Cinderella’s cassava

A historical study of agricultural adaptation in Mwinilunga district from pre-colonial times to Independence

June 2009

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Contents

Maps and illustrations........................................................................................................................ v
Acknowledgements........................................................................................................................... vi
Introduction .......................................................................................................................................1
Hoes and axes – Exploring African agricultural history................................................................. 3
Development and underdevelopment – Structure and agency ...................................................... 4
Filling the gaps – Some notes on methodology .............................................................................. 6
A preview of the following chapters ................................................................................................. 8
Chapter 1 – Making sense of a versatile environment .....................................................................11
The area and its population ............................................................................................................. 11
Physical and climatic features ......................................................................................................... 12
Agriculture ....................................................................................................................................... 14
Animal husbandry ............................................................................................................................ 17
Hunting .......................................................................................................................................... 19
Fishing ........................................................................................................................................... 20
Forest resources ............................................................................................................................... 21
Struggling with the environment – Coping with environmental difficulties .................................... 22
Concluding remarks ......................................................................................................................... 25
Chapter 2: Connections, co-operation and trade.............................................................................. 27
Individuals, gender relations and household co-operation ........................................................... 27
Land tenure and village set up .......................................................................................................... 29
The village – Living and working together? .................................................................................... 30
Patterns of exchange, barter and trade ............................................................................................. 31
The rise of the Lunda entity and the long-distance trade ............................................................... 33
“The breadbasket of the caravan system” ....................................................................................... 34
The impact of trade on agricultural production ........................................................................... 37
Concluding remarks ......................................................................................................................... 38
Chapter 3: Colonial collapse? ........................................................................................................... 40
Pre-colonial disruption – The Chokwe influence ........................................................................... 40
Entering ‘No Man’s Land’ ................................................................................................................ 41
An example of early colonial rule – The administration of George Alexander McGregor and its impact on agricultural production ........................................................................ 45
Taxation, labour and agricultural production ............................................................................... 47
The missionary influence – Missions as economic centres ............................................................ 50
Drawing and crossing boundaries – Relations with Angola and Congo ......................................... 52
# Maps and illustrations

## Maps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Map 1</td>
<td>Zambia/Northern Rhodesia</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map 2</td>
<td>Mwinilunga district</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map 3</td>
<td>Mwinilunga district and neighbouring areas of Angola and Congo</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map 4</td>
<td>Long-distance trade routes connecting Mwinilunga to the Angolan coast</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Illustrations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustration</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illustration on cover page</td>
<td>The road to Kanyama</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 1</td>
<td>A hunting shrine</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 2</td>
<td>A hunter with his bow, arrow and spears</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 3</td>
<td>A fishing basket</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 4</td>
<td>Two girls fishing in a river</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 5</td>
<td>Tomatoes, onions and bananas grown by the Ovimbundu in Samahina</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 6</td>
<td>Harvested cassava roots</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 7</td>
<td>A field of cassava</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 8</td>
<td>A maize cob <em>(kahila kabaka)</em></td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 9</td>
<td>A grass <em>nkunka</em></td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 10</td>
<td>A chief discussing village affairs with the male population</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 11</td>
<td>A group of villagers awaiting the touring district commissioner</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration 12</td>
<td>Early roads and transport – A motor car on its way to Mwinilunga</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowledgements

Throughout this study, I have been surprised countless times by the friendliness, the support and the willingness to assist which I received from numerous individuals. In fact, without them this study could never have been completed, and it is towards all these individuals that I remain deeply indebted and greatly thankful.

Special thanks go out to my supervisors Jan-Bart Gewald and Robert Ross, not only for directing me towards this most interesting area of study, but also for guiding, supporting and inspiring me along the way. The value of their contributions was indispensable.

The long periods of time which I spent in the archives have been made so much more pleasant by the kind assistance and interest shown by the staff of not only the Rhodes House in Oxford, but especially the National Archives of Zambia in Lusaka. Without access to their rich collections of data, this research could not have materialised. The staff most kindly guided me through my first archival experiences and went out of their way to assist me in all possible manners, for which I remain grateful. I want to express particular appreciation towards Marja Hinfelaar, not only for helping me find my way through the archives but also for making me feel welcome and giving me the confidence to pursue this research.

A word of gratitude goes out to the University of Zambia. The affiliation to the University opened many doors and facilitated this research and it is especially towards Mrs. Felicitas Moyo and Prof. Phiri that I remain thankful. Furthermore, I greatly enjoyed the Lunda language lessons with Isaac, as knowledge of the language (however basic and however poor my pronunciation) greatly facilitated my first contacts in Mwinilunga.

What surprised me most however, were the everyday contacts with the various people I met in Mwinilunga. I have been surprised because of their interest in my research, their ceaseless assistance and because of their willingness to accept my presence. I cannot start to thank Mrs. Julian Chiyezhi and her entire family, for welcoming me, showing me around and introducing me to all the facets of daily life in Mwinilunga (the songs, the food and the dancing!). My time spent with them was a truly extraordinary experience.

Without the assistance of the Mwinilunga branch of the Ministry of Agriculture, this research could not have been carried out. Particularly vital was the contribution of Mr. Ambrose Musanda, who assisted me in every possible way and offered me more help than I could have hoped for. All agricultural officers proved enormously helpful and even made me feel like part of the staff. I cannot even start to thank the branch officers, who helped me find informants, who translated for me and who opened up their houses to me. It is to Mr. Maimbo, Mr. Katongo, Mr. Mutale, Mr. Mbewe, Mr. Zaza, Mr. Phiri, Mr. Kayama, Mr. Kalusa, Mr. Chinshe and Mr. Ngambi that I remain deeply appreciative, not only for their time and efforts, but especially for their friendliness.

Many thanks go out to all the persons who have agreed to participate in this research by sharing their memories and experiences with me. Even though not all interviews have been directly quoted, they have served to inform the general ideas running through this work. The insights and knowledge gained through these interviews proved to be indispensable, not only in bringing the archival data to life, but also in challenging them in unexpected ways.

The personal support, encouragement and patience which I received from my friends and family proved particularly important. I could depend on them for advice, support, distraction and ceaseless encouragement. Their unconditional confidence in the successful completion of this work provided great motivation to continue.

An apology must be made for the misrepresentations and faults which are doubtlessly present in this work, they are wholly my own. However, this work has aimed and most sincerely hopes to do justice to all the inputs, comments and advice received from the numerous individuals who have contributed in any way towards the completion of this work. They deserve all credits!
Introduction

Musongu wanzala wabadika musongu wamwana – The pain of a hungry person is worse than the pain of labour [giving birth] – Lunda proverb

Satisfying food requirements and preventing hunger is one of the main, though by no means exclusive, aims of agricultural production.¹ Nevertheless, this does not always succeed, as periods of abundance can be followed by periods of scarcity and even hunger. Such fluctuations cannot be explained by solely looking at methods of agricultural production, however. Agricultural production cannot be viewed in isolation, but is influenced by and connected to social, economic, environmental and political factors.² It is the influence of these broader factors on agricultural production in Mwinilunga district, in the north western corner of Zambia, during pre-colonial and colonial days, which this work will set out to examine.

‘The Cinderella Province’ is the term which has frequently been used to refer to the north western province, of which Mwinilunga district is part. This politicised slogan refers to the poorly developed and neglected state of the area during both the colonial and post-colonial periods.³ The Northern Rhodesian and later Zambian state afforded the area but minimal funds and attention, causing marginalisation and widespread poverty.⁴ In spite of Mwinilunga’s peripheral position, in comparison to the economically and politically favoured Copperbelt and line-of-rail areas, the district was nevertheless believed to hold great potential for development, which remained untapped but could be released if the opportunity arose, which indeed happened several times during the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial days.⁵ In this light, it will be argued that cassava was a ‘Cinderella crop’ for Mwinilunga district. Even though the crop was only introduced to the area in the 17th or 18th century, its cultivation and consumption increased rapidly and its use became so widespread that cassava was even adopted as an identity marker.⁶ People today proudly pronounce that “cassava is our staple crop”, and declare that they have ‘not eaten’ if they have not had their share of cassava-based nshima (thick porridge), even if they have consumed other foods.⁷ The adoption of cassava caused a reorganisation of labour patterns and gender relations in agricultural production, and as a crop it has many distinct advantages, most notably that it enables an increase in productivity while requiring but limited amounts of labour inputs.⁸ In spite of these advantages, cassava was somewhat looked down on by both the colonial government and traders, who preferred and promoted other crops such as rice and maize, denouncing cassava as inferior and lacking nutritional qualities.⁹ Nevertheless, cassava cultivation enabled the population of the district to greatly increase agricultural output and overcome times of hardship, and therefore the crop could be seen as enabling “Cinderella to get the ball at her feet”.¹⁰ Examining the means by which the people in the

⁵ See: Pritchett, The Lunda-Ndembu, Chapters one and six for a historical overview of Mwinilunga district.
area of Mwinilunga, in spite of being faced by the apparent constraints of political and economic marginalisation, were able to upkeep and at times even expand agricultural production and examining how they were affected in this by various (internal and external) factors will be the main aim of the present study.

Although the area of Mwinilunga district has been dealt with by two excellent anthropological studies, by Victor Turner in the 1950s and more recently by James Pritchett, these works merely afforded a cursory glance at historical developments.\(^{11}\) Even though Pritchett did pay some attention to the history of the area, he predominantly based his claims on secondary literature, and his work therefore largely lacked the detail and nuance obtained by research based on primary resources. Contrasting authors such as Schecter, Hoover, and von Oppen, and in addition Vansina and Vellut, did examine historical developments in detail, but did not deal with the area of Mwinilunga specifically, or dealt with early pre-colonial (dynastic) history which is not the direct focus of the present work.\(^ {12}\) Therefore, a historical analysis of the late pre-colonial and colonial period in Mwinilunga district can add to existing knowledge of the history of the area and hopefully provide some new insights. The main focus here will be on agricultural history, but agriculture will be seen in a broader context, as intricately linked to environmental, social, economic and political processes. It will be argued that, because agriculture stood at the centre of village life during this period of time, looking at agricultural change can reveal developments of broader significance, for instance illustrating the impact of colonial rule on daily life, the influence of labour migration on rural areas and the effects of changes in gender relations. The main question which will be dealt with, then, is how agricultural practices and levels of agricultural production in Mwinilunga district were influenced by and changed due to broader socio-economic, environmental and political developments during the late 19\(^{th}\) and first half of the 20\(^{th}\) century.

In order to examine this question attention will be paid to the late pre-colonial and colonial periods, which marked turbulent changes in the area. Not only were pre-existing patterns of long-distance trade with the Angolan coast disrupted, but this period also saw the gradual establishment of colonial rule in the area. It has been argued that Mwinilunga district from a position of centrality during the pre-colonial period, being a large-scale producer of foodstuffs (most notably cassava) and successfully provisioning passing caravans, became rather peripheral to the interests of the Northern Rhodesian state during colonial days. It was argued that colonial rule placed restrictions on the avenues of livelihood procurement and on economic opportunities, not only by legislation and taxation but also by the disruption of long-distance trading networks, and thereby caused agricultural production to diminish, even leading to the widespread occurrence of hunger. This grim view was somehow reversed from the late 1940s onwards, however, when Mwinilunga district became an exporter of large amounts of cassava, maize, rice and other crops, needed to feed the growing mining population along the line-of-rail. The late colonial period, then, saw a period of increased agricultural production and arguably agricultural production even flourished or ‘boomed’.\(^{13}\)

On the basis of these developments, it can be argued that examining this specific period of time can provide insights into the causes and effects of changes and fluctuations in agricultural production and output. By looking at this period the effects of trade and colonial rule, but also the effects of environmental factors, technological developments and ideological changes on agricultural production can be assessed. In addition, insights can be gained in the process of centre-periphery

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13 This historical overview is based mainly on Pritchett, *The Lunda-Ndembu*, Chapters one and six.
interaction and formation. This rough historical overview, based mainly on existing secondary literature, but altered during the course of this study in several respects due to insights gained from primary source material, will function as the starting point and will be examined so as to assess the impacts of both internal and external factors on agricultural production and output.

Neither the geographical nor the chronological demarcations adopted in this study should be taken as absolute, but they are not arbitrary either. Even though Mwinilunga district did not exist as fixed entity during the pre-colonial period, kinship and chiefly ties connected the area and during the colonial period the district gained administrative significance and coherence. Taking a district as a unit of study, moreover, offers insight into the process by which boundaries were demarcated and given shape on the ground. Nevertheless, the district should not be viewed as self-contained unit and broader connections to neighbouring areas (including those across international boundaries) will be taken into account.\(^{14}\) Additionally, a note should be made on the chronological demarcations adopted here. The terms pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial suggest clear, absolute ruptures between the three categories, but in fact these ruptures appear to be much more blurred, gradual and incomplete when examined closely. Contrastingly, the parallels and long-term developments straddling the temporal boundaries stand out. Even though the post-colonial period will not be studied here, as Zambian independence in 1964 is taken as formal end-point for this study for practical purposes, many parallels between the colonial and post-colonial periods can be seen and would form interesting material for further studies. The main focus here will be on the late pre-colonial and colonial period, and special attention will be paid to the parallels and long-term developments connecting the entire period. It will be argued that, contrary to the prevailing view of the pre-colonial period as static and primitive, this period of time saw the initiation of various long-term developments and trends which emanated through into the colonial period, which was often less different, progressive or innovative than has sometimes been presented.\(^ {15}\)

**Hoes and axes – Exploring African agricultural history**

Agricultural issues have since long commanded the interest of historians and other scholars dealing with Africa. It is, however, especially during the 1970s and 1980s that agricultural history received ample attention and a whole wave of scholarship on agriculturally-related topics appeared.\(^ {16}\) What these works did, especially, was to challenge the idea that agriculture, village life and rural communities (had) remained in a state of a-historical pristine harmony.\(^ {17}\) Until then the view of passive, changeless and technologically primitive agricultural producers had implicitly prevailed in many works, especially those dealing with the pre-colonial period before European colonialism had brought change and ‘development’.\(^ {18}\) From the 1970s onwards, however, African agricultural initiative was afforded more centrality and increasing attention was paid to changes and developments within agricultural technology, methods of production and the use made of resources such as land and labour. In addition, more attention was paid to differentiation and contestation within agricultural communities. Households and villages were no longer seen as harmonious units of production, but gender, generational and class relations and struggles commanded more interest.\(^ {19}\) This tradition of scholarship, dealing with a wide-ranging variety of issues, pointed towards the

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\(^ {14}\) Chapters two and three will pay more attention to the process of boundary demarcation and district formation and offer a limited literature review on this topic.

\(^ {15}\) The view of the pre-colonial period as static and the colonial period as progressive has been expressed (implicitly) in many works. For a questioning of these views see: Richard Gray and David Birmingham (eds.), *Pre-colonial African trade: Essays on trade in Central and Eastern Africa before 1900*, (London etc.: 1970).

\(^ {16}\) Tosh, “The cash-crop revolution”, p.79.


\(^ {19}\) For a review of this literature see Berry, “The food crisis and agrarian change” and Isaacman, “Peasants and rural social protest.”
centrality of labour issues, gender relations and technology to agricultural production, amongst other things. The present study will build upon, and connect to these ongoing debates, and where possible even provide new insights to them.20

In the light of these debates on agricultural issues, several studies on Zambian agricultural history have been undertaken, most notably Moore and Vaughan’s study on the Northern Province and Vickery’s study on the Southern Province, both dealing with the (pre- and post-)colonial period.21 These studies have yielded valuable insights into the influence of colonial rule on gender, class and racial relations, in addition to shedding light on the development of cash crop production and the process of labour migration. The case of Mwinilunga, though touching upon some of these same issues, can provide a different view, as the area was differently affected by issues such as racial struggles and cash crop production, due to its relatively marginal position to prevailing colonial interests. It will be argued that the effects of colonial rule were not universal, but could differ markedly between various areas and could even differ within communities, villages or households.

Even though the number of studies directly concerning agricultural history has diminished somewhat during recent years, being partially replaced and complemented by studies in the field of environmental history, which reasserted the central importance of factors such as rainfall, temperature and soil characteristics to agricultural production, as well as paying attention to questions of resource management and environmental sustainability, agricultural issues still loom large.22 Agricultural developments, so closely linked to livelihood procurement and village life in general, can reveal issues of broader significance, and therefore the hypothesis which will be adopted here is that socio-economic, environmental and political developments influenced agriculture and (potentially) caused agricultural change. The question whether this change was internally or externally driven, and whether it could be seen as a positive or negative development, has been the subject of long-standing debates on ‘development’ and ‘underdevelopment’, structure and agency, examining the interaction between African individuals or societies (agricultural producers in this case) and market forces, European penetration and colonial influence.

