Ankole district." However, the document offered the stick as well as the carrot, for it was made clear that, should they fail to abide by its stipulations, removal from office might follow. It was also threatened that "should the Kabaka of Ankole — Kahaya or his successors — be responsible for the infringement of any part of the terms of this Agreement, it shall be open to His Majesty's Government to annul the said Agreement, and to substitute for it any other methods of administering the Ankole district which may seem suitable." Clearly, the terms of the Ankole Agreement were British, just as the new order it inaugurated.

The conditions under which the treaty was concluded are not without interest, if only because the only available text of the Agreement was written in English. The missionary Willis, who had barely begun learning Runyankore, was invited to attend the ceremony only to find, to his utter despair, that he was required to give an off-the-cuff interpretation of the Agreement in that language.<sup>63</sup> Local understanding was not apparently considered crucial, as long as the Ankole representatives duly placed their X-marks, which they readily did. At any rate, it soon transpired that the Agreement, while repeatedly recognised as a 'valid' document, had no force of law, at least not if Banyankore wanted to base an appeal on it.<sup>64</sup> Regulations governing many kinds of behaviour were put on the books and applied in the same way as elsewhere in Uganda; notwithstanding the eloquent references made to the Ankole Agreement in subsequent documents and public speeches, its function was none other than to provide a convenient cloak for the exercise of power by the British.

Whether or not he was aware of what he had been contracted into, the Omugabe of Ankole was not at first unwilling to comply with British directives. Of course, he had no choice. But aside from that, British backing provided a new and perhaps even more secure basis for the enjoyment of prerogatives. Moreover, a semblance of traditional authority was kept up which tended to conceal the loss of status suffered by the incumbent. To the average villager or herdsman, at any rate, the implications of the takeover were not immediately visible. There followed a period of incubation, during which the old order continued to shape popular allegiances (although for decreasing numbers of people), making it possible for the Omugabe to draw upon residual traditional allegiances. The

colonial administration was naturally interested in making use of this goodwill to facilitate its own entry and consolidation of control; hence one major consideration suggesting the retention of traditional authority. Moreover, it was felt, in Ankole as elsewhere, that to remove a traditional ruler might cause consternation and resistance, and such reactions were definitely to be avoided. On these grounds, the Omugabe of Ankole was enlisted in the service of His Majesty's Government.

However, the employment of traditional authority entailed some profound ambiguities which were to seriously threaten its effectiveness. Even if some early European administrators had a passing interest in the exotic, or took a delight in exploring the role and meaning of historic kingship, in the day-to-day execution of tasks, they commonly assessed traditional authority mainly in terms of its command over the popular will or the obedience it might be able to provide. The assumption was that "all you could in fact do was to explain what you wanted to some 'Native Authority'; and as he — or she — was generally only too anxious to please, the result was usually that it was done."<sup>65</sup> Thus, in the eyes of the population, the legitimacy of traditional authority had to be maintained if it was to remain effective. But, in those early days, to treat a king or chief with all the pomp and protocol which later became more common might have stimulated a renewed consciousness and taste for actual authority on their part; this could easily have come to conflict with the conduct of regular colonial administration and could by no means be allowed. Obviously, therefore, there was a fragile balance if not tension between the requirements of continued legitimacy and external control, and it is not difficult to imagine that the subtleties of the compromise may somehow have escaped a man like the Omugabe of Ankole. He was told time and again that he was supreme chief or Kabaka. Moreover, there was the fresh memory of the traditional period in which his position, as we have seen, was indeed symbolically exalted.<sup>66</sup> Yet the tendency was clearly to employ him as an instrument with which to gain popular acceptance for administrative measures. An incongruous element in the new bureaucratic edifice he was, in effect, ordered around by British officers to explain colonial policies and to induce compliance among the people of Ankole.

Ambiguities were especially noticeable in regard to the Omugabe's position vis-à-vis the administrative chiefs. For long these relationships were not explicitly laid down and, moreover, the official line in respect

of these matters tended to change over time. The policy was evidently to have it both ways, that is, to keep full control over the chiefs in the hands of the district administration while yet adhering to the idea that all authority was exercised in the name and under the supervision of the Omugabe. Chiefs of counties and lower divisions were appointed by and held responsible to the district administration.<sup>67</sup> District officials inspected their books, kept records of their administrative performance, and reported on their diligence in implementing bye-laws. Yet the Omugabe was put forward as their superior, and this was done in more than a purely nominal sense. From the British point of view, it seemed practicable to make use of his influence over the subordinate chiefs. For this, however, he somehow had to be given an opportunity to display his authority. The Omugabe was therefore also asked to tour and inspect and report. Clearly, this entailed some problems, of which duplication of supervision was only the least. For one thing, the standards of good administration entertained by the Omugabe were not necessarily the same as those of British officials and as a result differences almost inevitably arose. Chiefs would either find themselves confronted with two kinds of demand and possibly be unable to decide which to give priority, or the Omugabe would follow the official line and communicate directives which he himself did not quite accept. Moreover, the relationship between the Omugabe and the chiefs was entirely different to that in the pre-colonial situation. The Omugabe came to perform in an administrative command system and it was expected that his traditional legitimacy would ease his assumption of this new role. But because this legitimacy was associated with an earlier and different authority relationship, the new role was not an instant success; instead, it left puzzles and embarrassment on the side of the Omugabe as well as of the chiefs. Moreover, as the exact scope of his authority had been left exceedingly vague, the chances of a successful learning process were all the more problematic. Finally, to function effectively in any capacity within the district organisation, a certain amount of administrative proficiency was a sine qua non. The whole system was designed on the basis of paperwork and bureaucratic codes, and whoever did not master their essentials was at a loss. No wonder that the Omugabe, who was wholly untrained for these purposes, should have felt a sense of inadequacy in discharging the administrative tasks devolved upon him. Rather more surprising is that the problems created by this situation were not readily appreciated by British officials; it was only as late as 1938, when the

Omugabe asked for copies of reports to be sent to him, that a District Commissioner began to wonder "has the Omugabe facilities for starting a filing system of his own?"<sup>68</sup>

These ambiguities and contradictions led to increasingly strained relationships between the Omugabe and British officials. Lack of interest and resentment of the British administration came more and more to characterise the Omugabe's attitude, and a vicious circle ensued in which growing impatience and irritation on the part of colonial officers and increasing apathy and surliness on the part of the Omugabe were some of the more salient elements. Painstaking reporters of everything happening within their jurisdiction, colonial administrators have left an extensive record of these difficulties. A letter sent on March 3, 1907, by the Acting Collector in Mbarara to the Sub-Commissioner, Western Province, reporting one instance of friction with the Omugabe, deserves to be quoted at length as it typifies the attitude and tone of the earlier administrators towards the Omugabe:

Sir,

I have the honour to report that Kahaya, Kabaka of Ankole was yesterday guilty of conduct of such an unseen nature that I feel that it should be brought to your notice.

This consisted in misbehaviour towards myself and insolence of such a sort that it should in my opinion be recorded. The immediate and apparent cause of this lapse upon his part was that I found it necessary to speak somewhat seriously to Kahaya with respect to the manner in which he treated certain requests I made to him in connection with the arrangements for the Anglo-Congolese Commission. My reproofs which were certainly not more severe than the occasion demanded were received by Kahaya in a spirit of mixed sullenness and impertinence. He informed me that he could see that I wanted to quarrel with him, that he would henceforth refuse to visit me if sent for, and that he would not attempt to carry out my requests. Thinking that he had momentarily lost control of himself I endeavoured for a space to remonstrate with him. But he either maintained an obstinate silence, or replied with sullen impertinence. Seeing that further conciliatoriness could serve no useful purpose, I told him that I would tolerate his tone no longer. I told him that he had been grossly impertinent to me, and that I would see that his behaviour was reported. I then ordered him to leave my house, and not to return until he could behave himself.

Kahaya has not of course adhered to the wild statements above-described. He received my Interpreter within two hours of the occurrence, and gave directions that what I required should be attended to. And he has today met an inquiry from me as to whether he will come to see me in a proper manner, in a becoming spirit. And did this outbreak of temper stand by itself I should not give to it much heed. For Kahaya is liable to fits of extreme and hasty temper, joined at times with an ineradicable obstinacy.

I have seen him before quite inarticulate with rage against Baguta. But the whole trend of his conduct of late, and his normal demeanour when any attempt has been made to guide him or to induce him to regard seriously the responsibilities of his position compel me to think that we need to be very careful in our treatment of Kahaya. During the past few weeks in particular I have been very dissatisfied with his manner and conduct. And because two weeks ago I thought fit to censure him for repeating to me five days in succession a statement which he knew to be a deliberate falsehood, he used language which if taken seriously would seem to indicate that in his opinion the Kabaka could not be found fault with by the Collector.

This is of course an attitude which cannot be allowed for a moment. It is needless to say that it will be a bad thing for Ankole if Kahaya and the Bahima Chiefs in general are allowed to persist in the notion, which they undoubtedly entertain, and have cherished for some time, that specious promises are all that is required, and that performance is scarcely even expected; it will be worse if the idea gains ground that the Collector can always be put off by perfunctory excuses, and will not venture upon strong remonstrances. The Bahima will need wise handling,

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your most obedient humble Servant,

In this instance, the Sub-Commissioner in turn communicated the incident to his superiors at Entebbe, adding that "it would appear from it that Kahaya's character is not even now formed and he should be treated to discipline much as a school boy", and concluding that "he will have to be properly kept in his place".<sup>69</sup> Accordingly, he instructed the Acting Collector that

"[Kahaya] must learn that the Collector is the representative of the Government in his Country and any disrespect shown to him, or other Government Officers, is a slight which will not be lightly passed over. Please also inform him that I have reported the matter to His Excellency the Commissioner and make a note of the occurrence in your record book of Chiefs' characters."<sup>70</sup>

A few days after the incident, the Acting Collector was proud to report that Kahaya had visited him again and that "his behaviour on this occasion was all that could be desired". "But I venture to think", he went on, that "every opportunity should be available to cause Kahaya to realise more clearly his responsibilities as Kabaka, and the attitude it is deemed to assume towards a Collector and towards Europeans in general."<sup>71</sup>

The problem was not solved, however, and over the following decades a long series of reprimands reached the Omugabe. In 1921, for instance, the District Commissioner of Ankole issued a warning to him in the following terms:



"I notice that these days you never seem to go to the Lukiko or take part in the work of your country, why is this so? Your people are complaining that their Head Chief is no longer there to look after them. You must realise that it is your duty to preside at the Meetings and Courts of the Lukiko, and not allow other people to take away your power, so I hope that it will not be necessary for me to have to write again about this."<sup>72</sup>

A few years later a letter from the Provincial Commissioner to the Omugabe conveyed the same concern:

"1. I am informed by the District Commissioner, Ankole that you are taking little or no interest in the Administration of your country. 2. I hope when I visit Ankole in December that I shall find you have been attending Lukiko regularly and are trying your best to help on the country of which you are the Omugabe. 3. If you consider you are so ill that you can no longer carry out your duties, would you like to retire on a pension and have your successor appointed now."<sup>73</sup>

Again, in 1933, after visiting the Omugabe, a District Commissioner wrote in his report,

"I explained that I was very dissatisfied with him as Mugabe and that Europeans at Mbarara, Fort Portal and Entebbe were saying that he was useless and was no good. He had spoilt his name among them and now he was spoiling his name among his own people ... I told him that I wished to help him and wished to uphold the Mugabeship for the good of the country, but I could do nothing if he did not help me."<sup>74</sup>

In that same year, the Omugabe was also reminded

"Always remember that a Mugabe who does not see his people and to whom they cannot come is not worthy of the post of Mugabe or pay."<sup>75</sup>

And on December 31, 1937, the District Commissioner wrote to all local heads of departments to express his "regret that the disrespect shown by the Mugabe made it impossible for me to hold Lukiko".

It had also become apparent that the Omugabe's behaviour conflicted in several ways with the codes for prudence and propriety introduced by the British. In 1926, for instance, the Omugabe was told by the Provincial Commissioner that

"The Government wish to accomplish two matters, namely, (1) to make such suitable arrangements as will prevent your money being taken wrongly by other people without your knowledge, as is happening now; (2) by a proper system of supervision and accounting to prevent your having debts beyond your income and seeing that all such debts are paid every month thus preventing disgrace coming both on yourself and on your country. You are at liberty to spend all your money as you like and we do not wish to inquire as to how you spend it provided you do not get into debt and agree to the supervision that the Government think necessary."<sup>76</sup>

And in 1927, the Provincial Commissioner instructed the Officer-in-Charge at Mbarara:

"As regards the Omugabe, will you please convey the following remarks to him:

- (a) It is the business of the Omugabe to understand any rules made with regard to his country, and that if he is mentally unable of understanding them he is not fit to be Omugabe.
- (b) That there is a legal order limiting the amount of beer to be brewed, and that he the Omugabe is guilty of an offence and liable to severe punishment for instructing people to break the law.
- (c) That it is the aim and object of the Government to prevent drunkenness and that his action is calculated to encourage it and is therefore contrary to Government orders to chiefs and that such action cannot be tolerated.
- (d) That he the Omugabe is not above the law of the country and that if he cannot obey the law and the instructions of the Government, I will place the matter before His Excellency the Governor with a view to considering his removal.
- (e) That this is by no means the first adverse report received on his conduct, and that unless an improvement is noted, drastic action will have to be taken."<sup>77</sup>

Various other irregularities, big and small, likewise occupied the attention of colonial officers. On 16 August, 1921, the District Commissioner felt compelled to write to the Provincial Commissioner "I report that it is my duty to bring to your notice a serious scandal complicating the Omugabe, Katikiro and the Sekibobo."<sup>78</sup> The scandal involved the Queen of Ankole, and in the instructions which followed she was to be escorted by 'reliable men' to Mbarara. On 16 September, 1926, renewed disappointments caused the Acting Provincial Commissioner to communicate to the Officer-in-Charge, Ankole, that he was "directed to convey to the Omugabe an expression of His Excellency the Governor's surprise and regret that he — the Omugabe — as head of the Native Government in Ankole, should have committed irregularities in connection with the collection of grazing fees in contravention of his own Lukiko Funds." And in 1935, according to the Ankole District Annual Report for that year, it was decided to cancel the Omugabe's Game and Elephant license and to withdraw all privileges for five years, owing to his "infringement of the Game Laws".

In response to these injunctions and reprimands, the Omugabe made occasional promises to improve his conduct and meet the standards set for it by the Protectorate administration. One such pledge is contained in a letter he wrote in 1927 to the District Commissioner:<sup>79</sup>

Dear Sir,

I have seen the P.C.'s letter No. 694/395, which he wrote warning me that I should do my work for my country.

Now I am writing to inform you what I am going to do in future. I expect to make a big Safari rounding the District like the Katikiro has recently done, my principal work on my Safari is to see the chiefs' work and encourage them also to encourage the Bakopi [peasants] to cultivate lot of food for famine.

After coming back from the Safari I will preside [sit] in the Lukiko regularly, so I hope in that case I may be able to abolish my present habit of sitting in my house doing nothing.

I confirm this before you that I will do my best to do the Administration work as it is required by both the Govt Officers and my people, and in future there will be no more slackness in me.

I shall be very grateful if you will kindly write to the P.C.W.P. and inform him that his warning has been strictly carried out, and that I will not cause more trouble in future.

My safari will start from here on the 15th inst.

I hope to come and see you in your office tomorrow morning at 9 a.m. and will talk to you about my Safari, etc.

I beg to remain,  
sir,

Your Obedient Servant E.S. Kahaya, Omugabe.

Some such statement of intent actually inaugurated a renewed involvement of the Omugabe in public affairs. He would then do some touring and address audiences on the objectives of government policy, acting as the mouthpiece of the administration. In a speech given by the Omugabe to the Bahima in 1940, for instance, the topics covered included:

"I want to remind you about important words which the Honourable Provincial Commissioner, Western Province told you yesterday. He told you that in former days you were brave and clever people but when you got rich, you received other people to work for you, and little by little you became lazy and good for nothing.

2. ... the Government will help you in keeping cattle and making good butter and hides, so that they may be of good quality and good price. She will build a School here, but you must send to it your children and pay school fees for them. 3. Don't willingly break rules given to you by the Veterinary Officer. The well is made for you as a sample of good will, and you will make new ones by yourselves when this is spoilt. 4. The Government will build a Hospital for you, but please do send to it your patients and have confidence in the Government Doctor rather than in your pagan witches. 5. In my last safari to Nyabushozi, I spoke to you about Poll Tax, I want now to remind you of the use of it. Money collected from poll tax is for use in: making roads, building hospitals and other buildings of chiefs, paying chiefs and all government porters."<sup>80</sup>

When asked to do so by the district officials and in his rare moments of involvement, the Omugabe might also call his subordinates to their duties.

In respect to a chief's behaviour, for example, Kahaya reported to the District Commissioner:

"Sir, I have the honour to inform you that I have seen Mr. Firimoni Lwaigambwa Myguema, and reprovved him for his drunkenness, and I have instructed him to cease drinking native beer. He has agreed to my advice, and he has sworn in my presence that he will never drink it again."<sup>81</sup>

Such an intervention, made towards the end of his rulership, was surely becoming behaviour for an Omugabe in His Majesty's service. And it was in that commendable spirit that Kahaya's successor, Gasyonga, expressed himself when taking over in 1944. Thanking the Governor for his recognition, he wrote, "I assure Your Excellency that with the advice of the Protectorate Government and the Ankole Native Administration I shall endeavour to be one of His Majesty's Loyal Servants."<sup>82</sup>

The point of interest in all these reports is that they offer insight into the highly problematic relationship between the Omugabe of Ankole and British administrative officers. Not only do the communications of these officials tell us something about the areas of friction, but a certain official viewpoint emerges from the records. This viewpoint is of particular interest to us. Basically, the notion entertained by District Commissioners, Provincial Commissioners and other colonial officers appears to have been that the Omugabe did not know his place and did not know his role. They found that he lacked understanding of and interest in the tasks assigned to him. And from the tenor of the remarks they submitted, it is apparent that British officials tended to attribute the difficulties in dealing with the Omugabe largely to the make-up of his personality. He was considered weak, physically and intellectually, sullen, lacking in will and moral acumen. During virtually the whole period that Omugabe Kahaya was on the scene, that is until 1944, this was the most common and favoured explanation. Accordingly, in the series of Annual District Reports for Ankole, the sections concerning the Omugabe together read like a long temperature chart on his condition, as the following illustrate:

- 1934 "The outstanding feature of the year has been the new lease of life that the Mugabe has taken. I indicated the possibility of this revival at the end of last year."
- 1935 "The interest of the Mugabe in the affairs of the District has been but sporadic."
- 1936 "Much the same comment applies to the Omugabe as in previous years, namely that on the pretext of ill health he confines himself to his house and takes but little interest in the affairs of the District."

- 1937 "The shortness of my time in Ankole makes it difficult to pass comment on the activities of the Mugabe and his Chiefs."
- 1938 "The Omugabe broke his leg during the year, but though it has not completely recovered he has during the last quarter been able to go on tour."
- 1939 "The Mugabe made two tours during the year and appeared interested in all activities of his people. His health was precarious but mentally he was able to deal with all matters referred to him."
- 1940 "The Omugabe made one extended tour during which he visited several Saza headquarters. He continued to take an intelligent interest in all the activities of the district."
- 1941 "The Mugabe toured Nyabushozi county and addressed the Bahima in a forlorn attempt to make them help in the development of their new Saza and to stop emigration to Buganda. He has been sick during the last three months of the year."
- 1942 "The Mugabe has remained in bad health during the whole year. His only public appearance was at the time of the visit of the S.A.A.F. when he attended the display."<sup>83</sup>
- 1943 "The Mugabe has continued in bad health and has made no public appearance during the year."
- 1944 "In October the District was shocked to hear of the death of the Omugabe, E.S. Kahaya II. He has been in bad health for some considerable time and had taken little or no part in the administration of the district."<sup>84</sup>

In considering this chronicle, it seems beyond dispute that Kahaya was a man of limited physical powers and of no spectacular intellectual resources. Nowhere, in British or local accounts, does he emerge as a man of great vision or foresight, or as someone who would have his own will and stand by it. Of weak health and described by his early European visitors as "a very stout overgrown youth" about whom "there was nothing particularly regal,"<sup>85</sup> his involvement was by and large a passive one; generally he tended to withdraw from the complexities with which he became surrounded from all sides, and these not merely British. However, to explain problems in the relationship with the Omugabe simply by reference to personality factors is not only superficial, it too easily shifts the onus from the structural arrangements he came to operate in and the way in which these were manipulated by the British. The ambiguity of his role made misunderstandings and conflict practically unavoidable, and there is every reason to believe that the problems would have been even more serious had the Omugabe had a stronger personality.<sup>85</sup> As it was, however, Kahaya was a boy of about 18 when he was installed, almost immediately before the British made their entry. Hence, the conception of his office or the lack of it, was largely British-derived; if there were difficulties, these were inherent in the very definition of his role.

Long after the early days of self-confident colonialism had passed, British officers developed a more balanced understanding of the structural transitions they had enacted. As Mitchell reflected in 1939:

"Few of us realised ... that the instrument which we were using could not retain its effectiveness if we deprived it — as we generally did — of most of its powers and responsibilities, to say nothing of its revenues. I haven often wondered since those early days that the Chiefs thought it worthwhile even to try to carry out our wishes, when we had taken from them the power to punish and often looked upon the tribute and service from their people, without which they could not exist, as being corrupt extortion."<sup>87</sup>

This contradiction was fully apparent in the instance of Ankole. The frequency with which the institution of kingship was used to induce compliance with administrative policies was inversely related to its actual usefulness for that purpose; accordingly, its employment tended to produce ever more marginal results. For some time it was evidently felt that if only the Omugabe could be interested in the innovations proposed by the district administration, it would not be difficult to get the rest of the population to follow suit. However, the result was very different, not least because the role designed for the Omugabe was as foreign to the Banyankore as it was to the man himself. As contrived by the British administration, the role of the Omugabe departed in major ways from pre-colonial conceptions. This was not only because the Omugabe became subordinate to Protectorate officials, but the idea of a bureaucratic line of command was also highly unfamiliar. The meaning of the institution in traditional times, which was to symbolise the political integration of a pluralistic polity through the hierarchical authority values associated with it, was irretrievably deflated by the use made of kingship to get acceptance for immediate ends. This policy had assumed the existence of sources of actual power which the Omugabe had never had. It had further assumed that, whatever the original basis of his prestige, this would be prolonged within the new context to be established. Both these assumptions proved fallacious; when the Omugabe was asked to convey colonial policies to his people, they saw him perform in a capacity which made little sense, either in the old or in the new framework. Even his relatively rare visits to various areas were felt as a burden and nuisance by the people concerned, as was evidenced in the repeated complaints over the requirements to lay on food supplies for him and his retinue. Increasingly, therefore, he was met by lack of understanding and interest, which only enhanced his own disinterest and discomfort with his role, and ultimately led to the state

of apathy and withdrawal which disappointed so many of his British superiors.