Development and underdevelopment – Structure and agency
Explaining fluctuations in agricultural levels of production (either increases or decreases) has been attempted by paying attention to both internal and external factors and stimuli. Among the internal factors, for instance, methods of production, divisions of labour, technological implements and environmental factors have been included.23 However, in addition external factors and stimuli were frequently taken into regard. This was done not only by assessing the influence of trade and markets on agricultural production, but more specifically by paying attention to European contact with the African continent and the individuals on that continent, first through imperialism and thereafter through colonialism. It was argued that agricultural production was stimulated to increase once confronted with markets for surplus produce, and thus with various forms of trade.24 Some went a step further, however, by arguing that these markets only arose in the phase of interaction with the

20 Especially significant for the present study are the works of Cecile Jackson (ed.), Men at work: Labour, masculinities, development, (London etc.: 2001), and Anita Spring and Art Hansen, Women’s agricultural work in rural Zambia: From valuation to subordination, (Waltham: 1979).
23 See: Tosh, “The cash-crop revolution”.
“international capitalist economy”, associated with European penetration of the African continent.25 These views, then, stressed that it was (exclusively) through external contact with markets, commodity production and eventually colonial rule that change was brought about.26

Opinions differed as to whether this contact was to be seen in a positive or negative light. Modernisation theories, and later on neo-liberal scholars, argued that contact with Europeans through trade and colonialism could encourage progress and development, by bringing technological advances, encouraging specialisation and a more efficient allocation of resources.27 Contrary to this positive view, dependency theories argued that global trade and colonial influence had ‘underdeveloped’ African cultivators, by extracting their surplus production through mechanisms of unequal exchange and domination, creating inequality between the ‘centre and the periphery’. Trade, imperialism and colonialism were said to have impoverished and marginalised African agricultural producers by methods of monopolistic trading, the levying of various rents, fees and taxes and by forcing individuals into labour migration.28 What modernisation and underdevelopment theories had in common, however, was that they both stressed the great influence of external factors, underplaying local and individual actions, initiatives and responses.29 African agricultural producers, especially during the pre-colonial period, were presented by both views as passive, unable to respond effectively to external forces and decidedly backward (or as underdevelopment theories argue, made backward by colonial and European domination).30

This dominance of external focus has been countered more recently by an approach which pays attention to African agency, internally driven change and the possibility to negotiate power relations.31 Agency can be defined as the capability of doing things, the capability of an individual to make a difference to a pre-existing state of affairs or course of events. Agency thus inherently includes power, in the sense of transformative capacity.32 This emphasis on agency has been accompanied by an increasing interest in pre-colonial dynamics and developments, thereby stepping away from the idea of pre-colonial African societies as primitive or static, and laying emphasis on the historical foundations of change.33 In addition, the hegemonic and monolithic character of colonial rule has increasingly been questioned. Not only has attention been given to individual and local reactions to colonial rule, it has also been shown that colonial rule could affect various individuals and areas in different ways. In addition emphasis was placed on power struggles and the process by which power was negotiated.34 Placing the issues of agricultural change, with which the present study is concerned, within the long-standing (sociological) debate on structure and agency enables attention to be paid to issues of power, politics and social hierarchies, in addition to remaining

25 For a review of such work see: Isaacman, “Peasants and rural social protest”, p.7-8 and Ranger, “Growing from the roots”, p.102-103.
27 For a review of literature see: Cooper, “Africa and the world economy”, p.3-8 and Isaacman, “Peasants and rural social protest”, p.7-8.
30 See the review works of Berry, Cooper, Isaacman and Ranger.
33 See: Gray and Birmingham, Pre-colonial African trade, for an especially good example of this mode of thought.
sensitive to individual initiatives, reactions and variations.\textsuperscript{35} One view, advanced especially by structuration theorists, is that structure and agency are mutually dependent. A structure, defined in general terms, is a set of internally related elements.\textsuperscript{36} However, terms such as environmental, ideological, economic, political and especially social structure, often take on a different meaning. It is argued that agents are part of and form structures, but are at the same time influenced and even shaped by these structures. In this sense, structures can be seen as both enabling and posing limits to human behaviour.\textsuperscript{37} The view which will be adopted here is one of a middle way between determinism (the view that agents are determined by structures) and voluntarism or individualism (the view that agents can shape structures independently and completely).\textsuperscript{38} It will be argued that structures could influence individuals and at times limit their range of choice, but in turn also formed the field in which individuals operated and were thus inherent (and not ‘external’) to their actions.\textsuperscript{39} By their actions, or ‘agency’, individuals could influence, shape and to a certain extent even alter prevailing structures, and therefore the interaction between structure and agency was marked by continuous negotiation and contestation.

Somewhat contrary to sociological approaches it will be argued here to not only view social systems as ‘structures’, but to also consider the structural features of environmental, economic, political, and to a certain extent even ideological factors. The influence of all these factors on agricultural production in Mwinilunga district will be assessed, in order to examine the interplay between individual agents and the impact of factors such as the environment, markets and colonial rule. By focusing on agency, the internal and external factors influencing agricultural production can be combined, in addition to paying attention to individual and local (re)actions and variations. In this respect power relations are crucial. Power relations always involve a degree of both autonomy and dependence expressed in the interaction between various agents. Autonomy and dependence are never absolute, though. It can be argued that “even the most autonomous agent is in some degree dependent, and the most dependent actor or party in a relationship retains some autonomy.”\textsuperscript{40} And in addition: “conditions never become so totalising or hegemonic that all creativity in countering or coping with the circumstances African societies are subjected to is annihilated.”\textsuperscript{41} Therefore, the focus will be placed on agency in order to examine the influence of and reactions to political, socio-economic, ideological and environmental factors on (individual) agricultural production, for the specific context of Mwinilunga district.

**Filling the gaps – Some notes on methodology**

“History is always an incomplete and problematic reconstruction of that which is no more”, and regrettably though inevitably, sources of past events are limited, biased and have their respective shortcomings.\textsuperscript{42} In order to minimise the incomplete and biased nature of source material and fill the informational gaps, different types of sources have been studied and combined. Three main sources of information have been used, namely archival sources, oral history and secondary literature.\textsuperscript{43} The secondary literature on the studied area and topic proved useful in order to formulate questions and set up hypotheses with which to approach and examine the primary source material. Even though these hypotheses have at times been adjusted during the course of this study, they proved a useful


\textsuperscript{37} Giddens, *Central problems in social theory*, p.69-72.

\textsuperscript{38} Wendt, “The agent-structure problem”, p.361.


\textsuperscript{40} Giddens, *Central problems in social theory*, p.93.

\textsuperscript{41} De Bruijn, van Dijk and Gewald, *Strength beyond structure*, p.2.


\textsuperscript{43} Details of the consulted sources can be found in the list of references at the end of this work.
starting point for the examination. Subsequently, the secondary literature served the purpose of placing the data gathered from primary sources in a broader perspective and linking it to ongoing academic debates.

It is, however, through the examination of primary sources that this study hopes to make a contribution to existing knowledge on the topic and area. Various archival sources, both at the Rhodes House in Oxford and at the National Archives of Zambia in Lusaka, have been examined. The studied documents mostly consisted of reports compiled by the colonial administration, memoirs and diaries written by missionaries and personal accounts of travellers, traders and administrators. In particular, the district administrative reports, compiled by the colonial administrative staff, have proven useful in this respect. Like all written sources, these documents are biased due to the perspective of the author, the audience and the purpose of writing. However, what is more important here is that the majority of these sources have been written from a colonial perspective, by ‘outside observers’, be they administrators, missionaries or traders. The views of the local population are practically absent and in these documents the inhabitants of the district function predominantly as objects, about whom is written, sometimes even as the “abnormal other”. Even though some administrators and missionaries did have an intimate knowledge of the population and language of the district, others did not and therefore the documents represented in the archives should be subjected to critical examination and should be weighed against one another. In addition, by relying on the archival sources composed by the colonial government, the danger exists of affording too much influence and power to the colonial administration, while denying a say to the inhabitants of the district and leaving certain topics (completely) untouched. Archival sources, if taken at face value, can serve to reinforce the dominant view of the colonial administration as all-powerful, denying the local population every form of influence, power or agency.

As an attempt to offset these shortcomings, fill the gaps of the archival sources and pay attention to the views and perspective of the inhabitants of the district, use has been made of oral history by interviewing the present-day population of Mwinilunga district. Oral history can serve to counter the dominant narrative of the male colonial elite, by paying attention to the everyday experiences of the local population, especially of women who are particularly underrepresented in the archival sources. Oral sources, evidently, are flawed by the passage of time, the inaccuracy of human memory and are influenced by the present context and prevailing interests. Nevertheless, recording the stories of numerous individuals who still had memory of the colonial period provided useful insights into past events, yielded information which had remained unrecorded in the archival documents and enabled the contextualisation of written sources. Men and women, chiefs, headmen and villagers, resident in different parts of the district have been interviewed, providing varied accounts of agricultural practices during colonial days.

By combining these different sources, treating individual accounts with scrutiny and weighing them against one another, an attempt has been made to arrive at a grounded and nuanced view of past events. In order to nuance the view of colonial dominance reflected in archival sources, an approach has been adopted of ‘reading between the lines’ of the colonial documents and comparing oral and written sources. The arguments and hypotheses advanced in this study have been based, as much as possible, on the reading, analysis and combination of the different sources. Even though multiple interpretations and explanations remain possible, the reasoning adopted in this study will be made explicit and will be backed up by reference to either written, oral or secondary sources, or a combination of all these.

A preview of the following chapters

In order to examine the interplay between structure and agency, and the interaction between internal and external factors influencing agricultural production, a combination of chronological and thematic approaches has been adopted. Each chapter will deal with a different set of factors, environmental, political, ideological, social and economic, in order to examine their influence on levels and methods of agricultural production.

The first chapter will focus on examining the influence of environmental factors, such as rainfall, temperature and soil characteristics on agricultural production. It will be argued that environmental factors could function as both enabling and constraining agricultural production, but that in turn human actions could also give shape to their environment. The second chapter will examine forms of socio-economic co-operation and trade between individuals on different levels. It will be argued that trade and co-operation could serve to broaden and expand individual livelihood bases, optimise the use made of available resources and stimulate and enable increased agricultural production. In addition this chapter, by paying attention to patterns of pre-colonial long-distance trade, will serve to counter the typology of the pre-colonial period as static and primitive. It will be shown that various developments which were influential and important during the colonial period had their roots in the pre-colonial period. The third chapter will examine the establishment of colonial rule and the socio-economic and political effects this had on agricultural production. The view that colonial rule initially brought collapse and widespread hunger will be examined and attention will be paid to the avenues of opportunity which did remain open to individual producers. The fourth chapter will examine the formation of ideas on agriculture, crops and nutrition. Ideas will be approached as expressions of socio-economic and political power negotiations and struggles. The interplay between European or colonial and local ideas will be examined and attention will be paid to the power relations hidden behind the denunciation of certain crops and methods of agricultural production as ‘desirable’ and ‘progressive’, whereas others were derogatorily termed ‘backward’ and ‘primitive’. The final chapter will examine the period of relative agricultural ‘boom’ during the late colonial period, especially during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Whereas the enabling environment of traders, transport facilities and market access played a role in explaining increased production, it will be argued that attention also has to be paid to factors such as methods of cultivation, crop repertoires and labour relations in order to offer a full picture. This final chapter will provide a coming together of the previously examined socio-economic, political, ideological and environmental factors and their influence on agricultural production.

By examining these various issues, the interplay between individual agricultural production and the structural features of the environment, politics, ideology and marketing will be examined. The choices made by individuals in order to procure their livelihood will be seen as an expression of individual movement within the field of possibility and constraint. In addition, fluctuations in agricultural production and output will be regarded as the outcome of the constant interaction and struggle between individuals and their context. It is this interaction and struggle which will form the main thread throughout the whole work.
Map 1: Northern Rhodesia/Zambia
(Source: www.greatnorthroad.org)
Map 2: Mwinilunga district

Map 3: Mwinilunga district and neighbouring areas of Angola and Congo
(Source: NAZ SEC2/964: Mwinilunga district tour reports, Map drawn by district commissioner)
Chapter 1 – Making sense of a versatile environment

Human and environmental factors are inseparably linked, and influence each other mutually. The natural environment is the stage on which the human play evolves, as it both enables human action and poses limits to it. Agricultural practices are particularly influenced by and connected to environmental factors, as rainfall, temperature and soil characteristics influence which crops can be grown in a specific area. However, agriculture is not determined by environmental factors, as human action can equally shape and even alter the environment by making use of fire, cutting down trees, fertilising the soils, hunting on game, etc.

Even though the geographical, physical and climatic features of Mwinilunga district influenced the shape which agricultural production in the area could take and the range of possibilities open to agricultural producers, environmental determinism should be avoided as people were “capable of manipulating the natural world to their advantage.”

In order to set the scene and provide a context for the socio-economic and political factors influencing agricultural production, which will be described in the following chapters, it is important to first pay attention to the geographical, physical and climatic features of Mwinilunga district. It will be shown how agricultural practices built upon, but at the same time gave shape to, the environment of the area. The ways in which people made sense and use of the natural environment will be examined, not only through agricultural production, but also through hunting, fishing and gathering. It will be argued that it was through the combination of these different livelihood strategies and through the use made of different ecological niches that people were able to make optimal use of the versatile environment of Mwinilunga district.

The area and its population

Mwinilunga district was created as an administrative entity in 1906, under the rule of the British South Africa Company (BSAC), and is situated in the extreme north west of the territory formerly known as Northern Rhodesia, but referred to as Zambia today. The district shares international boundaries with both Angola and Congo and district boundaries with Kabompo and Solwezi districts. Throughout the colonial period, the district boundaries have been altered several times. Boundary alterations took place between different districts within Northern Rhodesia, but also when the Anglo-Belgian and Anglo-Portuguese Boundary Commissions demarcated the exact international boundaries of the area. Because of this, the surface area of Mwinilunga district fluctuated between 12.000 square miles (31.080 km²) in 1926, 14.000 square miles (36.260 km²) in 1946 and 8.460 square miles (21.911 km²) in 1950.

Estimates of the total population of Mwinilunga district are given in district annual reports and indicate a steady rise in population numbers throughout the years, due to natural increase, immigration, but also due to more accurate methods of recording census. Whereas in 1920 the total population was estimated at 10.866, in 1930 the number had risen to 22.500, and in 1940 the

51 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook.
52 Mwinilunga district was previously known as Lunda district and Balunda sub-district and successively formed part of Kasempa province, Central province, Kaonde-Lunda province, Western Province and Northwestern province.
53 The Anglo-Portuguese and Anglo-Belgian Boundary commissions visited the area of Mwinilunga district during 1912-14 and again from 1924-29.
54 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook and NAZ: Report of the land commission of Northern Rhodesia, 1946. The difference between the 1946 and 1950 figures can be explained by the fact that during the 1940s three areas were included in Mwinilunga district which were later transferred to Solwezi district.
estimate was 35,600. By 1962 the final estimate was a total of 42,781 people.\textsuperscript{55} In spite of the rising population numbers, Mwinilunga district as a whole remained rather sparsely populated, having a population density of 2.9 persons per square mile (1.1 per km\(^2\)) in 1946. However, there were certain places where population was more concentrated, such as in the three north western chiefdoms of Ikelenge, Nyakaseya and Mwinimilamba around Kalene Hill, where population densities reached up to 8 per square mile (3.1 per km\(^2\)). In 1958 in Ikelenge the population density was even reported to be 30 people per square mile (11.6 per km\(^2\)).\textsuperscript{56} Generally, areas of population concentration were situated along major rivers, along roads and mail paths, surrounding chiefly capitals, around areas of European settlement, such as the Boma (district administrative station) and missions, and around areas offering a wide range of social amenities, such as schools, hospitals, etc.\textsuperscript{57}

The overall low population density in combination with the general abundance of land, which was not always very fertile however, caused labour rather than land to be the scarce factor in agricultural production. Whereas large tracts of land were in principle available to enterprising individuals, this land could not be worked effectively without large deployments of labour. This situation was aggravated by technological bottlenecks, as the presence of the tsetse fly limited the possibility of animal traction and large-scale mechanisation was also unviable, leaving the hoe and the axe as main agricultural implements. Due to these factors, agricultural plot sizes remained relatively small (ranging from one to several acres) and the emergence of large-scale farming enterprises, except by single European immigrants, remained limited.\textsuperscript{58}

**Physical and climatic features**

Mwinilunga district forms part of the Central African Plateau, with altitudes ranging from 3,600 feet (1.100 metres) in the low-lying river valleys in the south to 5,000 feet (1.500 metres) in the northern parts around Kalene Hill, the mean altitude being approximately 4,500 feet (1.370 metres).\textsuperscript{59} The soils of the area consist mainly of Kalahari contact soils, described by Trapnell and Clothier as leached soils of low productivity, which are often acidic but are suited to the cultivation of certain crops such as cassava and millet.\textsuperscript{60} In some areas, Northern plateau type soils are encountered, which are clayey alluvial soils, low in organic content and of low agricultural potential. Occasionally patches of (light) red and brown clayey soils can be found which are considered to be more fertile and better suited to agricultural production.\textsuperscript{61} Along the rivers floodplains and damboes are found, which are seasonally flooded and can be used for the cultivation of maize, vegetables and rice.\textsuperscript{62} Mwinilunga district is especially well-endowed with termite mounds, commonly called anthills. The soils of anthills contain a higher clay and mineral content, have a higher pH, higher moisture content and a greater biological activity than the surrounding soils and therefore support vegetation which can be very different from

\textsuperscript{55} These figures, especially the earlier ones, are but estimates as methods of recording census were far from accurate. The figures are derived from NAZ: KSE 4/1 District notebook, Report of the land commission of Northern Rhodesia 1946, NAZ: SEC 2/135 D.B. Hall, North western area annual report, 1951 and NAZ: NWP 1/2/101, Loc. 4919, H.T. Bayldon, North western province annual report, 1962. In 1951 population figures declined to 31,453 people due to the transfer of territories to Solwezi district.


\textsuperscript{57} NAZ: SEC2/955, R.C. Dening, Mwinilunga district tour report, November 1947.

\textsuperscript{58} From personal correspondence, it appeared that the main cassava fields which individuals cultivated ranged from one to four acres, even though next to this people usually had subsidiary fields of vegetables, groundnuts, rice or grains.


that on surrounding soils.\textsuperscript{63} Even though the soils of the area have certain limitations and are not always of high fertility, they hold some distinct advantages. The soils can be worked easily, they are deep and well drained and weed growth on them is relatively sparse.\textsuperscript{64}

Although it is important to look at these broad distinctions in soil types, the micro-ecology of the soil may vary considerably within a small patch of land. These micro-ecological variations are recognised by the local population and are put to use for agricultural production. Indicators such as woodland or grassland cover are used to show that a certain plot of land is suited to the cultivation of a specific crop and also indicate for how long a piece of land can be cultivated before the soil becomes exhausted.\textsuperscript{65} Therefore, fields for different crops are made in different places. For example, the cassava garden is not made in the same spot as the millet and/or sorghum garden, as each crop needs different soil characteristics and nutrients to develop optimally.\textsuperscript{66}

Closely correlated to soil types are the various types of vegetation in the district. Early district commissioners called the country “densely wooded, one continuous forest”\textsuperscript{67} and said that “it does not appear (...) that the District can be said to be suitable for agriculture owing to its being practically entirely covered with timber.”\textsuperscript{68} The district holds rich and exceptionally varied forest vegetation, and the amount of different woodland species is estimated to be close to 1,000.\textsuperscript{69} Most common are miombo, chipya, Cryptosepalum and dry evergreen forest, with species of Brachystegia, Julbernardia, Isoberlinia and Marquesia predominating in the area.\textsuperscript{70} The forest cover is by no means uniform, as there are numerous gradations in tree height and density of tree growth. Vegetation types range from thick forest (mavunda) and forest of low stunted trees (ikuna), to extensive grass plains (chana) and riverside damboes.\textsuperscript{71}

Next to soil characteristics and vegetation types, climatic factors also influenced the agricultural potential of the area. Mwinilunga district is well-endowed with rainfall, receiving a mean annual rainfall between 53” (1.346 mm)\textsuperscript{72} and 55” (1.397 mm).\textsuperscript{73} Rainfall figures, however, can fluctuate heavily from year to year and vary in different localities of the district. Whereas in the 1931-32 season high rainfall of 67.51” (1.715 mm) was recorded, in the 1917-18 season there was exceptionally low rainfall, of only 40.71” (1.034 mm).\textsuperscript{74} There is a single rain season, rains usually setting in during October, or occasionally even during September. Heavy rainfall is experienced during November-February when the main planting of crops also takes place. Rains then continue until April, or sometimes even May, even though mid-season droughts during December can be experienced, which can last up to three weeks and jeopardise the growing crops.\textsuperscript{75} The overall high rainfall enables the cultivation of crops with high moisture requirements, such as rice and various types of vegetables (even without irrigation), even though the irregular spacing and late onset of the rains can occasionally negatively affect yields.

Temperature ranges in Mwinilunga district do not fluctuate much throughout the year. The mean maximum temperature is 84 degrees Fahrenheit (29°C), rising during August-October when figures in the nineties (>=32°C) are frequently recorded. The daily minimum temperature is subject to greater fluctuation, being as high as 61 degrees Fahrenheit (16°C) in January-February, but

\textsuperscript{63} A.E.G. Storrs (ed.), \textit{Know your trees: Some of the common trees found in Zambia}, (Reprint: 1995), p.XIII.
\textsuperscript{64} NAZ: MAG 1/10/1, Loc.76, Agricultural development North western province, 1960 and Muliokeka, \textit{Zambia seed technology handbook}, p.22.
\textsuperscript{65} Trapnell and Clothier, \textit{The soils, vegetation and agricultural systems}, p.9.
\textsuperscript{66} NAZ: MAG 2/9/3, Ecological survey reports, July 1935.
\textsuperscript{67} NAZ: KSE 6/5/1 G.A. McGregor, Balunda district monthly report, November 1908.
\textsuperscript{68} NAZ: KSE 6/1/1, Bellis, Balunda district annual report, 1911.
\textsuperscript{69} District planning unit, \textit{Mwinilunga district situation analysis 2007}, p.6.
\textsuperscript{70} Muliokeka, \textit{Zambia seed technology handbook}, p.23.
\textsuperscript{71} Pritchett, \textit{The Lundo-Ndembu}, p.47.
\textsuperscript{72} NAZ: MAG 1/10/1, Loc. 76, Agricultural development North western province, 1960.
\textsuperscript{73} NAZ: Report of the land commission of Northern Rhodesia, 1946.
\textsuperscript{74} NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook.
\textsuperscript{75} NAZ: MAG 2/9/3, Loc. 170, Ecological survey reports, February 1934.
dropping to 45 degrees Fahrenheit (7°C) during June and July, when occasional night frosts can be recorded in the low-lying river valleys, causing potentially serious damage to crops which do not tolerate frost, such as cassava.  

When rainfall and temperature ranges are combined, three distinct seasons become apparent. Firstly, there is the rainy season from October to April (nvula), which is followed by the cold dry season from May to July (chishika) and finally there is the hot dry season from August to September (nonga). It will be illustrated that the whole complex of village life is closely interrelated to these different seasons, as different activities take place during each specific season.

**Agriculture**

The development of agricultural practices and techniques in Mwinilunga district was based on and closely interrelated to the environmental characteristics outlined above. Trapnell and Clothier in their *Ecological Survey* mention an “admirable adaptation of agricultural systems to their environment”. How were the agricultural techniques developed in Mwinilunga adapted to the possibilities and limitations offered by the specific environment?

**Staple crops**

Agricultural production in Mwinilunga district was based on the cultivation of a number of staple crops. The main staple crop was either cassava (in the largest part of the district) or various types of grains, namely finger millet, bulrush millet or sorghum (in the east and south of the district).

However, even in areas where cassava was grown as a staple crop grains would be grown as subsidiary crops, with the additional purpose of brewing beer from the grains, and vice versa. Throughout the colonial period a progressive trend could be witnessed, however, as areas which had previously focused on grains were increasingly shifting to cassava cultivation. Cassava had various advantages as a crop, as it grows well on the sandy, occasionally acidic, soils of the district and is very high yielding, even higher yielding than sorghum, millet, or maize. Also, the crop is drought-resistant and can withstand locust attacks. Furthermore, cassava can be harvested throughout the year and thus alleviates labour peaks during the harvesting period and provides food and energy throughout the year, preventing (severe) ‘hungry periods’. However, cassava also has certain limitations, as it is susceptible to rotting when water-logged, it is sensitive to frost and when eaten without complementary foodstuffs it can cause nutritional deficiencies, even though the edible cassava leaves are high in vitamins, minerals and proteins.

For the cultivation of staple crops land was prepared by using a system of *chitemene* cultivation, with hoes and axes. Firstly, the portion of land which was reserved for cultivation would be cleared of vegetation, by cutting down whole trees, though not uprooting them, but leaving the stumps in the ground. This would happen when the rains had ceased in April, May or June. A larger portion of land would be cleared of trees than would eventually be cultivated. This was done to provide enough fertilising ashes for subsequent cultivation. Especially for finger millet cultivation as much as eight up to ten acres of land would be cleared in order to make a finger millet garden of one

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80 NAZ: SEC 2/955, C.M.N. White, Mwinilunga district tour report, May 1940.
81 NAZ: MAG 1/18/6, Ministry or agriculture, North western province tour report, 1962.
82 NAZ: Department of Agriculture of Northern Rhodesia, Annual report 1949.
84 Mulokela, *Zambia seed technology handbook*, p.331.
85 Trapnell and Clothier, *The soils, vegetation and agricultural systems*, p.22.
86 Interview with Mr. Muhemba, October 4th 2008, Chibwika.
The tree cuttings, leaves and grasses would then be piled up in a circle and left to dry until September or October when they would be burnt, just before the rains set in. The burning of the vegetation had the double effect of fertilising the land and reducing weed growth. Different areas of the burnt field or even different plots of land altogether, would be used for grain and for cassava cultivation. Certain types of grass and tree cover were regarded as indicators that land was suited to either cassava or grain cultivation, specific trees or high grass cover being indications that land was suited to cassava cultivation and virgin forest being preferred for millet and sorghum, as those crops required highly fertile soils. Fields were made at a distance from the village, so as to protect them from damage done by domestic animals, and to enable the use of the fertile (virgin) forest soils.

Different techniques were used for cassava and grain cultivation. For cassava cultivation, the plot of land would be hoed up into tall round mounds, consisting of earth, ashes from the burnt trees and sometimes leaves and/or grasses to add additional fertility. These mounds would be planted with cassava stems, averaging 6 stems per mound although the exact number depended on the size of the mound. Planting would occur after the first rains, in October or November, though occasionally planting could take place even before the first rains had commenced. In that case the shooting of new leaves on the trees would be regarded as an indication that rains were approaching, and the cassava stems would be covered with leaves to protect them from the heat of the sun. Thereafter cassava would be left to grow, and little attention would be paid to the crop until the first weeding took place, around April or May of the next year when the rains had ceased. Weeding was done either manually or with hoes and was repeated on a yearly basis. Cassava roots matured within two to three years, depending on variety, and were harvested in small portions, taking out the roots, but leaving the stems in the ground, when these were required for consumption. While the standing cassava crop was maturing, new fields for cassava cultivation would be opened up on a yearly basis, which resulted in the fact that several different cassava fields would be cultivated simultaneously. Whereas cassava cultivation, once the planting had taken place, did not require much labour, the processing of cassava after the harvest was all the more labour-intensive. Cassava roots first had to be soaked in a river, stream or pond for four to seven days. Once they had been soaked, they would be peeled either with a knife or manually, and dried in the sun or over a fire. The dried roots would then be pounded in a large pestle and mortar to make them into flour ready for consumption.

Millet and sorghum, contrastingly, were not sown in mounds but in beds, sowing taking place in December, when the first mushrooms were sprouting. Millet and sorghum were planted on a separate plot of land, because they required highly fertile soils preferably of burnt down virgin forest, needed much sunlight and depleted the soil rapidly. Because of this, a new plot of land was opened up for grain cultivation each year, leaving the old plot of land to completely regenerate by lying fallow after it had been used for one year. Millet and sorghum needed more attention than cassava while under cultivation, as they required regular weeding and bird scaring was necessary to protect the grains. Harvesting took place in April, and population groups which were dependant on grain-cultivation often experienced a ‘hunger period’ during January-March, when the stocks from last year’s harvest had been depleted and the new crop had not yet ripened. This hunger period would, however, usually be bridged by taking recourse to other foodstuffs, such as yams, wild fruits, green...
maize, etc. Millet and sorghum, next to being processed into flour and eaten as a staple crop, were also used extensively for beer-making purposes. Women brewed large quantities of beer which was drunk on special occasions, such as ceremonies and weddings, but was also used to attract labour to assist in cultivation.

*Subsidiary crops*

Next to these staple crops a large variety of subsidiary crops was cultivated. These consisted of various root and tuber plants, maize, rice, various fruits and vegetables, different types of beans, groundnuts and cucurbits, but also crops grown for seasoning food, producing oil, adorning the body, feeding livestock and many other purposes. In total, close to one hundred different crops were grown in Mwinilunga district. These could be grown intercropped with cassava in the mounds during the first year of its growth, on separate plots of land along rivers and in dambo gardens where water was abundant, or within the village itself. Subsidiary crops could add variety to the daily diet and could provide a back-up in times when the staple crop was scarce, which is why their cultivation was regarded as pivotal and was not subordinate to staple crop cultivation.

A wide variety of crops could be grown intercropped with cassava in the same mounds. Sweet potatoes, being tuber crops like cassava, could easily be added to the existing mounds. In addition, different varieties of gourds and squashes could be included in cassava mounds, as well as various types of local vegetables such as *kateti* (a solanaceous fruit), *wusi* (roselle) and *mulengu* (amaranth). Even crops such as beans and maize (*kahila kabaka*, a flint type of maize with coloured kernels) were occasionally intercropped with cassava, by sowing a few seeds in every mound, even though the soil properties were not such as to allow maize to prosper when intercropped with cassava. Most of these crops were harvested between March and May, and could be eaten just before the grain crops had matured. Some crops could thereafter be preserved in calabashes or dried and eaten throughout the year, in order to add variety to the diet and offset temporary shortages.

Not all subsidiary crops could be grown in the same mounds as cassava, though, as some crops had specific planting, soil or moisture requirements. Next to the cassava and grain gardens, therefore, separate riverside gardens were occasionally made, which would be under the exclusive control of female cultivators. Crops grown in these dambo or riverside gardens included vegetables such as tomatoes, onions and cabbages, but also groundnuts, various types of beans, maize and even rice. Beans, while being grown during the rains in cassava mounds, could also be planted in dambo gardens, where they performed well in the clayey soils. They would then be planted in August or September and harvested in November, growing during the dry season. Maize could also be planted in the dambo gardens, where soils and moisture levels were more suited to its cultivation, and could then be harvested in December or January. Groundnuts, if intercropped with cassava, would not grow well, as they needed highly fertile flat soil beds and thus benefitted from cultivation on separate plots of land. Various vegetables, such as tomatoes, onions and cabbages, whose cultivation was promoted and further spread by immigrants from Angola, Congo and by European settlers, needed frequent watering and were also grown along rivers, even though excessive watering and rainfall could cause fungal diseases. Rice was a specific case, being a crop which could exclusively be grown on seasonally flooded damboes in certain parts of the district, namely in the extreme northwest around Nyakaseya and along the Kabompo River in Ntambu. Rice was planted in November, and harvesting took place in May or June. Throughout the colonial period

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97 NAZ: KSE 6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1927.
98 Interview with Mrs. Alfonsina Chingangu, October 15th 2008, Ntambu.
99 For a list of the most important subsidiary crops grown in the area, see Appendix I.
101 Trapnell and Clothier, *The soils, vegetation and agricultural systems*, p.16.
102 Mulikela, *Zambia seed technology handbook*, and interview with Mr. Solomon Kanswata, September 8th and October 18th 2008, Mwinilunga.
103 Interview with Mr. Paul Chitadi, September 8th 2008, Kampemba.
rice cultivation became a major source of cash income, the crop being traded to markets on the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt or in Congo, providing income to female cultivators who monopolised production of the crop.

In addition, some crops were grown within the boundaries of the village. These included various fruit trees, such as banana, mango or pawpaw, but also certain varieties of yams, local cotton bushes and sesame. All in all, a wide range of subsidiary crops was grown in different locations, so as to make use of the various micro-ecological soil and moisture qualities of a specific area, and in order to provide a steady food supply throughout the year.

**Agricultural techniques and risk minimisation**

Some techniques to minimise risks within agriculture, and to make optimal use of the various environmental possibilities, have already been mentioned. These included selecting suitable soils for various crops, based on tree and grass cover, making different gardens (main gardens, riverside gardens and village gardens) and intercropping various crops. By using these techniques, the population attempted to prevent seasonal shortages, provide a year-round food supply and secure a back-up if crop failure occurred.

Another important strategy to minimise risks was the adoption of different strains and varieties of a single crop. For instance, in 1954 as many as 28 different strains of cassava were mentioned in just one area. These various strains had different maturation times, some maturing in two years whereas others took three years to mature, had different tastes, as there were sweet and bitter varieties, varied in their disease-resistance and had different tuber sizes. Furthermore, various storage techniques were adopted. For sorghum and millet preservation grain bins could be built, whereas planting seeds were often stored and preserved in calabashes. Other methods to store food for longer periods of time were smoking, drying in the sun or over a fire, or thoroughly salting foodstuffs, though the last method was less common due to the limited availability of salt. By adopting these storage techniques food could be preserved for six up to eight months, thus assuring the availability of food throughout a large part of the year. Cassava, however, did not need storage mechanisms, as the crop could remain in the ground for long periods of time and could be harvested whenever it was required.

These various techniques of risk minimisation were combined with strategies of diversification. This meant that agricultural production did not function in isolation, but was often combined with, and connected to, other activities. Animal husbandry, hunting, fishing and making use of forest resources served to complement agricultural production and in conjunction these practices served to make optimal use of the opportunities offered by the varied environment. Non-agricultural practices were, thus, closely connected to agricultural production and contributed to it in numerous ways, which is why they merit closer consideration.

**Animal husbandry**

Most villages contained at least a small number of livestock, some possessing up to one hundred head. Livestock and cattle censuses ranged from an estimation of 960 sheep, 1523 goats and 4 pigs owned by the local population throughout the district in 1926, to 3562 sheep, 3168 goats, 72 pigs and 503 cattle in 1961, thus indicating a marked increase throughout the colonial period. The possibility of owning cattle was largely restricted by the presence of tsetse fly throughout large parts of the district, especially south of the 12th parallel, and also by disease control measures, which limited importation of (breeding) cattle from neighbouring areas of Angola and Barotseland, due to

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104 NAZ: NWP 1/2/17, F.M.N. Heath, Mwinilunga district tour report, 1/1948.
106 NAZ: KSE 6/6/2, C.S. Parsons, Mwinilunga sub-district tour report, May 1924.
107 NAZ: KSE 6/1/6, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1928.
the presence of bovine pleuropneumonia. Ownership of pigs was also limited, as pigs tended to interfere with cassava cultivation by uprooting the gardens. Goats and sheep, however, were quite common and were kept in most villages. Often there were local preferences for either goats or sheep, as sheep were said to be less susceptible to disease than goats, whereas goats were hardy, could eat almost anything and were not very susceptible to ticks and similar diseases. Furthermore, various types of poultry were held, such as chicken, guinea fowls and geese. Animals were kept in wooden kraals or pens during the night, but were often left to graze freely around the village during the day. Because village gardens were often not fenced, the stock would sometimes graze in and destroy neighbouring gardens, causing tension between stock owners and agricultural producers. The stock itself was, in turn, frequently attacked by wild animals, such as hyena’s, lions and leopards, causing their decimation and discouraging livestock ownership.