Kahaya did not possess the strong personality necessary to counter these trends, and his successor Gasyonga's case was not fundamentally different. But, again, had their demeanour been more powerful, friction might well have been much greater. The erosion of kingship, which, even if unintended, was the inevitable conclusion of the process of bureaucratisation, might then have been considerably complicated and delayed (or else speeded up by open conflict).

It should be clear that this is not necessarily supportive of the view held by some anthropologists that, for an innovation to be successful, it must be hooked on to existing cultural patterns.<sup>88</sup> On the contrary, new situations generate new orientations and values. Even if the conditions under which some new structures are introduced may be questionable, institutional change is bound to occur wherever there is any juxtaposition of new and old elements. To assume that an institution such as kingship can be transformed but that popular orientations and allegiances toward it will remain unaffected is profoundly misleading. The attempt to make use of the traditional role of kingship in Ankole was based on this ambiguity; far-reaching changes were introduced while assuming that the orientations which supported the old relationships would prevail. However, the structural transformations introduced in Ankole could ultimately lead only to obsolescence of the monarchy. Indeed, the redundancy of Ankole kingship was a built-in consequence of its use as a tool in the colonial machinery.

#### Transformation of the Ethnic Hierarchy

The last major condition which had a bearing on the position of Ankole kingship was the Bairu-Bahima division. Social distance and inequality between Ankole's ethnic groups contributed to the decline of the monarchy; in the conflict which developed between them the institution was unable to overcome its identification with one of the parties concerned, the Bahima. As we have seen, in the pre-colonial era Bairu and Bahima had different orientations to the monarchy. It would have been much easier for the institution to command general affective loyalties and identifications in modern times, notwithstanding the changed circumstances, if Bairu and Bahima had had similar orientations to begin with. Lacking these, the monarchy first needed to equalise the symbolic ties it had to offer and to give Bairu

and Bahima a sense of shared involvement. But this requirement ran counter to the "premise of inequality" and could not possibly be met. Ankole's ethnic stratification was another impediment to the rejuvenation of kingship and, as it proved, the monarchy did not overcome these constraints. When the monarchy was restyled, Bairu and Bahima again developed divergent attitudes which mixed with and gradually replaced their earlier differences in content. The Bahima kept their close ties to the monarchy but, as we shall see, the content of these changed considerably. Bairu, on the other hand, had never been very closely related to the monarchy, and when the institution dwindled into obsolescence, this was readily reflected in growing Bairu indifference. There was another strand of opinion among Bairu, however. The monarchy being identified with Bahima overrule, its legitimacy was questioned at the same time that Bahima supremacy was challenged by Bairu. Far from stimulating unification of the population through their joint identification with kingship, the Obugabe became a symbol of increasing tension between Bairu and Bahima.

The rise of ethnic hostility was the concomitant of a restratification process which began during colonial rule. In traditional times, the distinctive ethnic hierarchy does not appear to have been seriously questioned in Ankole. In view of the lack of perspectives of alternative arrangements, it is understandable that the Bairu generally submitted to the inferior social position which they were accorded. Following the Ankole Agreement, the principle of ethnic inequality was in various ways reaffirmed and even strengthened. For instance, the Bairu were obliged to perform labour duties, pay taxes and supply food, while the extracting agents were in a disproportionately large number Bahima chiefs who enjoyed a substantial share of this revenue. Again, until about the middle of the century, in the recruitment of senior chiefs, preference was given to Bahima and other non-Bairu such as Baganda. In word and gesture, moreover, the subordinate position of the Bairu was continually emphasised, thus reaffirming their feeling that they were a despised category. However, colonial rule also prompted social developments which increasingly caused the Bairu to question discriminatory treatment and to protest the very premise of inequality. Modern education instilled new orientations and aspirations among the Bairu, causing traditional values to decline and second-class citizenship to be refused. Bairu also derived greater self-sufficiency through the attainment of modern qualifications and through



the incomes gained in cultivating cash-crops. In the 1940s and 1950s, these trends prompted the emergence of a Bairu protest movement which raised persistent claims for fuller participation of the Bairu in Ankole affairs. Due in large measure to this pressure, increased Bairu involvement was in fact forthcoming. But it was a slow process and relationships between Ankole's ethnic groups were consequently marked by prolonged hostility.<sup>89</sup>

Even though it may have accelerated polarisation, the monarchy became a focal point of conflict not so much of its own doing as because it reflected the growth of ethnic antagonism. This occurred at a time when the monarchy's own influence was already profoundly eroded and the lack of substitution by new functions had become manifest. Contrary to the situation in adjacent Rwanda, the monarchy in Ankole was too weak to be itself a party of significance in the ethnic strife; it did not generate the conflict, neither could it be considered a cause of it. In the conditions prevailing in Ankole in this century, ethnic rivalry was bound to occur whether or not there existed a monarchy. But as there happened to be an institution of kingship, it was virtually inevitable that it be judged in terms of ethnic dissension, as was done with various other elements of the political system. To the Bairu, kingship served as a constant reminder of Bahima claims to hegemony; whatever pronouncements the Omugabe made to the effect that all Banyankore were equally his subjects,<sup>90</sup> they suspected him of siding with the Bahima in spirit if not in action. This applied to Kahaya as well as Gasyonga, but as Bairu protest became increasingly articulate during Gasyonga's term it was particularly his demeanour which was subject to their criticism. Even though the Bairu knew that kingship had been divested of practically all direct influence, any semblance of involvement of the Omugabe with Bahima tactics was invariably frowned upon in their ranks.

To the Bahima, the monarchy also became a symbol in the ethnic friction. Nor surprisingly, this had similar grounds as in the case of the Bairu. For the Bahima, Ankole kingship signified their political primacy. No matter how much the institution changed its meaning for them, the continued presence of the Omugabe during the time of the ethnic status transformation strengthened Bahima feelings of identity and security. The gradual eclipse of the political supremacy of the Bahima was for most of them a source of regret, and for some an incentive to try to halt the process. After the

1940s, tension focused particularly on the number of senior chieftainships occupied by Bahima. While the ethnic distribution of these positions changed very slowly, in the long run it was inevitable that the numerically weak Bahima would have to accept the decline of their privileged political status. As they were forced to withdraw, the Bahima derived a sense of unity and continued recognition of their political supremacy from the fact that the kingship was still 'theirs'. This was, of course, a false illusion, but that is not the most significant point. Because the Bahima held this illusion, the full extent of their eclipse as a political elite tended to be less evident to them, and this appears to have contributed to their relative quiescence during the transition. Thus, the fact that the monarchy was retained through the period of ethnic restratification probably helped to smooth the ethnic status reversal in Ankole.

Somewhat as an anti-climax, the contrasting attitudes of Bairu and Bahima rarely led to explicit demands for either the abolition or retention of the Ankole monarchy. Several factors mitigated the tension and hence diminished the degree to which the monarchy became an issue in the dispute. One such factor was Ankole's status as a sub-system of Uganda. The significance of this was that there were avenues for upward social mobility for both Bairu and Bahima other than those restricted to Ankole. Many of the best qualified Banyankore found employment in other parts of Uganda, and as these people did not need to involve themselves in the local competition for positions, this helped to attenuate the ethnic friction. This was one reason why conflict in Ankole did not assume the same proportions as, for instance, in the ethnically stratified but closed system of Rwanda.<sup>91</sup> In turn, this meant that the survival of kingship did not become an all-pervasive issue in the Ankole situation. Due partly to Ankole's incorporation in Uganda, therefore, its monarchy could be perpetuated without great problems.

Another factor which allowed the Ankole monarchy to exist in relatively untroubled conditions followed from a division among the Bairu. The effects of European proselytisation in Ankole had been to divide the population into roughly equal proportions of Catholics and Protestants. Converted Bahima are almost exclusively Protestants, while Catholic Bairu are slightly more numerous than Protestant Bairu. In time, different patterns of socialisation, different opportunities, as well as the vagaries of the political contest, tended to make the Protestant Bairu more antagonistic to the traditional Bahima establishment than were the Catholic Bairu. In the

late 1950s, Catholic Bairu even aligned themselves with the Bahima against the Protestant Bairu in the Ankole branch of the Democratic Party, although they insisted that this was done less out of predilection for traditional authority as such than for reasons of political expediency. The Catholic Bairu-Bahima alignment involved an implicit understanding, however, that the position of the monarchy would remain unquestioned. Meanwhile, the Protestant Bairu found their way into the Uganda People's Congress and faced a need to attract votes from either Catholic Bairu or the Bahima to stand a chance of winning elections. As a result, although UPC members would have been the most likely group to openly challenge kingship, these electoral considerations caused the Bairu to refrain from doing so. Ironically, the two political parties were so concerned not to be identified publicly with anti-monarchical opinion that at times each purported to comprise the most loyal defenders of the Omugabe. Little of this stemmed from a liking for kingship; but it did help to prolong the monarchy. Paradoxically, therefore, the ethnic and religious division contributed simultaneously to the increasing redundancy and the prolongation of Ankole kingship.

Ethnic tension rose to its height in Ankole in the middle and late 1950s. At the same time, however, important advances towards equality of Bairu and Bahima were made, stimulated by political as well as educational and economic conditions.<sup>92</sup> By independence in 1962, remnants of inequality were still present in Ankole, but the principle of Bahima supremacy had lost its validity and Bairu had attained equal standing in most spheres of life. The friction between Bairu and Bahima slowly subsided and Bairu protest also declined, although a core of Bairu militants continued to press for full equality and did not consider political emancipation to be completely achieved before the formal abolition of kingship.

#### The Neo-Traditionalisation of Ankole Kingship

It is somewhat difficult for a centrally placed institution which has lost its essential purpose to just fall into oblivion and fade away. Similar to the dilapidated roof of a house, the collapse would be obstructed by the remaining walls and beams. As an alternative to oblivion, however, an institution may be exalted into higher spheres. Either solution implies a removal from the functioning core of the system, but there is a difference of taste. In the first case, a moss-grown ruin might be retained, sober of form and potentially appealing. In the other, the monument would

be an elaborate piece of ornamentation, with as much aesthetic quality as the average bourgeois cemetery.

Thus, when a political institution is decorated with gilt and glitter, it is possible that its functions are subject to decay. And when most references to an institution concern its pomp and circumstance, it is fair to suspect that the one-time essence of its role has ceased to exist. Pomp may cover emptiness of function, and can help an institution to vegetate with minimal embarrassment. Judging from the Ankole district records, these tendencies were particularly manifest in recent decades with respect to the Omugabeship. Since the mid-1930s, attention was increasingly given to the ceremonial aspects of kingship, and as a result the Ankole monarchy became quite lavishly adorned.

The dressing-up was in symbolic as well as in more literal fashion. There was, for example, the question of the state chair. This matter was first raised in 1934, when the District Commissioner of Ankole called the attention of his superiors to the fact that the Omugabe did not have a throne. He suggested that the Governor of Uganda might wish to show his appreciation of the interest then being taken by the Omugabe in the affairs of Ankole by presenting him with a state chair.<sup>93</sup> The Governor, however, considered this too rash an act. The Chief Secretary communicated to the Provincial Commissioner that:

"The Governor has learned with great satisfaction that the Mugabe is now showing greater interest in public affairs, and the Mugabe may be informed to this effect if you so desire. His Excellency considers, however, that the question of conferring further distinction on the Mugabe should be postponed for a year, by which time it should be possible to form an opinion as to whether the present improvement is likely to be lasting."<sup>94</sup>

It proved that the opinion formed after this trial period did not warrant the early conferment of a throne. In fact, it took as much as ten years before further steps were taken on this matter. The Enganzi then approached the District Commissioner to request whether "the Protectorate Government would kindly provide a Coronation Chair".<sup>95</sup> The District Commissioner was slightly at a loss with this request. The Omugabe's demeanour was not so much the problem now. But as the District Commissioner knew a throne to be a very integral part of the emblems of royalty, he wondered: "Are there any symbolic decorations which you want to incorporate in the chair. Please let me know soon".<sup>96</sup> The reply was not without interest to an understanding of the sources of royal symbolism in Ankole. For the Enganzi, while sending a sketch of Bagyendanwa, the royal drum, wrote: "As you know this better

than I do, I request you to incorporate some decoration in the chair you may deem suitable."<sup>97</sup>

This small exchange of communications was of limited significance. Taken alone, it certainly did not constitute sufficient ground to suggest that the Omugabeship was being styled after what kingship tends to connote in European eyes. But similar searches for symbolism occurred in respect of various other attributes of royalty and reaffirmed that trend. In 1944, for instance, the Enganzi made the request "that the Government may grant us a crown for the Omugabe to wear on the Coronation Day".<sup>98</sup> Evidently somewhat taken aback by this question, the District Commissioner responded: "Will you please let me know what was the custom in the past when a new Omugabe was crowned? The Crown is such a symbol of the Omugabeship that I feel it should be locally made."<sup>99</sup> The District Commissioner was soon put in the picture on the tradition of crowns, although the answer was perhaps a little unexpected. For he reported to the Provincial Commissioner that "it appears ... that in the past the Omugabe never had a crown and it is a new idea that he should wear one on his Coronation Day."<sup>100</sup> Confronted with this information, the Provincial Commissioner concluded that the suggestions made were not really built on tradition. He directed the District Commissioner that

"the use of the term 'Coronation' is inappropriate and should be avoided; similarly, if possible, the term 'crown' or reference to 'kingship'. The native term for the ceremony, if it can be distinguished from the Accession ceremony — and also for the head-dress — should be invariably used..... I agree that if it is considered by the Banyankore that the Mugabe should wear a special head-dress on ceremonial occasions, one should be made locally. Similar head-dresses in Bunyoro are made mainly of cowrie shells; that of the Mukama of Toro was made for him by his Mother, chiefly of parrot's feathers."<sup>101</sup>

The Provincial Commissioner had correctly surmised that a coronation and all it would imply was a novelty for Ankole. As Morris tells us, "the word engure (which is really a headband) is borrowed from Luganda and the idea of a 'coronation' is a European importation."<sup>102</sup> It seems possible, however, that the Provincial Commissioner's resistance to the terms 'crown', 'coronation', and 'kingship' was not merely based on their lack of traditional reference, but was also on the conviction that too much exaltation was to be avoided. Judging from the tone of his instructions, this official was still apprehensive that too explicit a recognition of 'royalty' might elicit identification and sentiment which would prove harmful to regular administration. Inasfar as that fear existed,

it appears to have been overly pessimistic. The demands for neo-traditionalisation came indeed, and would continue to come, from local quarters. But they were by and large restricted to the Bahima establishment and particularly to those individuals who, due to the positions they occupied in the administration, were able to see what standards developed elsewhere in the country. Royal 'bon ton' in Uganda was in no small part arrived at on a comparative basis, and popular opinion in a district such as Ankole did not necessarily enter into it.

In any event, the determination to resist anything but 'genuine' tradition did not last long. The door was soon opened for symbolic innovations of all kinds, resulting in regalia galore. A full-fledged Coronation was held in 1945, some of its colour being indicated by the enlistment of the services of Mr. Georgiadis in Alexandria, who was asked to provide a suitable 'Ceremonial Robe embroidered in gilded silver threads' for the Omugabe.<sup>103</sup> One of the high moments in the ceremonies was the 'crowning' of the Omugabe by Bishop Stuart of Uganda. Several years later, in 1964, this was followed by a resolution that the place where the Omugabe was crowned should be "preserved and kept as a monument to remember the day in future". The argument was that the kingdoms of Buganda and Toro had "examples of such places of royal significance". Moreover, it was considered that "such places could boost tourist trade".<sup>104</sup>

Since this Coronation, the anniversary of the Omugabe's accession became an important annual event in Ankole. The celebrations were rationalised in the following plausible terms by the Enganzi:

"In the past years, the birthday or accession ceremonies of our late Omugabe, like those of his contemporaries, were not observed as it was impossible to know their exact dates. With the new generation, however, it has been possible to know the dates of these events and consequently in Buganda, Bunyoro and Toro these ceremonies are held every year by new rulers who succeeded their predecessors. Our new Omugabe has just succeeded to the Ankole throne and so it is our great desire that he should not be the exception".<sup>105</sup>

Thus, every year on September 26th, a series of festivities were held in Mbarara to celebrate the coronation anniversary. They had very little to do with Ankole tradition, but they served to suggest status and dignity through the display of pomp and protocol which was their characteristic feature. The usual programme for these occasions ran from church services to sundowners and included such other standard items as a march past by school children, the inspection of a guard of honour (not mounted by any

Ankole constabulary but by the Uganda Police), the release of prisoners, speech-making and football matches. The programmes were not least of interest for the detailed care which went into deciding the order of precedence in which visiting dignitaries were to take part in the proceedings.<sup>106</sup>

The tendency to make Ankole royalty more royal entailed the redesignation of many contingent elements in the system. Early on, many quasi-traditional chiefly titles had been introduced under auspices of Ankole's monarchical status. Among those which gained currency were those of the saza chiefs (Pokino, Kaigo, Mukwenda, etc.) and of senior officials such as the Omuramuzi (chief judge), the Omubiki (treasurer), the Kihimba (administrative secretary), and the Omujasi (head of Ankole askaris). Most of these terms were actually borrowed from Luganda, but while proposals were raised at times to 'ankole-ise' these titles, Ankole tradition offered insufficient equivalents to make this possible. Styles were likewise reviewed in the circles intimately associated with the Omugabe. Western models for family patterns were reflected in puzzles about the nomenclature for the Omugabe's official wife and children. In the past, Roscoe says, "it was quite evident that there never was a queen".<sup>107</sup> In 1945, however, the Eishengyero debated over whether the Omugabe's wife should be called Omwigarire or just Omugabe's wife, a conclusion being reached in favour of the former.<sup>108</sup> The English equivalent of this became Queen. The Omugabe's children became known as Princes and Princesses, and the family thus began to bear faint resemblance to the composition of a stereotype European royal house.

Inevitably, perhaps, there were other questions about proper royal standing. Their significance was not so much in the way they were solved, but in the fact that they were raised at all. In 1952, for example, the Eishengyero was asked to consider the desirability of acquiring a 'special dress' for the Omwigarire. This did not prove difficult to decide. In the debate, one member submitted that "she had a good dress which she had put on at Coronation Day and that could serve", with which argument the Council concurred.<sup>109</sup> A year later, similar questions were raised, and similarly decided, in respect to the Omugabe's children. The Eishengyero did not find sufficient grounds to assume responsibility for their style of dress on public occasions.<sup>110</sup> Considerable care was given, however, to the memory of kings, the Ankole Government building a mausoleum for Kahaya and his descendents.

There were yet other ways in which the monarchy was dressed up; most of them were small matters but together they formed a trend. The Omugabe's residence, for instance, became known as Mugaba (Palace), thus distinguished from the more humble traditional term ekyikari (enclosure). A sizeable two-storey building dominating its environment, the palace showed little regal inspiration, traditional or modern, in the decoration of its interior.<sup>111</sup> A Royal Standard was designed for the Omugabe, "set on yellow cloth with his Coat of Arms, drums in white and a lion in brown, against a black background".<sup>112</sup> In 1954, the words "Omugabe-Ishe-Nyina-Bagyendanwa" (Omugabe-Father-Mother-Bagyendanwa) were inserted into all official stamps and seals of the Ankole Government.<sup>113</sup> And in 1959 the pictures of the Omugabe and Bagyendanwa were to appear on opposite sides of a medal, to be awarded to individuals who had distinguished themselves in his service.<sup>114</sup> Again, there was the Eishengyero's resolution to hang the Omugabe's photograph in all official buildings in Ankole, and its further decision, in 1956, that the picture of the Omwigarire should be displayed in the Eishengyero Hall.<sup>115</sup> Also in 1956, there was a concern that the Omugabe's platform in the Eishengyero Hall was not of suitable beauty and standard. It was decided that this should be improved and made "to show both tribal and Western fashions".<sup>116</sup> Clearly, the pursuit of regalia led in many different directions.

Only in relatively few instances did the search for decorum involve a conscious attempt to preserve or revive traditional cultural attributes. One such case concerned the customary greeting due to the Omugabe; it was reaffirmed more than once that this should be in the traditionally proper way, "Osingyire Nyakusinga", and "Obukama Nyakusinga"<sup>117</sup> for bidding farewell. The reason for reiterating these forms was that they tended to be disregarded. The best example of successful preservation, however, were the royal drums. These were kept in a specially built house maintained out of Ankole government sources, and had their own keeper, an old lady of the Bakururu clan, one of whose duties it was to see that the fire burning for them never went out. A striking degree of personification was maintained in respect to Bagyenwanda: the drums had their own land and their own herd of cattle, and each of them was referred to as an individual. The senior one was flanked to the right by his 'wife' and to the left by his 'enganzi'. Nonetheless, this preservation amounted essentially to the upkeep of an antiquity, no matter how admirably it was done. Apart from the keeper of Bagyendanwa, virtually no-one in Ankole believed that



disappearance of the drums would really entail the end of the world, and radical Bairu regarded the whole thing as no more than pieces of wood.

Perhaps surprisingly, quite a few traditional attributes of kingship were in decline at the very time that new royal decoration was being introduced. This was of no mean importance for the monarchical image in Ankole. The moon ceremonies, for instance, traditionally one of the central ingredients of Ankole royal culture, were wholly disregarded in recent decades. Allegedly, this was due to the fact that the knowledge had been lost of the special drumbeat which was a requisite for this festive ritual. This argument seems but another way of saying that the conditions and interests at the Omugabe's court offered little encouragement for these skills to be handed down. A similar decline manifested itself in the royal music of Ankole.<sup>118</sup> Originally involving three bands of sixty musicians each, these were reduced to thirty, later to eleven musicians per band. Moreover, while traditionally these musicians formed part of the Omugabe's immediate retinue, in more recent times they lived in various quarters of Ankole and only came to Mbarara to perform a few times a year, commonly complaining about their low pay. Most indicative for the decline of this music, as with the moon ceremonies, was the fact that a good many of the songs and tunes which comprised the heritage of Ankole royal music were irretrievably lost.