Milk and eggs which could be obtained from livestock were but sparingly utilised by the local population, and animal husbandry was not only practised for the purpose of obtaining meat supplies. Even though animals were slaughtered for meat occasionally, the slaughtering of an animal was often reserved for special occasions, such as rituals, weddings, the reconciliation of a conflict, to pay fines, to honour a special visitor, etc. Furthermore livestock was used as an article of exchange, for bartering purposes with neighbouring areas in order to obtain goods such as clothes and soap, but also other foodstuffs such as salt and even cassava. In addition, animals were often viewed as a sign of prestige and a store of wealth, providing savings for when a large expense had to be made, such as the payment of school fees or the visit to a hospital. Animal meat was also occasionally used to attract labour from fellow villagers to assist in specific cultivation activities (work parties, explained in the following chapter).

Animal ownership was organised on an individual basis. Even if a family kraal existed individual family members would know exactly to whom which animal belonged. However, once an animal was slaughtered, the meat could be shared with close kin and sometimes even with the whole village. Livestock ownership and trade became commercialised when lucrative markets arose at the Congo and Copperbelt mines where a large demand for meat existed and where high prices were offered, especially from the 1930s onwards. During the late colonial period the government started promoting livestock and particularly cattle ownership by individuals. This was done by distributing and lending out National and Chiefly herds of cattle, first only to chiefs, but later to ‘promising villagers’ as well. Also, limitations on the importation of cattle were lifted, which enabled people to bring over cattle which they owned from Angola to Mwinilunga. Furthermore, improved breeds of goats, sheep and improved cockerels were distributed on a loan or repayment basis. Stock ownership, it was believed, would facilitate improved agricultural methods, by providing manure, enabling ox-drawn ploughing and by diversifying the diet of the local population, providing milk, butter, eggs and meat. The possibilities of large-scale ranching in the area were

109 NAZ: Report of the Land Commission of Northern Rhodesia, p.27.
113 Interview with Mrs. Yesta Muyutu, October 9th 2008, Ntambu.
117 Interview with Mr. Solomon Kanswata, September 8th and October 18th 2008, Mwinilunga.
118 Interview with Mr. Mwangala, September 8th 2008, Mwinilunga.
121 Interview with Mr. Paul Chitadi, September 8th 2008, Kampemba.
considered, but this was found to be unprofitable, as ‘sour veldt’, a lack of dry-season fodder and a low carrying capacity of the land for cattle were said to exist in the area. In spite of these limitations, the few European farms in the area were all based on cattle-ownership, and to a certain extent cattle rearing was found to be a profitable enterprise, when combined with other activities such as trading and transport services.

Even though animal husbandry was but rarely put to direct agricultural use by providing either manure or draught power, it did contribute to enable agricultural diversification. Animal husbandry provided occasional meat supplies which were not only highly valued, but were also part of a barter system providing access to essential goods, and in addition meat supplies enabled the organisation of work parties. Furthermore, animal husbandry provided a potential source of resources and even wealth which could be used for agricultural production and the expansion of existing fields.

Hunting

“We Lunda, we are hunters”, is a frequently proclaimed statement of self-identification even in present times. In the past, especially in the south of the district, on the river plains and in the stunted bush, game could be found in abundance and large herds of various game species were reported to have existed. In the northern parts of the district game could also be found, even though it was more scattered across the area and mainly smaller species of game were to be encountered. By the 1950s, however, “ruthless destruction of game (…) [and] meat hunger” was mentioned and it was noted that there was hardly any game left in the district. This extermination of game was, according to the district officers, due to the fact that Lunda men were “inveterate hunters”, killing all the game indiscriminately ever since they had obtained access to muzzle-loading guns. To prevent the rapid disappearance of game, various orders and decrees were put in place to restrict the freedom of the hunter. It became obligatory to purchase a licence in order to hunt larger species of game and to own a gun, the trapping of game was subjected to limitations and the sale of game meat was severely curtailed. Furthermore, Game Reserves and Controlled Hunting Areas were erected to limit the indiscriminate shooting of game. It is, however, doubtful whether the disappearance of game could be attributed completely to the actions of local hunters, as it is probable that European hunters, hunters from Barotseland and poachers from neighbouring areas also played a significant role in decimating the game populations. Furthermore local hunters claimed to be selective when choosing their prey, hunting only on the older specimens of a herd and thus enabling the game population to procreate and increase.

Even though hunting was progressively curtailed, both by government regulations and by the increasing scarcity of game, it remained an important marker of Lunda identity, especially connected to masculinity. A saying goes that, “whoever kills the hunter has killed the whole village”, indicating the pivotal role that hunters played in village life. Hunting was associated with male fertility, and even the power of chiefs, in ensuring the fertility of the land and the people on that land, was connected to hunting, expressed in the fact that chiefs were ritually awarded the chest of

125 NAZ: MAG 1/10/1, Loc.76, Mwinilunga district Crown Land Survey, 1956.
126 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga District notebook, 1917 entry.
129 NAZ: KSE 6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1926.
132 Interview with Mr. Harrison Zimba, October 10th 2008, Ntambu.
133 Turner, Schism and continuity, p.25.
134 Interview with Harrison Zimba, October 10th 2008, Ntambu.
each animal killed while hunting. Game meat provided a highly valued and important contribution to the diet, providing animal proteins and fats which were much-needed complements to the produced crops. The high valuation of hunting was not always in line with the actual contribution that game meat made to the daily diet, however, as game meat was neither available universally, nor throughout the whole year, but was regarded as a special treat, only to be indulged in occasionally.

Hunting was an exclusively male activity, practised in groups of two up to twenty men, staying in the bush for considerable periods of time (ranging from several days up to one month). Different hunting techniques were used, such as the construction of pits, traps and snares or the use of ropes made from tree bark or fibre. These techniques were practised by groups of hunters collaborating, but there were also individual hunters who used spears, bows and arrows, or various types of guns, either locally made muzzle-loaders or firearms imported from Angola. Furthermore, children would collect or snare small mammals, birds, caterpillars, grubs, crickets and winged termites. A special type of hunting was the organised annual burning of parts of the bush, called ikuna, under the leadership of village headmen or chiefs. This practice involved burning a part of the bush, which would subsequently be surrounded by men with guns, spears, bows and arrows, waiting for the game to flee the flames so that it could be caught and killed. This practise, however, gradually fell into disuse throughout the years.

Even though hunting could be practised throughout the year with guns and spears, the best period for hunting was the dry season, between June and November, when the grass was dry and game would gather around water sources. The meat obtained by hunting was usually shared by a large part of the village community. Some ritual parts of the slaughtered animal could be reserved for the headman and/or the chief, whereas the rest of the animal was divided among kin and neighbours.

If the hunting trip was particularly successful, the excess meat would be preserved by smoking or drying and could be traded or bartered with neighbouring areas. Thus, hunting supplemented and contributed to agricultural production, by providing meat supplies, animal proteins and fats and by enabling occasional barter with neighbouring areas.

Fishing

Mwinilunga district is particularly well-endowed with water resources, containing numerous perennial streams, some large rivers, various swamps and lakes. The Zambezi River has its source in the northwest of the district, whereas the Kabompo and the Lunga rivers also flow through the area. Nevertheless, district commissioners proclaimed that the local population was “ignorant of watermanship” and often complained about the difficulty they experienced in obtaining fish supplies. This could, however, be attributed to the fact that most of the rivers in the district are in their upper course, making fish scarce, fry and difficult to catch.

Fish formed an important dietary supplement to agricultural production, providing essential supplies of protein, vitamins and minerals, even though the availability of fish was dependent on

137 Interviews with Mr. Kamiji, October 4th 2008, Chibwika and Mr. Harrison Zimba, October 10th 2008, Ntambu.
140 Pritchett, The Lunda-Ndembu, p.48-49.
141 Turner, Schism and continuity, p.32.
142 District planning unit, Mwinilunga district situation analysis 2007, p.7.
Whereas in the northern parts of the district fishing opportunities were relatively poor, in the southern areas fish was said to abound and reports were given of thousands and thousands of fish being caught in the Kabompo River, to such an extent as to attract village settlements on its banks especially for the purpose of fishing. Fishing could not be practised throughout the year to an equal extent, though, as it depended on the various seasons, heavy rains causing the rivers to swell and making fishing difficult.

Within these restrictions of season and locality, several techniques were developed and used in order to make use of the fish-resources in the rivers. Fishing was practised by men, women and children, though each used different techniques. Men usually fished in the large rivers during the period of August-December, though fishing was most successful in October-November. Men would fish with spears or nets, or they would make traps by using fishing baskets. Some would build dams, use hooks or even use fish poison made from specific pounded leaves. Women mostly fished in smaller streams with fishing baskets, just after the rains had ceased in April. Even young boys and girls practiced fishing, usually in small ponds, either by using spears (reserved for boys only) or by scooping out all the water from the small ponds in which cassava roots were soaked and thereby drying out the whole pond and causing the fish to die.

Fish could either be eaten fresh, or preserved by smoking, sun-drying or salting. An extensive barter trade existed between areas rich in fish and areas lacking fish, but producing large amounts of agricultural produce. For example, cassava meal from the northwest could be bartered for dried fish from the south of the district. Much dried fish was also obtained from Angola, by bartering cassava meal or other goods. By means of this barter trade, even areas short of fish could obtain adequate supplies to satisfy their needs, which enabled people to have access to multiple ecological niches, even those from which they were physically separated.

**Forest resources**

“Trees are wealth”, and Mwinilunga district was described as having a larger variety of trees than any other area in Northern Rhodesia. The local population made use of this wealth of trees and the rich variety of forest vegetation in numerous ways. Villages were located close to, or surrounded by forests and people relied on forests in order to obtain various goods, ranging from materials for housing (thatching grass, rope, bark fibre, etc.) and goods for clothing, to various medicinal plants and items of ritual importance. Furthermore, salt could be produced by filtering the ashes of certain wild plants, which were high in salt content, with water. In addition, some of the most important trade goods of Mwinilunga district throughout the pre-colonial and colonial period were directly or indirectly derived from the access to forest resources. These trade goods included rubber, beeswax, honey, game meat, animal skins and ivory, the uses and importance of which will be explained in following chapters.

Forests also provided a rich variety of dietary supplements, such as fruits, berries, nuts, tubers, mushrooms, various leaves, grubs, caterpillars and honey. These items were often only available in particular seasons, as caterpillars were only gathered during the dry season, mushrooms

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148 Interviews with Mr. Kamiji, October 4th 2008, Chibwika and Mr. Harrison Makina, October 10th 2008, Ntambu.
150 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga District Notebooks, P.O. Bourne, 1957 entry.
sprouted at the beginning of the rains and wild fruits would ripen during specific periods of the year.\footnote{22} Gathering food from the forest could be a hunger strategy, to bridge periods of scarcity preceding the harvests, or in order to alleviate food scarcity during a year in which harvests had failed.\footnote{23} However, the gathering of food from the forests was by no means confined to periods of hunger, and certain types of produce obtained from the forest were highly valued and collected even in times of general food abundance. Women would embark on special expeditions into the bush to collect all sorts of mushrooms, which were widely recognised as being a delicacy and also honey, brought home by men after hunting trips, was highly valued.\footnote{24} Access to forest resources, thus, provided essential goods, provided nutrients and added variety to the daily diet, next being a coping strategy in times of mild or more severe hunger or crisis.

**Struggling with the environment – Coping with environmental difficulties**

Environmental problems, in the form of droughts, pests, frosts, etc., unavoidably occurred from time to time. Rainfall patterns and disease environments could not be (completely) controlled. The reaction to these environmental problems, however, could influence if they would turn into crises or if their impact would remain limited. Various coping strategies and the dynamic interplay between different livelihood strategies of agriculture, hunting, fishing and gathering, could serve to limit the impact of environmental problems. Hereunder the impact of, and reactions to, several environmental problems will be examined, namely the locust invasions of the 1930s, the 1947 frosts and the cassava mosaic disease. By looking at the response to these problems, an insight can be provided as to coping strategies, but also to the limitations of human influence on the environment in Mwinilunga district.

**Locust invasions 1928-40 – Menace or blessing in disguise?**

Starting from the late 1920s and continuing throughout the 1930s large swarms of locusts raged through the area of Mwinilunga. Swarms invaded the district from the neighbouring areas of Congo and Angola, particularly in 1928, 1931-32, 1934-35, 1937 and 1939.\footnote{25} Two distinct species of locusts were observed, namely the Red locust (*Nomadacris septemfasciata serville*) and the migratory locust (*Locusta migratoria migratorioides*). The local population already possessed some knowledge in dealing with the locust threat, as invasions had previously occurred in 1895, 1903 and 1908.\footnote{26}

Locust invasions were capable of causing famine and suffering, as they could destroy growing crops and could lead to starvation of the population.\footnote{27} A large red locust swarm is able to consume in a day what 4,000 people can live on for a year.\footnote{28} However, even though large swarms attacked Mwinilunga district during this period, the impact on food supply and agricultural production did not seem to be extremely serious. Various practices were adopted to avert the locust threat. Trampling and beating the locusts, warding off the swarms by making high shrieking noises, the use of smudge fires and the digging of trenches in which to trap the locusts, were all techniques adopted by the local population to limit the damage caused by invading swarms of locusts, the last two methods being particularly recommended by the colonial administration.\footnote{29} Locusts, after they had been caught, could also serve as an additional source of protein to the diet and were consumed in large quantities.\footnote{30}
quantities when other foodstuffs were lacking.\textsuperscript{163} These measures were, however, only partially effective and other methods had to be found to deal with the locusts.

Cassava cultivation, in dealing with the locust threat, proved to be a blessing in disguise. Whereas the eastern areas of Mwinilunga district, which were to a large extent dependent on sorghum and millet cultivation, suffered temporary shortages as the locusts attacked their crops, the population in the western parts of the district which predominantly depended on cassava cultivation suffered but little from the invading locusts.\textsuperscript{164} Because cassava tubers, the main source of food obtained from the cassava plant, grow under the ground and therefore cannot be attacked by locusts, cassava proved to be an efficient crop to withstand the locust menace. The colonial administration and local newspapers, initially seeing cassava as being inferior to sorghum, millet, maize and rice, even started promoting cassava as a locust-proof crop, as becomes clear from the following extract from a newspaper article:

“A locust-proof crop for Bantu; Plant more cassava! (...) The locusts have often been seen in great swarms descending on the cassava gardens, and when they fly away, you can hardly see a leaf or twig on the cassava plant, but the roots remain untouched, and from two to three weeks later the leaves appear and the gardens become as green as before.”\textsuperscript{165}

Therefore, increased production of cassava was encouraged by the colonial administration, and cassava cultivation even spread and expanded in areas which had hitherto been predominantly dependant on sorghum and millet.\textsuperscript{166} Recommendations by the colonial government to expand cassava cultivation were always accompanied by a certain degree of caution, though, as it was noted that “its food value is low unless its deficiencies can be replaced from other sources.”\textsuperscript{167} However, cassava cultivation did not only spread because of colonial encouragement, but also because the population readily adopted the crop and came to realise the benefits of its cultivation. Production of cassava also increased because there was a heightened demand for the crop. The Boma, for its food supplies and rations, came to rely increasingly on cassava as a locust-proof crop when other crops had failed or had been destroyed by locusts. Furthermore, surrounding areas relying on sorghum, millet, maize or rice cultivation whose food security was affected by locust swarms bartered and traded goods such as fish, meat and vegetables with the cassava producing areas of Mwinilunga, providing an outlet for the surplus cassava.\textsuperscript{168}

The cultivation of other locust-proof crops such as groundnuts, beans and sweet potatoes was also promoted, which lead to the spread and increase of their production throughout the district. Other coping mechanisms during locust invasions included increased dependence on livestock, fishing, hunting and foraging so as to deal with the shortages caused by the destruction of crops. Furthermore, when necessary meals were temporarily scaled down, which meant that instead of three meals a day people would consume two, or in times of extreme shortage, merely one meal a day. This, however, could have adverse effects on health if pursued for longer periods of time.\textsuperscript{169}

Thus, even though the locust invasions did form a threat to food security, by attacking the grain crops and largely depriving people of fresh vegetables (cassava leaves, sweet potato leaves, gourds, pumpkins, etc.), the threat was successfully dealt with by using various coping strategies and by expanding the production of locust-proof crops. Eventually, the locust threat passed as a fungal disease (\textit{Empusa Grylli}) in combination with various parasites almost completely decimated locust swarms.\textsuperscript{170}

\textsuperscript{163} Chabatama, “Coping with ecological adversity”, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{164} NAZ: SEC 2/133, Western province Mwinilunga district annual report, 1937.
\textsuperscript{165} NAZ: Mutende June 1936, letter written by Joe M. Mabuti.
\textsuperscript{166} NAZ: SEC 2/133, Western province Mwinilunga district annual report, 1935.
\textsuperscript{167} NAZ: NWP 1/2/10, Loc. 4898, C.M.N. White, Mwinilunga district tour report No. 6/1939.
\textsuperscript{168} Chabatama, “Coping with ecological adversity”, p.24-25.
\textsuperscript{169} Ibidem.
\textsuperscript{170} Chipungu, “Locusts, peasants, settlers and the state”, p.66.
‘Natural calamities’ – Frost and the cassava mosaic disease

Next to locusts, there were occasionally other environmental threats to agricultural production. One of these threats was frost. Even though cassava can grow under a wide variety of environmental circumstances, it is highly sensitive to frosts, which can jeopardise the entire prospective harvest.\textsuperscript{171} Serious night frosts, especially in the low-lying river valleys, occurred during the 1947 cold, dry season in Mwinilunga. The frosts resulted in dramatically decreased yields during subsequent years, as the growth cycle of the cassava crop takes multiple years and thus not only the first harvest was affected by the frosts, but its influence could be felt for several years. This was further aggravated by the fact that during the 1947-48 season heavy rainfall caused waterlogging, which in turn caused cassava roots to rot.\textsuperscript{172} In spite of the fact that these setbacks did cause reduced yields, widespread hunger did not occur. Even though harvests were less abundant than during previous and following years, by relying more heavily on other (annual) crops, such as maize, sorghum and millet, and by spending more time on activities such as gathering forest produce, detrimental effects were averted and shortages alleviated.\textsuperscript{173} By 1949 the situation was such that a district administrator even reported how: “The area’s food production had been the best ever, according to local producers (…) Rainfall helped to achieve good yields, but the people also planted carefully and sensibly.”\textsuperscript{174}

Cassava cultivators faced further difficulties due to the cassava mosaic disease, affecting the area during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Yield reductions ranged from 10 to even 40%, thus causing serious shortages in some areas of the district.\textsuperscript{175} Some uncertainty existed at the time as to the exact causes of the disease, as the appearance of mosaic was mistakenly blamed on the cultivation of cassava for prolonged periods of time on the same plot of land.\textsuperscript{176} In order to combat the disease, active steps were taken by the district administration together with the Native Authorities. Not only were disease-free and mosaic-resistant cassava sticks imported from other areas (most notably from Congo, where experiments with mosaic-resistant cassava varieties had been carried on for some time already), but people were also urged to eradicate diseased crops and thus uproot part of their plantings. This was a hard blow, and the district administration described how: “it takes more than words to convince a villager of the wisdom of uprooting perhaps half of the growing crop.”\textsuperscript{177} Even though the disease caused a situation of food scarcity in some areas, it did not affect all villages and areas equally. Whereas some villages suffered heavily due to the mosaic disease, in other villages cassava growth seemed to be but slightly affected and abundant harvests could nevertheless be reaped. The areas which suffered from shortages could thus fall back on areas in which abundant cassava stocks were available, for instance by bartering cassava for meat or fish, thereby averting severe scarcity. In addition the district administration encouraged the increased planting of maize, as a supplementary crop to cassava.\textsuperscript{178} Furthermore, the distribution of mosaic-resistant cassava varieties served to increase yields and make cassava mosaic less of a threat to the future cultivation of the crop.\textsuperscript{179}

Cultivators in Mwinilunga thus occasionally faced serious problems caused by the vagaries of their environment, which were not always within their own control. However, by making use of the wide repertoire of cultivated crops, the local variations within the environment of the district and by combining different strategies of hunting, fishing, foraging and agricultural production,
environmental difficulties could often be overcome, notwithstanding the occasional occurrence of food shortages.

**Concluding remarks**

The population of Mwinilunga district adopted different strategies to make use of the versatility of their natural environment. This was done not only by the adoption of different agricultural techniques and crops, based on the foundation laid by the geographical, physical and climatic features of the district, but also by combining agricultural production with animal husbandry, hunting, fishing and making use of forest resources. The combination of these different livelihood strategies enabled people to make optimal use of the different ecological niches present in the area. Even though the environment, to a certain extent, conditioned which different agricultural practices and livelihood strategies proved viable in the area, human action could also mould the environment in order to meet its own needs. It was in the interplay of different agricultural practices and in the combination of agriculture with other activities that people sought and found ways to cope with their environment, make sense of it and eventually use it to their own benefit. This interplay of strategies was continually subject to change and could adapt itself to different circumstances, providing people with a range of possibilities to adjust to the prevailing situation, even when faced with environmental difficulties. The following chapters will focus more on the socio-political and economic factors which effected agricultural change during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. It will be shown, however, how these socio-political and economic developments were to a large extent based on, intertwined with and (potentially) transformative of the environmental factors outlined here.
Illustration 1: A hunting shrine
(Source: NAZ SEC2/964, Mwinilunga district tour report, Accompanying photographs)

Illustration 2: A hunter with his bow, arrow and spears

Illustration 3: A fishing basket

Illustration 4: Two girls fishing in a river
(Source: NAZ SEC2/964, Mwinilunga district tour report, Accompanying photographs)
Chapter 2: Connections, co-operation and trade

Individualism was a characteristic ascribed to agricultural production and productive activities of people in Mwinilunga district in general, by both Pritchett and Turner, the main anthropologists studying the area. Even though both scholars recognised the importance of various social and political linkages within society, they downplayed the pivotal role played by connections and co-operation between individuals in agricultural production and in the economic sphere of production. Even though, at first sight, agricultural production, hunting and fishing indeed seemed to be organised on an individual basis, it will be argued here that socio-economic connections and co-operation between individuals were crucial in order to make efficient use of the varied opportunities of the environment. Various connections and forms of co-operation existed on the household, village and regional level and linkages even existed over longer distances. Systems of trade and barter played an important role in sustaining these linkages, and in enabling people to access resources and ecosystems from which they were physically and geographically separated.

Attention will first be paid to patterns of co-operation within agricultural production, by looking at gender relations, the household as a unit of production and intra-village co-operation. Thereafter, the focus will be on different forms of trade and barter, both over shorter and longer distances throughout the pre-colonial and colonial periods. Contrary to the prevailing view of African societies as “self-sufficient homesteads, the inward-looking units of a subsistence economy”, being confronted by “a vigorous, world-wide, alien industrial economy” only with the advent of European imperialism and colonialism, it will be shown that Mwinilunga district was connected to patterns of long-distance trade through the Lunda political entity at a very early stage. It will be shown that, far from remaining static and unchanging during the pre-colonial period, the area of Mwinilunga through the long-distance trade obtained access to ecosystems, trade goods and ideas from areas far removed from its own heartland. It will be argued that socio-economic and political connections, co-operation and trade played an essential role in enabling the development of individual productive capacities on a level higher than that of self-subsistent households.

Individuals, gender relations and household co-operation

Environmental factors influenced the social organisation of agricultural production and village life in general. People aimed to make use of the possibilities offered to them by their environment, for instance by (partial) specialisation and by engaging in co-operation and trade. Agricultural production in Mwinilunga district has been described as highly individualistic. This is reflected in the fact that individual tenure of fields was the norm, use rights over a plot of land being obtained by residence in a village community. In addition, there was an absence of communal work obligations, as fields were often worked individually. However, by focusing merely on the individual nature of production, many forms of co-operation are overlooked, as household and village members frequently did work together and this in turn enabled both increased and diversified production. How were individual production and forms of co-operation combined?

Individualism was allegedly reflected in gender roles in Mwinilunga, which have been described as characterised by chaambu, meaning separation between the sexes. Formally indeed,

180 Pritchett, The Lunda-Ndembu, p.84 and Turner, Schism and continuity, p.23.
182 Turner, Schism and continuity, p.23.
184 Pritchett, The Lunda-Ndembu, p.177.
the tasks of men, women and children within agricultural production were separated. It was the task of men to clear the fields, by cutting and burning the trees. Thereafter it was the woman’s task to plant, weed and harvest the crops, even though men could assist in planting and harvesting, especially when heavier tasks were involved. A task reserved especially for women was the preparation of cassava into flour, involving the whole process of soaking, drying and pounding. Furthermore women were responsible for day to day cooking activities and the brewing of alcoholic beverages, mostly the various types of millet, sorghum, maize and honey beers. Children would, when necessary, assist their mothers in everyday activities, but also had specific tasks such as the scaring of birds off the grain crops (millet, sorghum and rice), the herding of domestic animals, hunting on small mammals, etc. Outside the sphere of agricultural production, it was an exclusively male task to go hunting and to construct houses during the dry season, whereas fishing and gathering could be practiced by both sexes.\(^\text{185}\)

This formal separation of tasks was followed through to such an extent that husbands, wives and elder (male) children worked separate plots of land. Because of the practice of virilocal marriage, women usually obtained access to land through their husbands, as men would determine the place of residence.\(^\text{186}\) Furthermore, upon divorce it was the prevalent custom for a woman to move away from her ex-husband’s village and she would then lose her land-rights in that village. However, husbands had no claims to, or rights over, the plots of land worked by their wives, as every individual worked its own plot of land and owned all the crops accrued from this plot.\(^\text{187}\) There were various reasons for the practice of cultivating separate plots of land. Firstly, this practice reduced quarrels when relatives from either the husband or the wife would visit and request food. Relatives could then be fed from individual gardens, thereby not taking a toll on the family food supply as a whole. Secondly, as polygyny was widespread in Mwinilunga, the availability of separate plots of land prevented quarrelling between wives. Each woman had her own field, and the field of the husband would be worked in turn by each spouse. Thirdly, the separation of fields facilitated divorce, as upon divorce no quarrels arose as to which plot of land belonged to whom.\(^\text{188}\) Furthermore, women and elder children were given separate plots of land to test their ability in agricultural production. A saying even went that “the woman without a garden is not worthy to marry”, as she had not yet proved herself in agricultural production.\(^\text{189}\) Finally, the separation of fields and gardens enabled women to work streamside or dambo gardens, in which beans, maize, vegetables and rice could be grown, and which were under exclusive female supervision and tenure.

The previous description indeed suggests that gender relationships were highly individualistic. Agricultural tasks were divided along gender lines, and gardens were owned and worked by individuals, husbands and wives not having rights over each other’s produce.\(^\text{190}\) However, by paying attention to this formal separation only, numerous spheres of more informal interaction and co-operation within the household are overlooked. Households could sometimes act as units in agricultural production, as the whole household would work on the man’s field one day and then move on towards the woman’s field the next day. Furthermore, men would clear their wives fields, whereas women would weed their husbands’ gardens. Individual activities could also complement one another, as meat from male hunting trips offered a welcome addition to the vegetables, maize and rice provided from the female streamside gardens and the beer brewed by women facilitated the work parties organised by individual family members.\(^\text{191}\) Furthermore, husband and wife could


\(^{186}\) Interview with the Chief Kanongesha’s mother, September 11th 2008, Kanongesha.

\(^{187}\) NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook, F.V. Bruce-Miller entry.

\(^{188}\) Interview with Mr. Benja Sampoko, born in Kanongesha area, October 9th 2008, Ntambu, and interview with Mrs. Alfonsina Chingangu, October 15th 2008, Ntambu.

\(^{189}\) NAZ: Mutende, No.160, February 1944.

\(^{190}\) Pritchett, *The Lunda-Ndembu*, p.179.

\(^{191}\) Interview with Mr. Benja Sampoko, born in Kanongesha area, October 9th 2008, Ntambu and interview with Mr. Maimbo and Mr. Katongo, September 13th 2008, Kanongesha.
work together to satisfy family needs, as income earned by either the husband or wife was occasionally combined to further the needs of their children. Incomes, though not necessarily shared, were often pooled with other household members. Household co-operation offered an opportunity for individual household members to diversify their productive capacities. Whereas one household member could focus on fishing or hunting, another could focus on agriculture, and so different ecosystems and modes of production could be exploited, by enabling small-scale specialisation. Thus, even though there was formal separation between the sexes in agricultural production, there were numerous forms of more informal co-operation and interdependence between males, females and household members.192

Land tenure and village set up
In order to better understand the forms of village co-operation, the set up of villages and the prevailing forms of land tenure in Mwinilunga district will first be explained. Village residence was often based on relationships of extended kinship. According to Turner, the ideal village core would have consisted of a group of matrilineally related male kin, virilocally residing wives and their children.193 However, even non-kin, such as recent immigrants from Angola, Congo and other parts of Northern Rhodesia, could be included in the village residence unit.194 The size of villages differed greatly, as some villages could contain up to one hundred residents,195 whereas smaller settlements of ten people or even less were neither uncommon.196 The colonial government tried to promote village concentration in larger settlements by introducing the ten-taxpayer rule, which entailed that a village in order to be properly registered should have at least ten taxpaying males. This rule never became very popular, though, and in 1946 the rule was relaxed in favour of the introduction of the ‘parish system’, allowing the appearance of smaller settlements of enterprising individuals on ‘farms’, which will be described in more detail in the following chapters.197

Villages did not remain permanently settled in one place, but shifted their place of residence from time to time. Village movement could have various reasons, such as the search for better agricultural land, good hunting or fishing grounds, the movement towards major lines of communication such as roads, rivers and mail paths, but also quarrels, deaths and the dilapidation of houses could be reasons to shift to a new site.198 Whereas some villages shifted every three or four years over short distances, other villages would remain on the same site for longer periods of time, but would then be likely to move over longer distances, even up to fifty miles.199

Land tenure was in principle vested in the chief, who allotted vacant land for village settlements to headmen. Headmen needed to obtain formal consent from chiefs in order to settle in a particular area, but thereafter had access to as much vacant land as they required, as land scarcity was not a pressing issue in the area of Mwinilunga. Individuals, in turn, obtained plots of land through headmen, according to their requirements. Individuals held life-long use rights over land based on their residence in a village community, but did not formally own the land.200 These use rights over land entailed the right to divide the land, transfer it to others and inherit it. Furthermore, there was tenure security, meaning that users could not simply be evicted from the land.201

192 Jackson, *Men at work*.
193 Turner, *Schism and continuity*, p. XVIII-XIX.
194 Turner, *Schism and continuity*, p.10 and confirmed in various interviews.
195 NAZ: KSE 6/3/2, Mwinilunga sub-district Indaba, 1927.
199 NAZ: SEC 2/135, D.B. Hall, North western area annual report, 1951. 50 miles is equivalent to 80 kilometres.
The village – Living and working together?

Which forms did individual and household production take within the village set up outlined above, and which role did village co-operation play? Apart from co-operation on the household level, there was at times co-operation on a somewhat higher level based on the village unit, expressed on various occasions. Chiefs and village headmen could play an agriculturally stimulating role, either by verbally encouraging people to cultivate larger plots of land and diversify the crops that were grown, or by setting an example themselves, cultivating a large plot of land and adopting new crops and techniques in agricultural production. Chiefs and headmen could stimulate people to make an effort at increasing agricultural production and by doing this they could promote a sense of unity within the village among all village members.

Individual village members also sought means of working together with their neighbours. One form of co-operation was the chenda, or communal work party. As some tasks in agricultural production were highly laborious individuals, next to relying on the labour supply of the household, could benefit from assistance from neighbouring villagers. In order to perform tasks such as tree-felling, making mounds, hoeing and harvesting the help of other villagers could be called upon in order to complete these tasks within a short amount of time. In such cases large amounts of beer were be brewed, game meat would be made available, a goat or sheep would be slaughtered or money could be offered, as an incentive to attract neighbours to assist in the agricultural tasks which needed to be performed. These work parties would last one day. In the morning the people would gather together and perform the required tasks, and once the job was completed the beer or meat would be offered as a reward. Work parties were organised individually, by either men or women, though predominantly by men, and could assist in completing large amounts of work within just one day. Anybody who had sufficient resources could organise such a work party, and usually several were hosted each month within a village, which meant that villagers in rotation worked on each other’s fields, after which they would return to the cultivation of their own fields. Work parties were thus means of short-term co-operation on a neighbourhood or village level and enabled individuals to expand their production as they had access over a large pool of temporary labourers, which enabled them to cultivate a larger acreage.

Another form of village co-operation was the practice of communal eating. Food was consumed communally, even though separation by gender and age-groups did occur. In the chota, or palaver hut in the centre of the village, the entire adult male village population would gather together and consume their meals, thus sharing their food. Women, young girls and uncircumcised boys would eat separately in their own cooking huts, though. The communal meals were organised in such a way that each household would contribute something to the daily meals. This could either mean that households would take turns in preparing meals, or that one household would prepare the staple food whereas another household would provide the accompanying meat or the vegetable dish. Women were responsible for preparing and cooking the food, which they did in their individual cooking huts, even though two or more women might cook and eat together. As food was shared in this manner, it prevented individuals and households from (severe) hunger. When one household suffered from food shortages, it could rely on other households to temporarily provide them with food. The practice of communal consumption also encouraged social competition within the village, though. It was not deemed acceptable for one household to always contribute meat and

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202 NAZ: NWP 1/2/12, Loc. 4899, H.B.Waugh, Mwinilunga district travelling report, 8/1940.
203 Allan, *The African husbandman*, p.44.
204 Turner, *Schism and continuity*, p.22 and various oral interviews.
205 Tosh, “The cash-crop revolution”, p.87.
208 Interview with Mr. Solomon Kanswata, September 8th and October 18th 2008, Mwinilunga.
cassava in plenty, whereas another household would only provide small quantities of cassava and subsidiary crops. Therefore, individual households were encouraged to produce sufficient and even abundant supplies of food and if food was lacking they were encouraged to increase production. The practice of communal eating also enabled village members to make efficient use of the various opportunities offered by the surrounding environment. Even though there was no pure specialisation within villages, as a hunter would (almost) never focus solely on hunting but would have at least a small agricultural field on the side, some village members did focus more on one activity such as fishing, whereas other village members focused more on bean cultivation, for instance. The practice of communal eating therefore enabled each villager to benefit from these small-scale specialisations, as access could be obtained to all of them through the communal meals.