In these respects, Ankole monarchy differed rather sharply from the monarchies in Toro and Bunyoro. In the latter two kingdoms, comparable ingredients of traditional royal culture were kept alive until the last moment of royalty and also coexisted more successfully with modern elements. This difference from the Ankole case may be explained by the greater degree of popular support commanded by the Toro and Bunyoro monarchies, probably due to the more homogeneous core populations of their kingdoms. In Ankole, the population layer which provided the social environment and cultural supply-line for court life was exceedingly thin, the more so since the majority of Bahima were continuously on the move and out of immediate contact with the Omugabe. There was, in fact, only one small group which had come out in favour of kingship in recent times, i.e. the Bahima-led "Abataremwa ba Rubambansi" ("Those who never fail Rubambansi"). For some time around 1962, this circle staged semi-traditional poetry recitations in honour of the Omugabe, but after a number of such meetings, nothing more was heard of it.<sup>119</sup> Somewhat sadly, loss of royal glamour in Ankole was not only

apparent in respect to traditional features, but also to novel ornamentations of kingship. One by one, for instance, a number of signboards in public places which had been named after the Omugabe in and around Mbarara were rather mysteriously removed; the last was that of "Omugabe's Dam", which disappeared on the eve of the 1965 Accession Celebrations. This accentuated the fact that, apart from an incidental group as the Abateremwa, the monarchy depended almost exclusively on the formal government structure for support.

It is evident, therefore, that kingship came to be a lonely station. In its terminal days, the Ankole monarchy was not a centre which radiated an aura of cultural tradition and innovation. Limited to reflecting orientations from its environment, the shine it produced was just as faint as the popular identifications with the monarchy. The Omugabe's loneliness was even further exacerbated by the pedestal on which he was placed during the last stages of kingship. In recent years, one declaration after the other was made to purport the notion that the Omugabe stood above all other people of Ankole. Whereas earlier during British rule the status of the Omugabe had been toned down in the interest of effective colonial administration, in the 1950s and 1960s the tendency was towards increasing exaltation of the Ankole king. He was knighted and received a British Coronation medal; also in these later years, formal recognition was given to some of the Omugabe's traditional titles. In 1951, for instance, the Provincial Commissioner consented that the title of "Rubambansi the Omugabe" could be "used on all formal occasions as a matter of courtesy".<sup>120</sup> Similarly, when discussing the proposals for local government reform in the 1953 Wallis Report, the Eishengyero submitted that the Omugabe should be the political head of the kingdom, "as he had always been".<sup>121</sup> Also in that year, it was established that all bye-laws should be signed by the Omugabe before being published in the Gazette and should read "The Omugabe has given his consent to ..."<sup>122</sup> And, as if to reaffirm these notions, the Omugabe was given such tasks as performing the annual opening ceremonies of Eishengyero meetings and the awarding of Certificates of Honour to Ankole Government employees, adopted in 1954 as an encouragement to these workers.<sup>123</sup>

At that time the Eishengyero still in large part incorporated a Bahima establishment. After 1955, when the District Administration (District Councils) Act was applied to Ankole, its composition changed considerably and for some years (that is, until the Catholic-Bahima

alignment took office in 1961) the decline of the position of the Bahima elite was even noticeable in the council's treatment of further proposals to buttress the symbolism of the Omugabeship. In 1957, for instance, a motion which suggested that newly appointed chiefs should be presented to the Omugabe for confirmation was defeated.<sup>124</sup> Nonetheless, the idea was reasserted in 1964, from which time on new chiefs were expected to thank the Omugabe for their appointment and pledge loyalty to him on Accession Day; some of the chiefs, however, did not turn up on these occasions. Another resolution regarding the Omugabeship in 1957 was passed with a narrow majority of 39 to 33 votes. This contained the proposal that the Omugabe should be accompanied on his official tours by "one or two senior officials in their cars", since "going alone would be risky to his life and would belittle his dignity".<sup>125</sup> This also had a rather mixed fate, for in recent years there have been occasions on which the Omugabe was by-passed altogether at public functions. In 1967, when a series of community centres were to be inaugurated throughout Ankole, the Minister of Community Development in the Uganda Government, himself a Munyankore, decided to perform opening ceremonies without the company of the Omugabe so as to avoid being identified with the symbol of traditional rule. In retrospect, therefore, an Eishengyero motion of 1961 had a singularly sardonic quality.<sup>126</sup> It stated that the "Omugabe was to be the Head of all people in Ankole except for Her Majesty the Queen and her representative, the Governor of Uganda". This motion only sharpened the weird imbalance between the lofty and low standing accorded at different levels to Ankole kingship.

The inflation of the Omugabe reached its climax after Uganda attained its independence. Even more than before, the stature and dignity of the Omugabe were now upheld as supreme in Ankole. Over and above the internal Ankole factors which were contributive to this development, the elevation of kingship was accelerated as a result of realities of Uganda politics. One was the move to a special kind of federal structure for the new state, another was the capricious course of party competition. These two factors combined to produce some of the most extreme notions about the Omugabe's standing.

"Federalism" explicitly put Ankole on the map as a Kingdom. As noted earlier, there were many reasons to adopt a pluralistic constitutional framework for Uganda, the most decisive being the position of Buganda. This framework was federal in respect to Buganda, and semi-federal or quasi-federal in respect to Ankole, Toro, Bunyoro and the 'Territory' of

Busoga. Until this pattern was laid down, the term 'Kingdom' had been used in an informal sense in respect to Ankole and the other semi-traditional units, the common official reference being 'District'. Shortly before independence, however, the "Kingdom of Ankole" and the other Western kingdoms were given constitutional recognition. Ankole's monarchical status was formulated in a new Ankole Agreement, concluded on August 30th, 1962, and was reaffirmed in the 1962 Independence Constitution of Uganda as well as in subsequent legislation. The description of the position of the Omugabe was identical in the Ankole Agreement and the respective Schedule to the Uganda Constitution:

"1(1) The Omugabe (King), who is the Ruler of Ankole, shall enjoy all the titles, dignities, and pre-eminence that attach to the office of Omugabe under the law and custom of Ankole.  
(2) The Omugabe, the Omwigarire (Queen) and members of the Royal Family, that is to say, descendants of Omugabe Rwebishengye (Abanyiginya n'Abanyiginyakazi), shall enjoy their customary titles and precedence."<sup>127</sup>

The signing of the 1962 Ankole Agreement was hailed as the "biggest ceremony in Ankole history".<sup>128</sup> For several dignitaries it was an opportune moment to look back over the past era. The Bishop of Mbarara outlined three stages in the development of Ankole, which he called "the period when the Kings of Ankole were supreme, their period under British protection, and the time after the agreement had been signed by the Governor and the Omugabe".<sup>129</sup> The Enganzi pointed to the changes which had occurred since 1901 and asked "those present to join with him in asking the Governor to convey to the Queen and her Government the deep gratitude of the people of Ankole" for the work they had done.<sup>130</sup> The Omugabe, the Enganzi, the Governor and others, all gave expression to their satisfaction with the constitutional arrangements which had been agreed upon. The Agreement had been worked out in consultation with the Governor by a Constitutional Committee consisting of Ankole representatives. There had been only two points of difference which needed to be referred to the Colonial Secretary for settlement. One of these was whether or not Ankole Ministers were to enjoy individual or collective responsibility; the other concerned the number of guns to be fired for the Omugabe on ceremonial occasions. On the first issue, the final decision was that they were individually responsible, which meant they were essentially department heads. On the number of guns "the Committee demanded fifteen while the Governor was only prepared to grant nine".<sup>131</sup> The Governor won.

Shortly before the new Ankole Agreement became a fact, the dignity of the Omugabe became a sorry but welcome tool in party struggles. This was mainly a local reflection of the vagaries of party rivalry at the national level, first between the Democratic Party and Kabaka Yekka, later between the Uganda People's Congress and Kabaka Yekka. To appreciate this, it should be noted that in 1962 when Uganda became independent, the national government was formed by a UPC-KY coalition, while the Ankole government was controlled by the DP. As of 1963, however, a UPC government was in power in Ankole, and from the end of 1964 onwards a growing divergence between the UPC and KY caused the collapse of their alliance at the national centre. The central government remained in the hands of the UPC, while mounting UPC-KY hostility became a salient feature of Uganda politics.

In 1963, Kabaka Yekka ("The Kabaka Only"), the party which propagated the political leadership of the Kabaka of Buganda, began to solicit support among Baganda and others living in Ankole. The DP government of Ankole did not favour this move and was determined to halt KY intrusion into Ankole. A means to that end was offered when some people in Ankole began to wear badges bearing the words "Kabaka Yekka". The Ankole government prohibited this on the grounds that it amounted to "praising a King in another Kingdom", deemed contrary to customary law as it "belittled the honour and authority of the Omugabe".<sup>132</sup> Accordingly, one Muhamudu Kasumba was arrested and convicted in connection with such an offence, and a case grew out of this in which the action of the Ankole government was finally upheld as valid by the Uganda High Court.<sup>133</sup> The matter became rather more complicated because members of the Uganda cabinet did not, at that time, share the view that wearing a KY badge constituted an affront to the Omugabe. At a political rally in Mbarara in July 1962, some central government ministers even publicly denounced the order which sought to prevent the wearing of KY badges. The Minister of Justice, himself a Munyankore and UPC member, "shouted praises of Kabaka Yekka and told a big gathering that any one was free to wear a Kabaka Yekka badge in Ankole".<sup>134</sup> These controversies resulted in considerable estrangement between the Ankole and Uganda governments, and similarly between the Minister of Justice and the High Court. The issue took a new turn when those who sought to spread KY influence in Ankole adopted an alternative strategy. Not without inventiveness, they introduced a substitute label, and in no time new badges were circulating bearing the name "Omugabe Wenka" ('The Omugabe Only'). The display of these was soon also prohibited, however, and Omugabe Wenka

was an exceedingly short-lived affair. It seems a fair assumption, though, that even without government prohibition its impact would have remained minimal. Both the political group and the label had a very limited appeal in Ankole and no one ever attached much importance to the Omugabe Wenka stance. The comment of the Omugabe on the use of the label was nonetheless of interest. He stated:

"I am above politics and the use of my name by any one political party as a slogan would only divide my people and endanger their happiness and the progress of my Kingdom. ...I do not discriminate against any of my people and I regard all of them in Ankole, irrespective of their political or religious beliefs, as my beloved subjects and for that reason I do not permit a section of my people to use my name for political ends."