In addition, when somebody would fall ill or if an old person would need assistance in cultivation, village co-operation could be relied on. Moreover, exchange within the village sometimes took place, as neighbours would exchange cassava for meat, etc. Thus, even though agricultural production has often been described as highly individualistic, certain patterns of co-operation on the household and village level did exist, and enabled people to make use of multiple ecological niches and expand individual production. Even though by relying merely on individual production, people could survive and subsist, it was in the contact with others that diversity, abundance and prosperity could be obtained.

**Patterns of exchange, barter and trade**

In addition to direct co-operation, it was also through various patterns of exchange that individuals, households and villages were connected and could pool their productive resources. Especially for the pre-colonial period stages or phases of trade have been demarcated on the basis of geographical criteria (distance and area covered by trade) and on the basis of the various commodities which were exchanged. Vansina suggested a tripartite division between local trade from village to village (involving mainly specialised goods from local industry), trade over longer distances “either between culturally different peoples within a single state or between neighbouring peoples” (involving foodstuffs, goods from local industry and goods obtained by long-distance trade), and direct long-distance trade (mainly revolving around the exchange of European goods such as cloth, beads, firearms, etc.). By contrast, Gray and Birmingham suggested a distinction between subsistence-oriented and market-oriented trade.

Even though both these models are analytically useful, a progressive narrative in which trade is depicted as necessarily becoming more complex, covering longer distances and involving a broader variety of goods should be avoided. The progression from a stage of ‘primitive’, local and subsistence trade to a stage of ‘progressive’, long-distance and market oriented trade is by no means automatic or complete, as the two in many occasions continue to exist side by side and the distinctions are often far from clear-cut. Therefore it is important to look at which forms trade took in Mwinilunga, how it was organised and which items were included in the various forms of trade. The focus will be primarily on the trade in foodstuffs, although this trade was often closely connected to and intertwined with trade in other goods, which will also be taken into account.

Exchange and trade were in no way new phenomena brought to the area by the advent of colonial rule. (Small-scale) specialisation had induced trade, within the village but also between different villages and even over long distances from early on, as Vansina has convincingly argued for the area of (West) Central Africa. Early exchange was, for instance, induced by the development of

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210 Interviews with Mr. Phiri and Mr. Kalusa, October 2nd 2008, Chibwika.

211 Interview with Mr. Ngambi, December 9th 2008, Kanyama.

212 Interview with Mrs. Bibiana, October 5th 2008, Chibwika.


215 Gray and Birmingham, “Some economic and political consequences of trade”, p.3.
metallurgy, leading to the trade of scarce iron tools in exchange for a wide variety of available goods such as food, livestock, or locally manufactured mats, baskets, etc., reaching back to the first millennium A.D. and being conducted over long distances. In addition, there was probably early exchange between neighbouring villages and populations, as some focused more on agriculture, whereas others spent more time on hunting and foraging.\textsuperscript{216} Also in the case of the area of Mwinilunga, trade and exchange were long-established and could cover long distances.

Particularly significant in this case was the trade in foodstuffs. This trade could geographically be subdivided on roughly three levels, namely the local level (either within villages or between directly neighbouring villages), the regional level (between different chiefdoms, including those in present-day Angola and Congo) and the long-distance level (for instance with the Angolan west coast or during the colonial period with the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt).\textsuperscript{217} Trade was induced both by (small-scale) specialisation and by the differential allocation of scarce natural resources, which meant that goods which were abundant in one area were exchanged with an area where these goods were scarce and vice versa.\textsuperscript{218} Also for instance within a village, there were individuals who focused more on hunting or fishing (though this did not necessarily mean that they withdrew from agricultural production completely, as full-scale specialisation, especially during the pre-colonial period, was rare) and individuals who focused more on agricultural production or on the production of manufactured goods, such as mats, baskets, hoes and axes. These specialisations in turn stimulated exchange between fishermen and agricultural producers or between hunters and craftsmen. This exchange did not only occur within the village or between neighbouring villages, but could be conducted over longer distances, especially when the unequal distribution of natural resources is taken into account. Not all villages, for instance, were located close to rivers and even if they were this did not always mean that these rivers were suited to (intensive) fishing. Therefore, fish could be exchanged for cassava or beans even over longer distances. Where goods of a particularly scarce nature were concerned, such as high-quality salt, iron or copper, trade over long distances occurred. The area of Mwinilunga, for instance, obtained part of its salt supplies from Angolan salt pans.\textsuperscript{219} The distance covered by trade also depended on the extent to which the traded food items could be preserved for longer periods of time, in other words on the perishable nature of goods. Fresh items, such as fresh fish, meat and vegetables, were mainly confined to intra-village exchange and could be exchanged between neighbouring villages. However, for trade which covered longer distances, food had to be preserved. Meat and fish were dried or smoked and cassava roots were processed into flour, in order to be both easily transportable and less perishable.\textsuperscript{220} Overall, trade served to complement individual and household production, offered people access to a wide range of goods and enabled the diversification of individual livelihood strategies.

To a certain extent the long-distance trade was different from the local and regional patterns of trade mentioned so far, but in many ways the three levels of trade were also closely interlinked and could even act as mutually reinforcing. Local specialisation enabled the production of goods for the long-distance trade and goods obtained through the long-distance trade were ploughed back into local patterns of exchange, tribute and trade. In order to illuminate the functioning of the long-distance trade as applied to the case of Mwinilunga, the period of pre-colonial long-distance trade under the umbrella of the Lunda political entity will be examined. It will be illustrated that the area of Mwinilunga was connected to overseas products, ideas and markets long before the advent of


\textsuperscript{217} This division is not absolute and somewhat rough. However, this division has been informed by various oral interviews and my own reading and interpretation of the archival sources.

\textsuperscript{218} See Vansina, \textit{How societies are born}, p.210-225.

\textsuperscript{219} Hoover, \textit{The seduction of Ruwej}, p.327-356.

\textsuperscript{220} NAZ: MAG 2/9/3, Loc. 170, C.G. Trapnell, Notes on land suitable for European settlement in Mwinilunga, 12\textsuperscript{th} April 1935.
colonial rule and it will examined how agricultural production and the trade in foodstuffs were adjusted in order to meet rising demands.\textsuperscript{221}

The rise of the Lunda entity and the long-distance trade

The area which constitutes Mwinilunga district today was formerly part of a larger political entity, sometimes referred to as the Lunda Empire.\textsuperscript{222} Much remains uncertain about the exact history of the Lunda entity, but its initial development probably took place somewhere between the beginning of the 16\textsuperscript{th} and the beginning of the 17\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{223} Its heartland and capital city, Musumba, originally lay along the upper Bushimaie River in present-day Congo.\textsuperscript{224} Since its inception, the Lunda entity grew and spread over areas of present-day Congo, Angola and Zambia. The area of Mwinilunga was probably settled by a group of Lunda migrants, according to oral traditions by Kanongesha and twelve of his followers, around 1740-1755.\textsuperscript{225} At that time the area, having relatively unfertile soils, was only sparsely populated by a group of people commonly called Mbwela, with whom the Lunda migrants subsequently intermarried and who were incorporated into the Lunda political system by the award of various titles and the incorporation of tributary wives.\textsuperscript{226} The Kanongesha polity eventually came to occupy an area much larger than that of Mwinilunga district, including parts of Angola and Congo. This accounts for the fact that even today close links continue to exist between the people in Mwinilunga and those (directly) across international boundaries.\textsuperscript{227} Even though the Kanongesha polity was in many respects rather independent of the central Lunda polity at Musumba, there were nevertheless numerous ties binding the whole area together.\textsuperscript{228} For one there were political ties, as the Lunda king Mwantiyanvwa was recognised as political overlord by both Kanongesha and other Lunda chiefs.\textsuperscript{229} Also there were economic ties, not only by means of trade, but also through tribute which was paid by Kanongesha, other chiefs and their subordinates to Mwantiyanvwa.\textsuperscript{230} In addition, ties of marriage, alliance and friendship served to link neighbouring areas so that a common sense of Lunda identity was created and sustained.\textsuperscript{231}

The Lunda entity has frequently been studied from a dynastic and predominantly political point of view, by using sources of oral tradition, sometimes supplemented by early Portuguese traveller accounts.\textsuperscript{232} Even though the political influence of the Lunda entity was indeed significant, what will be examined here is the role which the Lunda state played in the long-distance trading networks with the Angolan coast. In particular, attention will be paid to the role of Mwinilunga district in these long-distance trading networks, as a large-scale producer of cassava for the passing caravans. Even though the area of Mwinilunga had previously been part of several long-distance

\textsuperscript{221} Von Oppen, Terms of trade and terms of trust, p.239.
\textsuperscript{222} The term ‘empire’ has been used by Gray and Birmingham, Pre-colonial African trade, Hoover, The seduction of Ruwej, Vansina, Les anciens royaumes de la savane, and Vellut, “Notes sur le Lunda”, but I choose to use the more neutral term ‘political entity’.
\textsuperscript{223} For a review of existing literature: Vellut, “Notes sur le Lunda”, p.65-66. The exact history of the Lunda entity remains uncertain due to the lack of sources and the doubtful reliability of existing sources.
\textsuperscript{224} Turner, Schism and continuity, p.2.
\textsuperscript{225} Schecter, History and historiography, see especially p.157.
\textsuperscript{226} Vansina, Les anciens royaumes de la savane, p.64, 126-127.
\textsuperscript{227} Turner, Schism and continuity, p.1.
\textsuperscript{228} Vansina, Les anciens royaumes de la savane, p.63.
\textsuperscript{230} Vellut, “Notes sur le Lunda”, p.78-84.
\textsuperscript{231} Turner, Schism and continuity, p.XX.
trade networks, for example those in copper and salt, but also the trade networks with the Indian Ocean coast from at least 1100 A.D. onwards, the intensification and expansion of scope of the trade with the Angolan coast, especially from the 18th century onwards, merits closer attention.

“The breadbasket of the caravan system”
The Lunda entity was an active participant in the long-distance trading networks which linked the area to the Angolan coast. This long-distance trade was closely connected to the Lunda state, and it has both been argued that the growth of the state was dependant on increasing quantities of trade, and that the state itself served to encourage further trade. The rise of the long-distance trade has frequently been associated with the advent of Portuguese traders in the area at the very end of the 15th century. However, trading initiative came as much from the societies in the African interior as from European traders on the coast and, especially initially, the goods and services which the Portuguese traders had to offer were limited and the foreign traders lacked effective means to impose their will. Already from the 17th century onwards, but intensifying during the 18th and 19th centuries, the volume and scope of the long-distance trade increased. This increase was often attributed to an African “insatiable longing for imported goods” in combination with a European desire to make trade “pay its way”. However, this reasoning presents a gross simplification, and it is mostly in the complex interaction between European traders, African intermediaries and the local population, and in the embedding of this trade into its socio-economic and political context that explanations for the rise and development of the long-distance trade need to be sought.

A wide variety of goods circulated through this long-distance trade. During the early period, salt, copper, iron and a variety of tropical goods were the main articles exported from the Angolan hinterland, but during the 18th and 19th century, their place was increasingly taken by items such as slaves, ivory, rubber and beeswax. In return, goods such as tobacco, liquor, beads, shells, brass, cloth(ing), gunpowder and firearms were imported by the Portuguese merchants. The Lunda political entity, due to patterns of exchange, tribute and warfare, managed to amass large quantities of these exportable goods, which made the journey of the Portuguese (and various middlemen such as the Ovimbundu and Imbangala) from the coast to the interior profitable and made the Lunda capital one of the main destinations of the long-distance trading caravans. Internal exchange enabled specialisation within the Lunda entity, and enabled some areas and groups to focus more on hunting, whereas others focused more on agricultural production. In addition, a trend could be observed towards the specialisation of men in non-agricultural trading activities, whereas women focused attention on food production. In combination with internal exchange and specialisation within the Lunda entity, it was the practice of tribute, paid by subsidiary chiefs (such as Kanongesha) to the Mwantiyanvwa at the central Lunda court at Musumba, which enabled the gathering of large quantities of goods in one central point. Tribute could include goods such as foodstuffs, slaves,

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235 For the first view see Gray and Birmingham, “Some economic and political consequences of trade”, p.15, whereas the second view is advanced by Bustin, Lunda under Belgian rule, p.21.
236 This has been argued by several authors including: David Birmingham, “Early African trade in Angola and its hinterland”, in: Richard Gray and David Birmingham (eds.), Pre-colonial African trade: Essays on trade in Central and Eastern Africa before 1900, (London etc.: 1970) and by Von Oppen, Terms of trade and terms of trust.
238 See: Bustin, Lunda under Belgian rule, Gray and Birmingham, Pre-colonial African trade, Hoover, The seduction of Ruwej; Von Oppen, Terms of trade and terms of trust, and Vansina, “Long-distance trade routes”, for good examples of in-depth studies of this topic.
copper, salt, raffia cloth, and ivory, all of which could be used in the long-distance trade. In turn, however, items obtained through the long-distance trade were redistributed to tribute-paying chiefs and so the long-distance trade and local and regional patterns of exchange could feed into and stimulate one another. Furthermore, warfare and state expansion played an important role in the sustenance of the long-distance trade, as the inclusion of new areas enabled the Lunda entity to tap new resources. The spread of the Lunda entity, though not necessarily by warfare but also by more peaceful means, meant an increased population and more land, which could also give access to more and possibly better sources of salt, copper, ivory, beeswax, etc. Warfare, in addition, played a major role in enabling the slave trade in which the Lunda entity was actively involved, as the numerous war captives could be diverted into this trade, even though war captives were by no means the only or even major group of people traded as slaves. The Lunda state, thus, played a crucial role in enabling the long-distance trade, but trade in many ways also kept the Lunda entity in place, by providing access to imported goods which could be used to attract and retain hold of followers.

The long-distance trade was conducted by means of large caravans, consisting of anywhere between 20 and 6,000 individuals. Caravans predominantly made use of head portage and foot transport, and movement was probably constricted to a maximum of 20 kilometres a day for approximately 10 days a month. Due to the large size of the caravans and the slow nature of their movement, their provisioning (with food and other essential goods) became an important and possibly problematic issue. It was in the sphere of food provisioning to passing caravans that the inhabitants of the area of Mwinilunga came to play a pivotal role, as they were strategically located close to major trade routes. Mwinilunga lay directly to the east of an area frequently referred to as the ‘hungry country’. Walter Fisher, a missionary travelling through the area in the late 19th century, described this area as follows:

“[It is] hilly land, known as ‘the hungry country’, for though there are a few villages at several points off the path, little or no food can be bought there (...) For ten days the road lay through uninhabited sandy plains (...) [and we] had to make forced marches through this in order to reach the villages beyond, where food could be purchased.”

The fact that this area, where food was difficult to obtain, lay close to Mwinilunga meant that caravan traders would be all the more eager to obtain food once they had reached Mwinilunga, as their supplies would have been largely depleted and they would need to restock. In addition, the area of Mwinilunga was located close to Nana Candundo (which was located at two days walking to the west of Mwinilunga), an important stop for caravans travelling on the southern route to the Lunda capital. Due to this strategic location of Mwinilunga, Pritchett has argued that the area became “the breadbasket of the caravan system”, supplying the many passing caravans with their food requirements.

What proved to be crucial in the provisioning of the caravans was the diffusion of a set of innovations brought through the long-distance trade itself. This set of innovations consisted of a variety of crops, brought from the ‘New World’ (mainly from the Americas) by the ‘Atlantic’ or ‘Columbian’ exchange, and included cassava, maize, groundnuts, beans, sweet potatoes, tobacco, tomatoes, and a wide variety of other crops. These crops were brought to the Angolan coast with
the advent of the Portuguese at the end of the 15th and during the early 16th century, but only gradually spread into the interior, where they were adapted to existing patterns of agricultural production and fitted in to suit local needs.\textsuperscript{252} Not all crops were adopted and spread equally rapidly, but probably this whole complex of crops had reached the area of Mwinilunga by the beginning of the 18th century.\textsuperscript{253} It is important to note that the introduction and spread of these crops, though to a certain extent being ‘foreign’ and brought by ‘external’ trade, depended predominantly on the local and ‘indigenous’ adoptions of these crops and on the ways in which they were fitted into existing patterns of agricultural production. In this respect especially cassava proved to be an important crop, and the spread and adoption of cassava, though neither rapid nor automatic, arguably led to an “indigenous agricultural revolution”, resulting in adaptations of existing methods of agricultural production, changing divisions of labour and greatly increased levels of productivity.\textsuperscript{254} Cassava played a major role in the provisioning of caravans and was one of the main food items which were traded, as the crop could be grown with relatively low labour inputs and could be preserved for long periods of time.

The passing caravans made large demands on local food producers. In order to satisfy these demands, a small surplus production (a ‘normal surplus’ geared towards bridging difficult years) would not suffice.\textsuperscript{255} Due to the magnitude of the caravans and their frequent passage through the area, their food demands were probably rather large and continuous. Von Oppen estimated that annually 14,000 tons of foodstuffs would have been required by the caravans passing through the Upper Zambezi region during the last quarter of the 19th century.\textsuperscript{256} Even though his study focused on an area slightly to the west of Mwinilunga, and the figures are mere approximations, they are indicative of the enormous magnitude of the food trade during this period. Since these food demands were made on top of pre-existing household, village and regional food requirements, it can be stated with relative certainty that producers in the area of Mwinilunga during this period were producing food especially for the purpose of provisioning the caravans.\textsuperscript{257} All kinds of foodstuffs were traded with these caravans, ranging from sorghum and millet, to fish and meat, cassava, maize, groundnuts, beans and sweet potatoes, some of which were part of the package of new introductions mentioned above. In addition, a wide variety of other goods such yams, pumpkins, fruits and honey were also traded.\textsuperscript{258} This trade in foodstuffs was organised mainly by individual producers and in return for the traded food, a wide range of goods was obtained from the trading caravans, including items such as cloth, beads and firearms.\textsuperscript{259} Trading food with the caravans became a real business, and in addition to food a wide range of other services was offered to the passing caravans. Creative ways were found to delay caravans as long as possible so that trading possibilities would increase, for instance by imposing various fines and by charging caravans for the violation of real or invented laws, merely to keep them in the area for a longer period of time.\textsuperscript{260}

The pre-colonial long-distance trade with the Angolan coast, thus, formed a major increase in scope and intensity over existing forms of trade, but also built upon the bases laid by local and regional forms of exchange. In addition, large amounts of imported goods were acquired through the long-distance trade, which were subsequently redistributed through local and regional socio-political


The Columbian exchange, following Columbus’ ‘discovery’ of America in 1492, marked a wave of exchange between Europe, the America’s, Asia, Australia and Africa and included various animals, micro-organisms (including diseases) and human population groups as well. The main focus here will be on crop exchanges.\textsuperscript{252}


Vansina, “Histoire du manioc”.


The idea of a ‘normal surplus’ is derived from Allan, \textit{The African husbandman}.

Von Oppen, \textit{Terms of trade and terms of trust}, p.96.

Von Oppen, “Notes sur le Lunda”, p.78-93.

and kinship networks. Even though it falls beyond the scope of the present work to examine the exact factors which enabled expanded agricultural production during the period of the caravan trade, it may be hypothesised that the answer lay in the direction of changing divisions of labour, changing gender relations and in the new repertoire of cultivated crops. Some parallels between this period and the period of expanded agricultural production during the 1940s and 1950s can be seen, and it is in the concluding sections of this study that these parallels will be further explored.

The impact of trade on agricultural production

How were all these different forms of trade organised, and how did they influence agricultural production? Trade often took the form of barter exchange. Barter could be defined as the (repetitive) exchange of goods in transactions between parties in which no currency changes hands. This, for instance, meant that beans were directly exchanged for game meat, without the intermediary step of exchanging one of these items for a currency. Barter exchange carried with it the idea of equivalence between certain goods. A certain quantity of cassava meal was regarded as being equivalent to an amount of dried fish, a basket or a hoe and could therefore be exchanged. However, this did not mean that no currencies existed in the area of Mwinilunga. Various items, as explained more elaborately in the following chapters, could function as currency, such as salt, cloth, beads, shells, and during the colonial period the pound sterling. Currencies supplemented, but did not (completely) replace barter exchange. Forms of barter persist in the area even today, as game meat from Angola is bartered for goods such as beans and cassava meal. The use of currencies was perhaps more widespread in forms of long-distance trade, but was not confined to it, as even in local and regional exchanges use could be made of currencies, especially once colonial currencies became more widespread.

In addition, even though formal markets did exist, during both the pre-colonial and colonial periods, trade frequently took place outside of these formal markets. Exchange often took place between two individual parties directly, for instance between caravans and individual agricultural producers. It has sometimes been argued that because trade (largely) took place by means of barter exchange instead of by using currencies, and was frequently conducted outside of formal markets, trade was therefore mainly subsistence oriented, instead of geared towards market production. However, von Oppen speaks of the “myth of the subsistence economy”, and equally for the case of Mwinilunga a sharp division between subsistence and market production or trade does not seem to be justified. Ever since local, regional and long-distance trade existed in the area, agricultural production and other productive activities were geared towards producing especially for this trade (in order to sustain and enable trade). Therefore production exceeded the pure ‘subsistence level’ as the aim was to produce a surplus which could be traded with others. Villages had always depended, to a certain extent, on exchange and trade with other villages in order to supply both vital needs and items in the domain of ‘luxury goods’ or ‘wealth’, and were thus never completely self-sufficient. Specialisation, while making different villages and areas more dependent on one another, also enabled the expansion of individual and local production. Von Oppen, again, argued that ‘world market integration’ was predominantly an expansion of scale compared to existing patterns of local and regional exchange: “World market integration simply meant, at the level of both female and

261 See: Hoover, The seduction of Ruwej, Von Oppen, Terms of trade and terms of trust, and Pritchett, The Lunda-Ndembu. This line of argument will be further advanced in chapter 5 and in the conclusion of this thesis.
263 Von Oppen, Terms of trade and terms of trust, p.329.
264 Vellut, “Notes sur le Lunda”, p.84-93 and Von Oppen, Terms of trade and terms of trust, p.211-235.
265 Personal correspondence with Mr. Maimbo and Mr. Katongo, September 2008, Kanongesha.
266 This line of argument is reflected in the work of Gray and Birmingham, “Some economic and political consequences of trade”, p.3-4.
267 Von Oppen, Terms of trade and terms of trust, p.236-241.
male producers, that a part of the yields of their gathering and cultivation was diverted to new partners. 268 The most direct phase of ‘world market integration’ for the area of Mwinilunga was marked by the intensified patterns of trade during the 18th and 19th centuries with the Angolan coast, even though previously trade with the Indian Ocean coast had connected Mwinilunga to broader networks, to a more limited extent. The long-distance trade, indeed, marked an expansion of scale and also increased the variety of traded goods. In many ways, however, this trade also built upon and even stimulated pre-existing patterns of local and regional exchange.

Since the local, regional and long-distance levels of trade in foodstuffs stimulated one another and continued to exist side by side, the three levels appear to be highly interconnected and the distinctions between them appear to be less clear-cut than perhaps initially seemed the case. In essence, the same food items were traded on the local, regional and long-distance level, the main difference being the magnitude or volume of the trade, and to a certain extent the goods which were obtained in return. Trade could serve to stimulate local production as producers were provided with an outlet for their goods and with an incentive to produce in terms of the items which they could obtain by trade with other areas. Trade, furthermore, acted to enable and encourage specialisation and enabled geographically dispersed population groups to access scarce natural resources.

Concluding remarks
Even though a large number of tasks in agricultural production were performed by individuals, agricultural producers in Mwinilunga were in many ways dependant on one another. Not only was household co-operation between the sexes crucial, but in addition intra-village co-operation was frequently indispensable. Socio-economic co-operation between individuals enabled the division of labour, the exploitation of a wide range of natural resources and increased levels of specialisation. In addition to co-operation between individuals, trade played a crucial role in pooling resources and encouraging the expansion of individual agricultural production, next to enabling and encouraging specialisation.

Contrary to being isolated and remaining static throughout the pre-colonial period, the area of Mwinilunga was connected to various networks of long-distance trade. These long-distance trade networks offered access to a wide range of goods and ideas, and provided a large market for foodstuffs in the form of passing trading caravans. The following chapter will examine the socio-economic and political impact of the establishment of colonial rule on the patterns of trade and agricultural production outlined so far. Did colonial rule present the producers of Mwinilunga with new opportunities, or were pre-existing patterns of agricultural production challenged or even jeopardised?

268 Von Oppen, Terms of trade and terms of trust, p.239.
Map 4: Long-distance trade routes connecting Mwinilunga to the Angolan coast.

Chapter 3: Colonial collapse?

Disruption, decay and diminished agricultural production, these are terms with which the initial establishment of colonial rule in Northern Rhodesia, and Mwinilunga district in particular, has frequently been described.\(^{269}\) It has been argued that the tools of brute coercion, taxation and labour migration were used by the colonial administration to subdue the local population, leading to the disruption of village life and agricultural production.\(^{270}\) Whereas during the pre-colonial period the people in Mwinilunga made their living by relying on a wide range of economic opportunities offered by their specific environment, including hunting, fishing, the long-distance caravan trade and agricultural production, during the colonial period they were said to have become mere subsistence cultivators, impoverished, restricted in the economic opportunities available to them and standing at the periphery of the new Northern Rhodesian state.\(^{271}\) Views of a pristine, yet static, pre-colonial situation have been contrasted to views of disrupted agricultural production, the depletion of natural resources and environmental degradation following hegemonic colonial incursions.\(^{272}\)

This dichotomy between harmonious pre-colonial societies and subsequent colonial collapse needs to be adjusted and nuanced. It will be shown on the one hand that pre-colonial societies and modes of production were not necessarily self-contained and stable, but could suffer from disruption and crisis themselves, and on the other hand that colonial penetration was often far from hegemonic, all-pervasive and merely disruptive. The socio-economic and political impact of the establishment of colonial rule on agricultural production in Mwinilunga district will be examined, and apart from merely highlighting processes of decay and impoverishment, it will be illustrated that by making use of various coping mechanisms and by obtaining access to (newly arising) possibilities offered by the colonial setting, the local population did not necessarily succumb to collapse.

Pre-colonial disruption – The Chokwe influence

The pre-colonial long-distance trade in which the Lunda entity was involved marked a period of relative prosperity and wealth. The Lunda were able to expand the area under their political umbrella considerably and in addition acquired large amounts of imported goods.\(^{273}\) However, this prosperity and wealth was increasingly challenged from the 1850s onwards. In 1834 the Portuguese outlawed the international slave trade, the sphere in which the Lunda entity had been most actively involved, and although the slave trade continued illicitly until the 1920s its volume decreased and other ‘legitimate’ trade goods were sought.\(^{274}\) Increasingly, ivory and beeswax exports took the place of the slave trade, especially once the royal monopoly on ivory was lifted in 1834 and prices skyrocketed. In the last part of the 19th century the trade in rubber was added to this, and a true ‘rubber boom’ was experienced.\(^{275}\)

Due to a complex interplay of political, economic, social and geographical factors, which have been explored in-depth elsewhere, the Lunda entity was unable to respond adequately to these


\(^{271}\) Pritchett, The Lunda-Ndembu, p.34.

\(^{272}\) Berry, “The food crisis and agrarian change”, p.69.

\(^{273}\) See: Vellut, “Notes sur le Lunda”, p.61-166.


changing patterns of trade. The gradual decline of the Lunda entity was contrasted by the increasing influence of the Chokwe in the area, who were specialised in the ivory, beeswax and rubber trade and effectively exploited this. The Chokwe were widely regarded as being excellent hunters and mainly settled in the forest environment, whereas the Lunda preferred to settle in the open country of the savannah. Initially, the Lunda had made demands on the Chokwe as elephant hunters in the provisioning of ivory, but from the 1850s onwards power relations shifted and by 1885-88 the Chokwe were able to occupy and raid the Lunda capital, Musumba. Even though the Chokwe expansion was probably gradual rather than characterised by mass migration or direct ‘invasion’, its effects on the area of Mwinilunga were nevertheless clearly felt.

Even though the slave trade had been officially abolished by the Portuguese, it continued unabatedly in the African interior between different population groups. It was through this slave trade that Chokwe influence most forcefully made itself felt in Lunda areas. Even though the pawnship system allowed for the relatively peaceful inclusion of numerous Lunda women into existing Chokwe social forms, more violent slave raiding also occurred. Copeman, one of the first colonial administrators in Mwinilunga, recorded the remembrance of this slave trade:

“There were (...) cases of slaves being carried off by force, and the roads to the west were littered with wooden manacles and the forked neck-sticks, as well as with skulls and human bones, showing the extent of this horrible trade.”

Accounts such as the one stated above are common, and in addition numerous informants recalled the impact of ‘inter-tribal warfare’ as causing widespread fear, poverty and general disruption. Even though these individual reminiscences might not be wholly accurate, it cannot be doubted that the decline of the Lunda entity and the widespread practice of slave raiding did have disruptive effects on the existing socio-economic and political situation in the area. Agricultural production, no longer finding a steady outlet in the long-distance caravan trade, probably suffered from the general disruption brought about by Chokwe incursions, and widespread impoverishment and hunger was frequently reported in the area. Even though the Lunda were able to regroup in the late 1890s and regained control of Musumba, the general state of affairs remained one of fear and disruption, resulting in the presence of small villages surrounded by tall stockades and hidden well into the dense forest. It was in this turbulent context that colonial rule came to be established during the opening years of the 20th century.

**Entering ‘No Man’s Land’**
The establishment of colonial rule in Northern Rhodesia by the British authorities was sometimes presented as being one of a swift thrust of a hegemonic “civilised European power replacing uncivilised African powers.” Although there are differing views as to whether colonial domination was established by use of brute force, or by means of relatively peaceful treaties, only rarely is doubt...
cast on the fact that colonial hegemony was established rather rapidly and completely. In this regard especially the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 has been seen as a crucial step in the “scramble for Africa” by European powers who “carved up the African continent” between themselves. These views, however, grossly overestimate colonial power, and largely ignore local responses to colonial incursions, presenting the local population as powerless victims falling prey to all-powerful European administrators. Here, however, the view will be advanced that the establishment of colonial rule in the area of Mwinilunga was gradual rather than sudden, and partial and incomplete (especially in the early stages) rather than hegemonic and totalitarian.

Even though the Berlin Conference determined that the area of Mwinilunga would eventually come to fall under the British sphere of influence, this did not yet equal physical occupation on the ground. In 1901-02 when Kasempa district was formed the area of Mwinilunga was formally included under its administration. However, during this period there were no formal boundaries yet and no attempt was made to establish any government structures in the area north of the Kabompo River. Mwinilunga was regarded as a “No Man’s Land” until 1905, when the area was awarded by arbitration by the King of Italy to the agents of the British South Africa Company. It was only in 1906 that tentative reconnaissance of the area took place, after which a government station was built and an official in charge was appointed in 1907, when formal administration of the area commenced.

Initially, colonial rule was an affair of “mere handfuls of men” in a vast district without thorough knowledge of the area or the language. Edward Arden Copeman, who later became administrator in Mwinilunga sub-district, remembers his first days in nearby Kasempa district as follows: “After telling me all he could about the district [Kasempa], and the Ka-Onde natives, and the work of the District Commissioner, in three or four days Macaulay went south and I found myself in charge of a District about as big as Ireland. I knew not a word of the local dialect.” The colonial administration and these “men on the spot”, even though they on paper and in theory held considerable powers in the area and over the population, often lacked control and influence over district affairs. The views of the early colonial administration as being highly powerful and harshly subjugating the local population therefore have to be nuanced. Administration in Mwinilunga sub-district initially consisted of only one Native Commissioner, one assistant Native Commissioner, 25 head of Barotse Native Police and several messengers and porters who accompanied the administration while touring the area. The basic aims of early administration were rather modestly defined as being: “to inform the natives that they were under British rule and must conform to the laws in the same ways as the tribes in other parts of Rhodesia (...) to endeavour to rid the country of the undesirables (...) and to select a site for a Government Station (Boma).” In first instance, no attempts were made to record census of the population or to levy taxes.

After a site had been selected for a Boma and a building had been erected in a central place from where to organise the administration of the area, the administrators were predominantly

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286 Whereas Pritchett in *The Lunda-Ndembu*, p. 33-37 and Macpherson in *Anatomy of a conquest* argue that colonial rule was established and consolidated by displays of overwhelming force, Peter Slinn in his article “Commercial concessions and politics during the colonial period: The role of the British South Africa Company in Northern Rhodesia 1890-1964”, *African affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 281, (1971), p. 365-384 argues that British rule was established by means of relatively peaceful treaties.


288 NAZ: KDD 5/1, Kasempa district notebook.

289 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook.


291 NAZ: HM6 CO3/4/1, Edward Arden Copeman personal memoirs.


294 NAZ: HM6 CO3/4/1, Edward Arden Copeman personal memoirs.
occupied by touring the area. This involved visiting the different village settlements, inspecting them and talking to the local population in order to inform them about the laws to which they should conform. Initial distrust was expressed by the local population towards the colonial administration, and this distrust was not unfounded as administrators had been ordered by colonial headquarters to “subdue the wild Ba-Lunda”, if necessary by using force. The administration indeed at times harshly responded to non-cooperation, for instance by arresting people, destroying houses, burning the crops in the fields, etc. This display of force, however, was not universal (due to the previously mentioned numerical weakness of the administration), and neither inescapable. The colonial administrators travelled with a fairly large entourage of porters and messengers, and frequently sent one or two messengers ahead of the group to announce the arrival of the administrators to the villagers. This gave the population some time to prepare themselves and also enabled the evasion of a confrontation with the colonial administration by temporarily fleeing to the bush surrounding the villages, only to re-appear once the administrators had left.