In regard to Kabaka Yekka, the Omugabe's view was:

"My Enganzi and the Nshengyero have publicly condemned Kabaka Yekka activities in Ankole and I strongly endorse their condemnations as I would not personally permit any other ruler to exercise his rule in my own Kingdom."<sup>135</sup>

The Kabaka Yekka threat against the Omugabe's Kingdom was repeated a few years later, but now in an entirely different political situation. Not without irony, the renewed Kabaka Yekka infiltration caused the UPC government then in office in Ankole to use much the same argumentation as its DP predecessor had done. On 14 September, 1965, the Enganzi issued a statement that "I have today been informed that a movement called 'Kabaka Yekka' has started infiltrating into this Kingdom to try and hinder the progress of this Kingdom." He pointed out that "saying Kabaka Yekka here in Ankole and wearing Kabaka Yekka shirts in Ankole means that the Kabaka is the only King ... even in this Kingdom of Ankole", and warned that "I, as the guardian of the constitution under the Ankole schedule, and the Omugabe's Government as a whole, cannot approve of this."<sup>136</sup> To the Omugabe, the Enganzi gave his pledge that "this Government and your loyal subjects shall never allow any external movement seeking to lower your dignity. The exodus of K.Y. to this Kingdom is truly calculated as lowering your dignity and seeks to cause division among your loyal subjects. Banyankore are well-known to be peace-loving and tolerant, but they might be forced to reach a point beyond which they will tolerate no more if K.Y. tries to force its way through to this Kingdom."<sup>137</sup>

That point was not reached, partly for the reason that K.Y. activities were effectively restricted. More important, however, was that the country

soon became absorbed in more critical developments. From the end of 1965 on, Uganda rapidly gravitated to one of the most profound crises in its independent history and through the spring of 1966 all attention was focused on the confrontation of Buganda with the national centre. Many other problems were eclipsed during this turmoil. The crisis brought about a major change in the power basis of Uganda politics and led to commensurate overhaul of the entire government structure. Preparation of constitutional changes took considerable time, however, and while new proposals were being formulated various old arrangements and institutions were temporarily left in abeyance. One such set of institutions was the kingship of Ankole and the other monarchies in Uganda. In 1966, an interim constitution was introduced which abolished federalism in all but name, and in which these monarchical institutions were reconfirmed. As the Enganzi said to the Omugabe when opening the Eishengyero, "nothing in this constitution has prejudiced your position as the Omugabe of Ankole Kingdom as you will soon hear. ... Part one paragraphs one to ten of the Ankole New Schedule, which concerns you Nyakusinga, has not altered either by letter or punctuation."<sup>138</sup> The provisional 1966 Constitution was in effect for a little over a year, that is, until the constitutional arrangements for a unitary republic in Uganda were ready. And Ankole kingship lasted until just then.

#### Redundancy and Political Development

Ankole kingship was an institution which lost its functions and met formidable obstacles in developing new ones. We have argued that, as a result, it became redundant. "Redundancy" being a rather elusive concept, its use in the context of our discussion calls for some clarification. It is suggested here that an institution is redundant which no longer serves any meaningful purpose in the social environment in which it exists or, in other words, if its presence makes no difference to the overall political process. Lack of power per se is not necessarily a criterion of redundancy. Nor is an institution which has become dysfunctional in terms of social or political integration redundant. Clearly, as long as an institution has a certain impact, no matter how one evaluates this impact, it cannot be described as "redundant". If influence can be regarded either as negative or positive, the term redundancy can only apply where influence is lacking in either sense — in other words, where influence no longer exists.

This use of the term differs sharply from the way it has been employed in communications theory and social anthropology. In the former field, for instance, language has been viewed as the result of two contradictory requirements. One is the need to be brief, which, it is suggested, tends to reduce 'redundancy' in communication; the other is the need to be understood, which tends to increase it. Thus, "any feature like repetition which makes the signal more extensive than the bare minimum which should suffice to carry the message is called redundancy".<sup>139</sup> In more or less similar fashion, 'redundancy' is also seen as filling the gap in communicative potential between spoken and written language:

"Conversation is built out of a relatively small vocabulary — but the words may be arranged with great fluidity into varied patterns with repetitions, stressings, gestures and a wealth of reinforcing 'redundancy'. Writing must make up for the lack of gesture or stress, if it is to combat ambiguity, by introducing redundancy through a wider vocabulary with a closer adherence to grammatical structure."<sup>140</sup>

It has also been suggested that an analogous use of the concept of redundancy can be made in anthropology, particularly if applied to a scale of increasingly formalised role-relationships along a rural/non-rural continuum.<sup>141</sup> Some useful insights may well be obtained through the employment of the term in these ways. The point of difference to the approach suggested here, however, is that even though they refer to redundancy as extra and superfluous elements, the propositions from communications theory and social anthropology nonetheless attribute some intrinsic utility to this 'redundancy'. Contrary to this, we would say that if there is some utility to an element, whether in language or in social or political networks, that element is not redundant. For our purposes, it seems feasible to regard as redundant such 'extra' elements or institutions which are ostentatiously lacking in utility or influence within their social environment. A case of redundancy in this sense is provided by the story of the Italian civil servant who, without anybody being aware of it, kept himself occupied year in year out putting certain stamps on certain forms. One day, a lion made his way into the office and ate the man, but the latter's disappearance was not noticed until several years later when he failed to respond to an administrative circular.

It follows that the test of redundancy of institutions must lie in the nature of the orientations which their presumed clientele exhibit towards them. This kind of test is particularly relevant in respect to



institutions whose role is largely designed to command popular allegiance, as religious institutions and other symbolic structures are supposed to do. The relevance of such institutions could be evaluated in terms of popular attitudes of acceptance or the extent to which client groups identify with them. In this approach redundancy may be considered a specific aspect of political culture; similarly as when one seeks to empirically establish the quality of a political culture by a sampling of the totality of popular political orientations, so one might also assess redundancy in terms of people's attitudes. Thus, the extent to which an institution is redundant may be equated with the degree to which people who are knowledgeable about the institution are found to be indifferent towards its role or existence. However, there is almost no orientation on which a population finds itself unequivocally unified. The designation of any particular quality to a sum total of orientations distributed along the continuum between two poles, therefore, means no more nor less than that in some predominant measure that quality seems applicable. 'Complete' redundancy is thus an abstraction which will be found in reality only in very exceptional cases.

After all this has been said, the operationalisation of the term 'redundancy' still leaves much to be desired. Nonetheless, the term is eminently suited for raising questions about the conceptualisation of political development. It can be argued that Ankole kingship was in decay. Some would also consider it a case of regressive political development. Strictly speaking, if one is exclusively interested in the fortunes of a particular institution, this view cannot be disputed. Obviously, Ankole kingship did not "develop" in the present century. If current standards are applied, Ankole kingship was not a case of political development; it lacked the conditions for an effective search for new goals, it did not exhibit any increase in functional complexity, and its longevity was consequently thwarted.<sup>142</sup> However, it may be queried whether it is useful to employ this yardstick. The functions of the Ankole monarchy were eroded when a new organisational framework permeated the society. Basically, there was no intrinsic requirement for a role of kingship in that framework. But as there happened to be a monarchy in Ankole, its retention suggested itself at least on the grounds that premature abolition might generate popular reaction which could hamper the development of effective administration. Thus, while the monarchy was made to shed its functions one by one, its continuation during the building of the new political and

administrative structures almost certainly helped to obviate an abrupt legitimacy crisis. Its own problems and ambiguities were no less severe when serving that purpose; rather, they were more pronounced, for certainly it is no mean task for any institution to be useful by becoming useless. The special significance of the Ankole monarchy was that it acted as a shell for modernisation. It helped to define the cognitive map for many members of Ankole society, even some of its newly enlisted members, during the time that major transitions were effected within the society. As these transformations reached completion, the shell could be finally thrown away.

Whether or not 'political development' occurred in Ankole in recent times can only be assessed with reference to the criteria one chooses to attach to this concept; to evaluate this would require another discussion.<sup>143</sup> However, if some of the more standard indices are taken as a basis, such as growing diversity of specialised administrative and political roles and the expanding scope of tasks a system is capable of undertaking, then it might well be concluded that in recent years 'political development' did occur in Ankole. Even if we apply a more critical test and enquire into the relevance of new institutional structures, the Ankole experience might be positively evaluated in certain respects. Of these processes, the withdrawal of the monarchy was both a result and a facilitator. Moreover, by the same criterion, the elimination of a superfluous institution such as the Obugabe had become may itself be considered a moment of political development. The instance underscores the fact that limited utility is to be gained from analysing institutions in isolation for an assessment of political development. The role of Ankole kingship, an institution in decay, appears to have correlated with political development. As such it merely illustrates a universal phenomenon, namely, that growth processes throw up redundancy.

## NOTES

1. Article 118 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda reads:  
"The institution of King or Ruler of a Kingdom or Constitutional Head of a District, by whatever name called, existing immediately before the commencement of this Constitution under the law then in force, is hereby abolished."
2. Though the term 'Ankole' will be used throughout this essay to refer to the context of the kingship, it should be kept in mind that the discussion of historical, i.e. pre-1900 structures refers, strictly speaking, to the state of Nkore from which the expanded Ankole district took its name. See p. 18 and footnote 50.
3. Z.C.K. Mungonya, "The Bacwezi in Ankole", Uganda Journal 22, 1, 1958, 18-21; and C.C. Wrigley, "Some Thoughts on the Bacwezi", Uganda Journal, 22, 1, 1958, 11-17.
4. Cf. Audrey Richards (ed), East African Chiefs (London, 1959) 357-358. In collaboration with Marshall Segall, the author conducted a study of identity in Ankole between 1965 and 1968. As part of the survey, some questions were asked in regard to the Omugabeship. The results of this study are still being worked out, but in a preliminary analysis the indifference towards kingship was confirmed in a striking degree.
5. The People (Kampala, 17 June, 1967).
6. See letters to the Editor in The People and Uganda Argus, June through September, 1967. For an early expression of the monarchist minority viewpoint see the article "Banyankore do not support the new Constitution", Sekanyola, 10 May, 1966.
7. This has been a favourite explanation for the origin of these states ever since Speke's account of his exploration. See J.H. Speke, Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile, 1863, 246. Clearly, however, to connect the establishment of state structures with the arrival of Bahima amounts to a dual hypothesis, and while the whole issue already lies in the domain of pseudo-history, there is no a priori reason why two such developments should have coincided.  
In addition, the area of origin of the Bahima has for long been a popular topic for speculation among anthropologists, historians and others. Whereas it has usually been presumed that Bairu were indigenous to the area, an astounding perplexity of origins has been attributed to the Bahima, most often Ethiopia, but also ancient Egypt and ancient Israel. See J.F. Cunningham, Uganda and its People (London, 1905) x-xi; Sir Harry Johnston, The Uganda Protectorate, Vol. I (London, 1904), 210; Robert P. Ashe, Two Kings of Uganda (London, 1889), 337-338.  
Sir Albert R. Cook summarises a good deal of the opinion on the Bahima by stating that "everyone has remarked their extra-ordinary likeness to the old Egyptian mummies", and Alfred R. Tucker describes the typical Muhima as "a man the very image, you would say, of Ramses II". Sir Albert R. Cook, Uganda Memories (1897-1940) (Kampala, 1945) 118; Alfred R. Tucker, Eighteen Years in Uganda and East Africa (London, 1911) 272.  
Recently, the debate has even shifted to biochemical arguments, although, as it seems, still without much conclusive proof. See Merrick Posnansky, "Kingship, Archeology and Historical Myth", Uganda Journal, 30, 1, 1966, 6-7, and G.C. Cook, "Tribal Incidence of Lactase Deficiency in Uganda", The Lancet, April 2, 1966, 725-730.

8. F. Lukyn Williams, "The Inauguration of the Omugabe of Ankole to Office", Uganda Journal, IV, 4, 1937, 309.
9. The legitimising myth of Ankole kingship was that Ruhanga, the Creator, had put his three sons, Kakama, Kahima, and Kairu, to a competitive test on the basis of which he entrusted each of them with a different task. The test involved keeping a milkpot filled for one whole night. Kakama won and was charged with the rule of the country. Kahima, who had given some milk to Kakama, was made to look after the cattle, while Kairu, who had spoilt all his milk, was ordered to till the soil. See H.F. Morris, A History of Ankole (Kampala, 1962) 6. This legend will be recognised as a local adaption of a mythical heritage found in the lacustrine area as a whole; even in Ankole there are further variations to the tale. A distinctly Bairu version is related in P.J. Gorju, Entre le Victoria, l'Albert et l'Edouard (Rennes, 1920), 279-281.
10. The term "Bahima State" was introduced by K. Oberg. See K. Oberg, "The Kingdom of Ankole in Uganda", in M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Pritchard (eds), African Political Systems (London, 1940), 128.
11. Oberg, ibid., 129-130; W.L.S. Mackintosh, Some Notes on the Abahima and the Cattle Industry of Ankole (Mbarara, 1938) 20; Richards, East African Chiefs, 152.
12. The phrase is borrowed from Jacques J. Maquet, The Premise of Inequality (London, O.U.P., 1961). However, while in Ankole as in Rwanda, there was a 'premise of inequality', this does not imply that hierarchical relationships were structured identically in the two cases.
13. Cf. Oberg, "The Kingdom of Ankole", 128-136; see also Jacques Maquet, "Institutionalisation féodale des relations de dépendence dans quatre cultures interlacustres", paper presented at the Colloque du Groupe de Recherches en Anthropologie et Sociologie Politiques (Paris, 1968).
14. Oberg, "The Kingdom of Ankole", 131; Richards, East African Chiefs, 153.
15. This discussion is largely based on sources written in the early part of this century and presumably refers primarily to the immediately preceding period, i.e. the latter part of the 19th century. Present lack of evidence on historic processes makes it difficult to distinguish differences, if any, in the Ankole political organisation from one period to another. Thus, it may well be that the Omugabe was gradually moving to a more powerful position, as happened in Buganda (see Martin Southwold, Bureaucracy and Chiefship in Buganda, East African Studies, No. 14, Kampala, 1961), or else that his position was growing weaker; the information available does not enable us to validate either hypothesis. The reader is advised, therefore, that any references to the 'traditional period', the 'historic' structure and so on, are no more than shorthand designations of the latter part of the 19th century.
16. See the insightful discussion of Peter C. Lloyd, "The Political Structure of African Kingdoms: An Exploratory Model", in Political Systems and the Distribution of Power, A.S.A. Monographs (London, 1965) 63-112.
17. John Roscoe, The Banyankole (Cambridge, 1923), 12.
18. Ibid., 36.
19. W.L.S. Mackintosh, Some Notes on the Abahima, 13.
20. Oberg, "The Kingdom of Ankole", 136, 137.
21. Ntare School History Society, The Governmental Institutions in Ankole before the British Rule, mimeo (Mbarara, n.d. 1965) 1.

22. J. Vansina, "A Comparison of African Kingdoms", Africa, XXXII, 4, 1962, 332.
23. The implied analogy is to a characteristic Bahima skill, namely the stretching of a cow's hide.
24. H.F. Morris (ed), The Heroic Recitations of the Bahima of Ankole (Oxford, 1964) 1. Cf. also Oberg, "The Kingdom of Ankole", 136. According to some Banyankore, the present spelling of the word 'Omugabe' carries Luganda influence. Although the term does have historical roots, in past times the king was more commonly addressed as 'Omukama'. In the earlier period, moreover, the British referred to him as 'Kabaka', which was their favourite term for traditional rulers in Uganda. The term Omugabe appears to have become more prevalent since the 1930s.
25. Williams, "Inauguration of the Omugabe", 312.
26. The paradox this points to was noted in Robert H. Lowie, Social Organisation (London, 1950), 344-345. See also Roscoe, The Banyankole, 51.
27. Cf. Oberg, "The Kingdom of Ankole", 134.
28. E.G. Tucker, Eighteen Years in Uganda, 272.
29. Willis Journal II, unpublished (a copy of this is available in the Library of Makerere University, Kampala), 228.
30. Roscoe, The Banyankole, 15, 16.
31. Brian K. Taylor, The Western Lacustrine Bantu (London, 1962) 35, 62.
32. Roscoe, The Banyankole, 14.
33. Richards, East African Chiefs, 157.
34. Transcript of a discussion with the Omugabe and senior princes of Ankole, 27th September, 1966, recorded by Gershom Nshemereirwe. The point was made by Mr. Samwiri Rwabushongo.
35. Ibid.
36. The selection of a Muhima of a non-royal clan appears to have been the general rule. Nuwa Mbaguta, who was Enganzi at the establishment of British rule, was a member of the royal clan of another kingdom, Mpororo. Muhidi, the Enganzi of Ntare V, was a Mwiru, although of a clan which was gradually moving to higher social status, the Basingo.
37. Richards, East African Chiefs, 157.
38. Roscoe, The Banyankole, 95.
39. Mackintosh, Some Notes on the Abahima, 12.
40. Oberg, "The Kingdom of Ankole", 129; Maquet, "Institutionalisation féodale", 2.
41. Roscoe, The Banyankole, 15-16.
42. Richards, East African Chiefs, 152.
43. Willis Journal, II, 290-291.
44. Oberg, "The Kingdom of Ankole", 133-134.
45. Cf. René Lemarchand, "Power and Stratification in Rwanda: A Reconsideration", Cahiers d'Études Africaines, Vi, 4, 1966, 597-598.

46. Richards, East African Chiefs, 348. See also L. Fallers, "The Predicament of the Modern African Chief", American Anthropologist 57, 2, 1955, passim.
47. E.R. Leach, Political Systems of Highland Burma (London, 1954) 8-15.
48. Ralf Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (London, 1959), 157-173.
49. Leach, Political Systems, 8.
50. The name Ankole is a mixed Luganda-English corruption of Nkore. For a more detailed account of the expansion of the kingdom, see H.F. Morris, "The Making of Ankole", Uganda Journal, 21, 1957, 1-15 and H.F. Morris, A History of Ankole.
51. See David E. Apter, The Political Kingdom in Uganda; A Study in Bureaucratic Nationalism (Princeton, 1961).
52. While it is legitimate to consider the tenacity of institutions in this way, it is quite a different proposition to raise the adaptive capacity to the level of a norm. This is, however, the tenure of the argument in Samuel P. Huntington, "Political Development and Political Decay", World Politics, XVII, 3, 1965, 386-430. In its extreme implication, this would mean that all political structures ever established should ideally have maintained themselves.
53. See H.F. Morris, "The Kingdom of Mpororo", Uganda Journal, 19, 1955, 204-207, and Morris, A History of Ankole, 17-22.
54. F. Lukyn Williams, "Nuwa Mbaguta, Nganzi of Ankole", Uganda Journal, 10, 1946, 196-208.
55. The Enganzi was the above-mentioned Muhidi. It should be noted, however, that the memory of past Abagabe appears to have fluctuated. Roscoe writes that when he first visited Ankole "... it was impossible to obtain from the people any information as to the names of their previous rulers". In part, this seemed to be explained by the fact that "contact with other tribes, especially with the Baganda and the Bakitara, aroused a desire to have a genealogy of the royal family, and a list of kings was prepared for the purpose". See Roscoe, The Banyankole, 34 (Abagabe is the plural of Omugabe).
56. H.F. Morris, A History of Ankole, Kampala, 1962, 35.
57. A good introduction to the puzzle is H.F. Morris, "The Murder of H. St. Galt", Uganda Journal, 24, 1960, 1-15. Despite lengthy and minute inquiries, the background to this incident has long remained a mystery. In recent years, the view has been circulated that the murder was a Bahinda plot to thwart Mbaguta's popularity with the British. The alleged murderer was a Mushambo who was himself found killed immediately following the Galt murder. Whether there was indeed an attempt to implicate Mbaguta by construing an incident for which the onus would come to lay on the Bashambo remains unproved. Its result, at any rate, was a strengthening of Mbaguta's position.
58. Obugabe is the Runyankore term for Ankole kingship.
59. This is aptly illustrated by some of the counsel contained in the Notes for Officers appointed to Uganda, published by the Crown Agents for the Colonies (London, 1934): "In Entebbe, Kampala and Jinja and the larger centres the population and facilities permit of most English games being pursued. Golf, cricket, tennis, soccer and occasionally rugger are played, and in the majority of out-stations there are tennis-courts and

rough golf courses. If, however, in bush stations these facilities are entirely lacking, regular exercise should always be taken, such as a brisk walk or a stroll with a shot gun" (p. 19).

60. Uganda Protectorate, Native Administration (Entebbe, 1939), 4.
61. Ibid., 5.
62. Ankole Agreement, 1901, para. 3.
63. Willis Journal, II, 227-229.
64. Cf. Daudi Ndibarema vs. Enganzi of Ankole, Her Majesty's Court of Appeal for Eastern Africa, Civil Appeal No. 78 of 1959.
65. Uganda Protectorate, Native Administration, 4.
66. He was not told then, however, that he was 'king'. Roscoe wrote in his preface: "I have found it advisable in this case to retain the native title of Mugabe for the king in deference to the wishes of the officers at work in the country, who dislike the title of king being used for rulers of small African states." Roscoe, The Banyankole, v.
67. With a single exception, i.e. Buhweju county, the provision in the Ankole Agreement that the principal chiefs were entitled to nominate their successors soon fell into oblivion.
68. A note in the margin of the minutes of the meeting of saza chiefs held on 19 May, 1938. This note as well as the documentation referred to below, is available in the archives of the District Commissioner's Office, Mbarara. The access granted to this material by the Ministry of Regional Administration and the kind assistance of the District Commissioner, Ankole, and his staff, are gratefully acknowledged.
69. Letter from the Sub-Commissioner, Western Province, to the Chief Secretary, Uganda Protectorate, on 20th March, 1907. It may be noted that Kahaya was indeed, and ostensibly, treated as a schoolboy by administrative officers, missionaries and other Europeans alike. Some of this transpires in the following comment: "As for the King, he has almost to be kept away from the house by main force. I almost think he would like to take up his permanent abode down here. Twice a day he likes to come down, and will not take the broadest hint to go. He is exactly a child, and one must of necessity act accordingly, and tell him when to go, and make him do it. But there is no question about his friendliness, only it is not conducive to much work." Willis Journal, II, 328.  
The exchange of courtesies with the Omugabe was rather in accordance with these attitudes. Perhaps as a result, it also was somewhat incongruous: "[There arrived some] young heifers from the King, one for each of us. When you think that the price of a cow, sold by government is 50 rupees, and that there is a proverb "What does not kill the Muhima will not separate him from his cow", so keen are the Bahima on their cows, this means a good present. Mbaguta, not to be outdone, sent down a fine cow and a calf for Savile and the following morning sent me a beautiful cow, both these last being of the hornless kind, which they say are the best of all. Finally he sent us down a really magnificent ram. We did not know really what to give in return as our needs are so very different from theirs, and what is useful to us is no good at all to them. However, they are very keen on European boxes: so we got two wooden boxes, painted them red, wrote KAHAYA and MBAGUTA respectively on them, and sent them up. We also gave each a bottle of Eau de Cologne." Willis Journal, II, 252.

70. Letter from the Sub-Commissioner, Western Province, to the Acting Collector, Mbarara Collectorate, 20th March, 1907.
71. Letter from the Acting Collector, Mbarara Collectorate, to the Sub-Commissioner, Western Province, 5th March, 1907.
72. Letter from the District Commissioner, Ankole, to E.S. Kahaya, Omugabe, 17th September, 1921.
73. Letter from the Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, to the Omugabe of Ankole, 27th October, 1927.
74. Report of the District Commissioner, Ankole, on his visit to the Omugabe, 17th March, 1933.
75. Letter from the District Commissioner, Ankole, to E.S. Kahaya, M.B.E., Omugabe w'Ankole, 10th December, 1933.
76. Letter from the Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, to Omugabe of Ankole, 1st February, 1926.
77. Letter from Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, to Officer-in-Charge, Mbarara, 11th April, 1927.
78. Katikiro and Sekibobo are Luganda-derived titles for the Enganzi and the county chief of Mitooma respectively. The term Katikiro was dropped in the 1930s in favour of 'Enganzi'.
79. Letter from the Omugabe to the District Commissioner, Ankole, 7th November, 1927.
80. Precis of the Omugabe's Speech to the Bahima at Nyabushozi, 15th February, 1940.
81. Letter from the Omugabe to the District Commissioner, Ankole, 29th January, 1940.
82. Letter from the Omugabe to the Governor of Uganda, 24th November 1944.
83. The meaning of S.A.A.F. is not clear from the record. Possibly it refers to the South African Air Force.
84. See the respective District Reports for those years.
85. Cook, Uganda Memories, 118. Willis' first encounter with Kahaya induced him to adopt somewhat similar notions: "The King is a young fellow, very much like a great overgrown boy, well over six feet in height and big in every way: huge long flabby hands and enormous slabs of feet - a terrible and significant warning against drinking much milk!" Willis Journal, I, 109. An early anthropological explorer, Cunningham, even took the liberty to take the measurements of Kahaya, which he recorded as follows:

"Height, standing in this sandals	6 ft. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
Chest, under coat	4 1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Neck	1 4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Wrist	0 8
Waist, outside garments	5 3
Buttocks	5 7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ankle (just above)	1 0
Calf	1 7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Foot (length of)	1 1 $\frac{1}{4}$
Weight	301 lb., or 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ stone"



Cunningham commented that "It will be seen from the measurements that, literally, the King of Ankole is a powerful man. He is just twenty years of age, weighs 301 lb. and stands 6 ft. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$  inch in height. He is erect, but, as might be expected, not very active. When he travels, he is carried in a large basket slung on poles by a team of the strongest men amongst his following. The team is grouped in fours, and each four carriers take the poles in turn, resting them on their shoulders. On a good road they can travel at a rate of four or five miles an hour." Cunningham, Uganda and its people, 20-21.

86. As if to confirm this, paragraph 182 of the Ankole District Annual Report, 1935, states: "While it cannot be said that [ the Omugabe ] has given any constructive assistance during the year, it must, on the other hand, be admitted that he has not been the cause of creating any unsurmountable difficulties."
87. Uganda Protectorate, Native Administration, 4.
88. E.G. "a change in any one part of the culture will be accompanied by changes in other parts, and ... only by relating any planned detail of change to the central values of the culture it is possible to provide for the repercussions which will occur in other aspects of life." Margaret Mead (ed.), Cultural Patterns and Technical Change (Paris, 1953), 10.
89. The development of ethnic conflict in Ankole is traced in greater detail in Martin R. Doornbos, "Kumanyana and Rwenzururu: Two Responses to Ethnic Inequality", in Robert I. Rotberg and Ali A. Mazrui, Protest and Power in Black Africa (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).
90. For instance, after a visit to Rwanda, the Omugabe stressed the unity he expected of the Banyankore in the following terms: "In Ruanda, there are three types of people, namely Bahutu, Batutsi and the Batwa. They work together in cooperation and ... their motto is "Omugaha gw'enyabushatu" [ a rope with three strands ] representing these classes of people in Ruanda. You will agree with me that no country should expect progress if there is lack of cooperation and disunity. Division and hatred engineered by subversive elements in a country exhibit a gloomy picture and their ends are fatal. I should like you to be "Omugaha gw'enyabushatu". That is when we shall achieve Ankole's will as a nation." From the "Speech by Rubambansi the Omugabe at the Opening Ceremony of the Eishengyero of Ankole", 17th January, 1956.
91. Martin R. Doornbos, "Protest Movements in Western Uganda: Some Parallels and Contrasts", Kroniek van Afrika, 3, 1970, 2.15-2.16.
92. See Doornbos, "Kumanyana and Rwenzururu".
93. Letter from the Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, to the Chief Secretary, Uganda Protectorate, 20th December, 1934.
94. Letter from the Chief Secretary, Uganda Protectorate, to the Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, 3rd January, 1935.
95. Letter from the Enganzi to the District Commissioner, Ankole, 9 November, 1944.
96. Letter from the District Commissioner, Ankole, to the Enganzi, 12th January, 1945.
97. Letter from the Enganzi to the District Commissioner of Ankole, 24th January, 1945.

98. Letter from the Enganzi to the District Commissioner, Ankole, 9th November, 1944.
99. Letter from the District Commissioner, Ankole, to the Enganzi, 18th November, 1944.
100. Letter from the District Commissioner, Ankole, to the Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, 12th December, 1944.
101. Letter from the Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, to the District Commissioner, Ankole, 18th December, 1944.
102. Morris, The Heroic Recitations, 82.
103. Letter from Acting Resident, Buganda, to Chief Secretary, Uganda Protectorate, 9th August, 1945.
104. News Release, Department of Information, Uganda Government, 11th July, 1964.
105. Letter from Enganzi and chiefs to Provincial Commissioner, 12th June, 1947.
106. For example, the Programme for the Omugabe's Twentieth Accession Day, 27th September, 1965, included:
- 8.40 a.m. All distinguished people take their seats at St. James Cathedral, Ruharo for Service.
  - 8.45 a.m. Constitutional Heads arrive and take their seats.
  - 8.50 a.m. Prime Minister's arrival at the Church.
  - 8.55 a.m. Arrival of Sabasaja Kabaka, the Abakama and the Kyabazinga of Busoga.
  - 9.00 a.m. Arrival of Rubambansi the Omugabe accompanied by the Enganzi and his Ministers.
  - 9.15 a.m. Beginning of Church Services at Ruharo, Nyamitanga (R.C.M.) and Nyamitanga Mosque.
  - 10.00 a.m. Procession from Ruharo to Mugaba Palace: Rubambansi the Omugabe, leading the Procession followed by Sabasaja Kabaka, Prime Minister, Ag. Chief Justice, Abakama, Kyabazinga of Busoga, the Enganzi, and Ankole Ministers, Central Government Ministers, Constitutional Heads and others.
  - 10.15 a.m. School Children and students March Past at the Palace.
  - 11.30 a.m. Inspect Guard of Honour mounted by Uganda Police. All guests seated in the Eishengyero Hall.
  - 11.40 a.m. Speeches in the following order:
    - (a) Enganzi's Speech
    - (b) Prime Minister's Speech
    - (c) Omugabe's Speech, followed by release of 9 prisoners.
  - 12.45 a.m. Refreshments to school children and students.
  - 1.00 p.m. Luncheon for invited guests only at Mugaba Palace, and the Rural Training Centre, Kamukuzi.
  - 2.35 p.m. Leave palace for Kakyeka Stadium.
  - 2.45 p.m. Arrive at Kakyeka to watch the following:
    - 3.00 - 4.30 p.m. -- Uganda Police mounting Parade.
    - 4.30 - 5.10 p.m. -- Net-ball
    - 5.15 - 6.55 p.m. -- Football
  - 8.00 p.m. Sundowner for invited guests only at Mugaba Palace.
  - 10.30 p.m. The Prime Minister Dr. A.M. Obote, will open a DANCE at Aga Khan School.

107. Roscoe, The Banyankole, 34.
108. Minute 13 of the Eishengyero, July, 1945.
109. Minute 47 of the Eishengyero, June, 1952.
110. Minute 90 of the Eishengyero, 8th July, 1953.
111. At present it is being converted into a hotel.
112. Uganda Argus (Kampala, 16th March, 1964).
113. Minute 18 of the Eishengyero, 21 April, 1954.
114. Minute 47 of the Eishengyero, 9th October, 1959.
115. Minute 42 of the Eishengyero, June, 1952, and minutes of the Eishengyero of 17th to 23rd January, 1956.
116. Minute 27 of the Eishengyero, 1956.
117. Minute 31 of the Eishengyero, 18th October, 1948, and Report of the Ankole Kingdom Customary Laws' Committee, Mbarara, 1964.
118. Paul van Thiel, "The Music of the Kingdom of Ankole", African Music, IV, 1, 6-20.
119. Some of this poetry was submitted to the vernacular press, but failed to be included for publication, Agetereine files, Mbarara.
120. Letter from Provincial Commissioner, Western Province, to District Commissioner, Ankole, 23 July, 1951.
121. Minute 3 of the Eishengyero, May, 1953.
122. Minute 46 of the Eishengyero, May, 1953.
123. Minute 70 of the Eishengyero, 1954.
124. Minute 25 of the Eishengyero, 1957. The idea was copied from Buganda, where the presentation of chiefs to the Kabaka was known as Okweyanza.
125. Minute 24 of the Eishengyero, 1957.
126. Minute 67 of the Eishengyero, 1961.
127. See Schedule 2 of the Constitution of Uganda, 1962.
128. Agetereine, 14th September, 1962.
129. Uganda Argus, 31st August, 1962.
130. Ibid.
131. Uganda Argus, 8th March, 1962.
132. News release, Enganzi of Ankole, undated (August, 1962).
133. Criminal Revision, No. 30 of 1962 of the Kashari County Court of Ankole.
134. Open letter from Enganzi to Governor of Uganda, 10th August, 1962.
135. Uganda Argus, 9th February, 1962.
136. "Official Statement by the Enganzi; Warning to K.Y. Infiltration in Ankole", 14th September, 1965, mimeo.
137. "Speech by Owekitinisa the Enganzi on the 20th Coronation Anniversary of Rubambansi the Omugabe of Ankole, Sir Charles Godfrey Gasyonga II", 27th September, 1965, mimeo.
138. "Speech by Ow'Ekitinisa the Enganzi on the Opening of the First Eishengyero of Ankole", 21st April, 1966, mimeo.

139. D.A. Bell, Intelligent Machines: An Introduction to Cybernetics (London: Pitman, 1962), 19.
140. C. Cherry, On Human Communication (New York, 1957), cited in Ronald Frankenberg "British Community Studies; Problems of Synthesis", in M. Banton (ed), The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies (London, 1966), 135.
141. Frankenberg, "British Community Studies", ibid.
142. Huntington, "Political Development and Political Decay".
143. The general argument underlying this is developed in Martin R. Doornbos, "Political Development: The Search for Criteria", Development and Change, I, 1, 1969-70, 93-115.