Next to touring the district, administrators had a wide range of other tasks, such as hearing legal cases, mapping the district, compiling a vocabulary of the local language, interviewing chiefs and headmen, etc. Furthermore, the colonial administration introduced various types of legislation. It for instance became necessary to possess a licence in order to own a gun, the shooting of large species of game was restricted, the cutting down of trees was limited in order to preserve valuable timber species, the upkeep of inter-village roads was made obligatory and villages were encouraged to concentrate in large settlements along major lines of communication. Even though these regulations posed limits to some pre-existing livelihood strategies, such as hunting, their enforcement was initially incomplete and could be circumvented. This is reflected in the attempt to regulate or rather exterminate the trade in slaves, rubber, ivory, guns and powder going on between the people in Mwinilunga and the neighbouring area of Angola. This trade, being a relic of the pre-colonial long-distance and slave trade, was carried out by Mambunda, Mambari and Portuguese slave traders and “undesirable Europeans” present in the area, robbing, plundering and ill-treating the population. It was the aim of the administration to rid the area of these traders, if necessary by using force. However, the persistence of this trade until the 1920s illustrates the inability of the colonial administration to enforce its legislation effectively. The enforcement of legislation was further limited by the fact that colonial officials changed posts so frequently. Colonial personnel rarely remained stationed at one place for long periods of time, and this meant that once a new official was appointed the process of getting to know the area, the population and the language had to start all over again, which greatly hampered administrative continuity.

Apart from administering the area, a pressing need of the colonial administration was to assure adequate food supplies for its own staff (messengers, porters, but also road workers, people employed for construction services, prisoners, etc.) and for various visitors to the area (traders, boundary commissions, missionaries, etc.). While stationed at the Boma, the question of food supply could be organised in advance to a certain extent, as food could be stored in grain bins in order to anticipate times of scarcity. While touring the district, however, food supplies had to be dealt with

295 NAZ: HM 6 CO3/4/1, Edward Arden Copeman personal memoirs.
296 NAZ: HM 6 CO3/3/1, Edward Arden Copeman papers.
299 NAZ: KSE 6/3/2, Mwinilunga sub-district reports Indaba, August 1927.
300 Pritchett, The Lunda-Ndembe, 228-231.
301 NAZ: HM 6 CO3/3/1 Edward Arden Copeman papers.
303 NAZ: HM 17 MI 5/1 Bruce-Miller papers, 30th March 1943.
from day to day, as the transportation of large amounts of food in the form of head loads by porters was both uneconomic and often impossible. Since there was an absence of stores in the area, the administration relied on the surrounding population for food supplies. Food buying from villages was organised through village headmen or through grain buying capacios, being either messengers or specially appointed villagers, who would gather individual produce and offer it to the administration in bulk. Even though food was often gathered on a village level, exchange and sale was an individual affair, profits being divided between the contributing individuals. Villagers would trade their food supplies with the colonial administration for calico, beads, salt or money. Money, however, was preferred by the administration and gradually started to predominate in the various transactions.

The colonial administration thus offered the local population a trading outlet for their agricultural produce. The market offered by the administration was not always stable, though. Even though touring all villages on a yearly basis was the administrative aim, this aim was by far not always achieved. In 1929, for example, as much as 46% of all villages remained unvisited throughout the year. Nevertheless, even the villages that were not visited on tour could be visited by individual messengers who were sent out by the administration to collect and buy food, and villagers had the option to go to the Boma themselves in order to offer their food for sale. However, many villages which were far removed from the Boma were at first hesitant to bring their supplies in for sale. Furthermore, the food requirements of the administration fluctuated heavily, as they could be low for long periods of time, but could also peak suddenly after which large amounts of food would be required from the population. This happened, for instance, when the boundary commissions visited the area, which had to be provided with food for their large staffs during several months. Exchanging food with the colonial administration was not always very profitable, either, as the administration sought to obtain food at minimal costs, frequently complaining about the high prices demanded by the population for their agricultural produce. However, while touring the district administrators were frequently offered food for free as a gift by the population, as it was customary to offer important visitors a free meal. It is possible that the colonial administration (occasionally) took advantage of these free offerings of food, as many respondents recalled food being ‘grabbed’ from them by the colonial administration, who expected food to be provided to them without giving anything in return. Thus even though the colonial administration did offer a market for agricultural produce, this market was at first limited and somewhat unstable. The population initially traded whatever they had left from the previous harvest period with the passing administrators and did not increase the size of their fields with the special purpose of providing for the needs of the administration. Even though the colonial administration attempted to verbally encourage people to increase agricultural production and make larger gardens, they frequently lacked the means to effectively enforce this.

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305 Fisher and Hoyte, *Ndotofu*, p.159.
306 Interview with Mr. Damson Kazeya, September 9th 2008, Kampemba.
309 NAZ: KSE 6/1/6, G. Hughes-Chamberlain, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1929.
310 NAZ: KSE 6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1926.
314 BOD: Mss Afr. S 779, Theodore Williams correspondences, January 26th 1913 and interview with Mr. Solomon Kanswata, September 8th and October 18th 2008, Mwinilunga.
315 Interview with Mr. Damson Kazeya, September 9th 2008, Kampemba, and interview with Mr. Ian Ntambu, September 7th 2008, Mwinilunga.
An example of early colonial rule – The administration of George Alexander McGregor and its impact on agricultural production

In order to look at the impact of early colonial rule on village life and agricultural production, the administration of the district by George Alexander McGregor from 1908-09 will be taken as an example. His administration has often been described as exceptionally harsh and violent, forcing many people to flee to neighbouring areas and thereby disrupting agricultural production. It will be investigated if the violence of McGregor’s administration was really such that it led to mass fleeing and large-scale agricultural disruption, or if people could find ways in which to circumvent colonial influence and sustain agricultural production.

First of all, it is important to note that observations of food scarcity were not always absolute and objective, but could differ according to the observer and the perspective from which the situation was viewed. While touring the district, McGregor frequently made remarks on the primitive nature of agricultural production in the area, the general scarcity of food and the difficulty of obtaining supplies for himself and his entourage:

“Native agriculture is of the poorest – probably the most primitive to be found in NW [North Western] Rhodesia. Little indeed beyond manioc is grown and but the minimum quantity of that is produced. Travellers find the greatest difficulty in procuring supplies even at exorbitant prices. Beans, millet, sweet potatoes and pumpkins are grown in but the smallest quantities.”

This account, however, stands in stark contrast to accounts given by other visitors to the district during the same period, speaking of “large and extensive gardens containing a most plentiful supply of cassava, potatoes, beans, and in lesser quantities pumpkins and added to this the by no means rare kills of the hunting portion of the community.” That obtaining food from villages was not always problematic is testified by Captain Stennett, head of the Barotse Native Police, visiting the area in 1909: “Although the number of natives on my station has been large far more food has been under offer than I could possibly take, and I was compelled to stop further supplies from being brought to the Boma.” How can these radically differing views of food scarcity on the one hand and food abundance on the other be accounted for?

As noted above, McGregor’s administration was said to have been exceptionally harsh, to such an extent that he was forced to resign from his function due to the violence he exposed towards the local population. McGregor is recorded to have raided gardens in order to obtain food, to have beaten and imprisoned people, and even to have shot and killed a person. Due to these actions, and due to the fact that McGregor was constantly accompanied by uniformed messengers and armed police, the population became hesitant to provide McGregor with food when he requested it, even concealing available food from him and refusing to trade or sell it to him. When McGregor visited a village the population would report to be lacking food, but while leaving he would encounter large fields and plentiful supplies of cassava, inciting him to raid the gardens and confiscate the growing crops, without rewarding the population in any way. J.M. Pound, McGregor’s assistant, reported that his messengers could obtain large quantities of food from the villages, but when it became clear to the population that the food was meant for McGregor, a refusal

320 NAZ: KSE 6/6/1, Stennett, Balunda district tour report, August 1909.
323 NAZ: KSE 6/6/1, Death of D. Richardson (Investigations into the death of a trader in Mwinilunga), 12th January 1910.
to supply the food followed. Other administrators, exhibiting a milder attitude towards the people, therefore met with more success in procuring food and encountered abundant supplies.

Because of McGregor’s approach, the population not only denied him food but also fled his presence into the bush or even to neighbouring areas of Angola and Congo. Whereas the fleeing into the bush was temporary, lasting mostly for several days, the fleeing to Angola and Congo was often more long-term, at times even permanent. McGregor, while touring the area met with deserted settlements, people abandoning their villages upon his approach and only numbers of old men and women remaining in their houses. This fleeing allegedly caused widespread agricultural disruption and hunger the following season, as “no one did any cultivation – they were all running away from Mr. McGregor and left their land to the pigs.” To what extent was fear of McGregor truly such that mass fleeing occurred, and how did this fleeing influence agricultural production in the following season?

Short-term fleeing into the bush by villagers has been recorded not only during McGregor’s administration but also on various other occasions throughout the colonial period, as a strategy to evade colonial influence. Going into the bush, however, apart from being an act of fleeing the colonial administration, was also a normal part of village life. For hunting purposes people would build grass settlements, or nkunka, to provide shelter during their hunting trips. Also during the direct pre-harvest period people sometimes slept in the bush in order to be close to their gardens. The practice of fleeing by going to the bush, then, was not disruptive of agricultural production, as in many cases people who stayed in the bush were in fact closer to their gardens than if they were to remain in their villages. Most acts of fleeing the colonial presence were of this short-term nature and often movements occurred over a short distance only, as people were highly hesitant to leave their gardens and growing crops behind, unless due to highly exceptional circumstances.

However, long-distance and long-term movements also occurred, though probably to a lesser extent. People moved to neighbouring areas of Angola, Congo and other parts of Northern Rhodesia, though it has to be kept in mind that during this period boundaries were not yet clearly delimited, let alone clearly demarcated on the ground. In some cases moving to Angola or Congo was merely a case of moving several miles, as the international boundaries bordered the district on two sides. Movement to another territory did, therefore, not necessarily have to be highly disruptive. When people migrated over longer distances, instead of harvesting cassava in bits and pieces several times throughout the year, as they were accustomed to do, they would attempt to return to their old garden sites at least once to reap the standing crops. They would then harvest the entire garden at once and preserve the produce for consumption, or sell part of it for cash with which they could subsequently buy food from neighbouring villages. As many people in Mwinilunga had (close) kin in neighbouring areas of Congo and Angola, they could rely on them for food provisions during the first year to overcome initial scarcity after long-distance movements. During the second and third years of settlement agricultural production would then slowly be re-established and normalised, for instance by relying more on annual crops such as sorghum and millet initially, instead of on cassava

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325 Interview with Mr. Solomon Kanswata, September 8th and October 18th 2008, Mwinilunga.
326 NAZ: KSE 6/5/1, Secretary of Native Affairs to McGregor, 26th February 1909.
328 NAZ: KSE 6/1/6, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1928 and Fisher and Hoyte, Ndotolu, p.133.
329 Interview with Mr. Samanjombi, October 4th 2008, Chibwika.
332 Interview with Mr. Godfrey Masambwisha, December 9th 2008, Kanyama and interview with Headman Kakeza, December 9th 2008, Kanyama.
which requires a longer maturing period. These various strategies served to facilitate long-distance, and in some cases long-term, movements and make their effects on agricultural production less disruptive.

Already in the next agricultural season following McGregor’s period of administration, abundant and varied food supplies were mentioned. Charles Bellis, who administered the area after McGregor’s resignation, did not experience any difficulty in obtaining food, even though he had to feed a staff of 120 people. Furthermore, the people who had fled McGregor’s presence started to return to their old settlements rapidly, often within one year, or otherwise built a new settlement nearby. Therefore, it appears that McGregor’s period of administration did not lead to a permanent, large-scale exodus of population and neither to serious disruption of agricultural production.

It can be argued that early colonial administration, though being violent and coercive on occasion, did not have permanently disruptive effects on agricultural production and village life. Fleeing, population movement and migration motivated by colonial presence and policies did occur, but did not necessarily lead to agricultural collapse. If production was disrupted by movement, this was often overcome during the following agricultural season and there were but few long-term disruptive effects. Stable agricultural production was crucial and a major priority for a large part of the population, and if fleeing occurred people aimed to preserve access to their gardens, or otherwise sought to re-establish agricultural production on a new site as soon as possible.

Taxation, labour and agricultural production

Until 1924 the administration of Northern Rhodesia was in hands of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) headed by Cecil Rhodes. The BSAC was a mercantile company operating under a royal charter, basing its administrative powers on mineral rights obtained in the area. One of the most important aims of the company was to exploit the commercial and mineral assets of the Northern Rhodesian territory in a profitable manner, in spite of the company’s endemic financial strain. In order to make administration commercially viable, administrative costs were kept low and ways to raise revenue were sought. The introduction of import duties, various levies, licences, but above all the introduction of the hut tax served to raise administrative revenue. When the Colonial Office took over administration from the BSAC in 1924, the situation changed but slightly, as administrative resources continued to be slender and the dependence on taxation for raising revenue persisted.

How was the hut tax introduced in Mwinilunga and which effect did this have on the population?

In Mwinilunga district the hut tax was generally introduced in 1913, with the dual object to generate administrative revenue and encourage the creation of a cheap labour force, which would serve to satisfy both local labour requirements and those of the mines in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa, though many workers from Mwinilunga were also attracted by the nearby mines in Congo. By introducing the hut tax, it was argued, people would be induced to move out of their villages and work for at least one or two months every year in order to earn money to pay the tax. This would make people accustomed to the habit of working, and it would bring them in contact with the use of money. Theodore Williams, an administrative assistant in the area during this period,

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334 Interview with Mr. Mapulanga, December 12th 2008, Mwinilunga.
337 NAZ: KSE 6/6/1, Stennett, Balunda district tour report, August 1909.
342 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook.
343 NAZ: KSE 6/3/2, Mwinilunga sub-district reports Indaba, August 1929.
commented on this: “The tax does good in making them work a bit, in learning how profitable work can be, and taking them abroad to see the way the more civilised Bakaonde live and thrive.” The height of the tax was initially set at 10/-, roughly coinciding with the average monthly wage of a worker. Taxation was to be paid by all adult men older than eighteen, though tax exemptions were granted to a limited number of individuals, due to old age, physical inability to work or due to extraordinary achievements or acts of bravery in service of the colonial administration.

Initially, the introduction of taxation caused much protest and distress amongst the population. When the tax was first introduced in 1913 it was said to have led to renewed large-scale fleeing, comparable to that following McGregor’s administration, possibly even on a larger scale. Williams, once again, offers a vivid insight into the situation:

“All the villagers have run, i.e. a population of 8000. All that remains are a few villages in the south. The people here are a wild and primitive lot and quite naturally don’t like the idea of spending 10/- on taxes.”

There is no doubt that the general exodus that occurred in the first fortnight of May was a very big thing. If two thirds of the population (though a small one) of an area 150 miles long by 50 broad had been caused to leave their houses for any other reason but an oppressive and premature tax there would have been a column about it in the Times.

In spite of these reactions, the administration, at times violently, insisted on the payment of tax. Imprisonment, the burning of huts or moving to Angola and Congo were presented as alternatives to people who refused to co-operate with the administration’s policy of taxation. J.M. Pound, the district commissioner at the time is recorded to have claimed that: “these folk need a bit of choking off, and I shall not spare pains to give it to them.”

Even though the renewed fleeing and harsh treatment of the population by the colonial administration had disruptive effects on village life and agricultural production, this disruption was gradually overcome. Some people returned from fleeing within a few days “when they woke up in the cold bush with the dew and the fog around them” and the hunger propelled them to return to their villages. Others stayed away for longer periods of time, crossing the international boundaries to relatives in Congo and Angola. Even these people, however, slowly returned, though they did not always report to the Boma immediately. Food supplies allegedly suffered due to the fleeing:

“The running last May has caused consequent starvation and the people are getting restless because of this. For these people were not content merely to run and leave their gardens to be eaten by the wild pigs in the bush – but they must also ply the hoe in the hand too and root up even their young cassava, so that they could leave with the feeling of finality and of burnt ships behind them. Now that most of them are back they are starving, and those who did not run are suffering.”

Next to these accounts of food scarcity and even starvation, there were also more positive accounts, though. In some places Williams was offered more food than he could purchase for his own needs and some people who had fled to Angola or Congo had made gardens there, which could supply them with food to bridge the time of scarcity. Prospects for the 1915 agricultural season were already good, and it appears that food shortage, where it occurred, was predominantly temporary.

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345 The height of the tax sum fluctuated throughout the years, rising to 12/6 in 1930 and subsequently being lowered to 7/6 in 1934 and 6/- in 1938. BOD: Mss Afr. S 779, Theodore Williams correspondences, October 22nd 1913.
346 NAZ: KSE 6/6/2, K.S. Kinross, Mwinilunga sub-district tax reports, December 1924.
350 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook.
354 KSE 4/1 Mwinilunga district notebook and Theodore Williams diary, June 23rd 1914 entry.
Cassava could be a beneficial crop, in case fleeing occurred, as it required but little attention between planting and harvesting. Once it had been planted, it could be left to grow and people could thus depart from their fields for longer periods of time, harvesting the cassava once they returned. However, if due to absence from their fields people had failed to plant cassava during the planting season, recourse was often taken to sorghum and millet cultivation, as these crops were annuals and therefore yielded a harvest more rapidly than cassava, which could take anywhere between 18 months and three years to mature. Eventually the people accepted the necessity of paying tax, though only hesitatingly so as the number of defaulters in following years remained high and people continued to flee occasionally when they saw tax collectors approaching. How did people find money to pay for the tax?

Tax money could be earned by seeking wage employment, either within or outside the district. Wage employment could, for instance, be found on the mines in Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, South Africa or Congo. Employment relatively close to home was provided by Kansanshi mine in neighbouring Solwezi district. Whereas some people engaged in mining contracts voluntarily, there were also cases of recruiting and (semi)forced labour. As in Congo the demands for labour outstripped the supply, various contractors visited Mwinilunga in an attempt to attract labour for the mines, including recruiters from the Robert Williams Company. The mines in Congo were a popular destination for labour from Mwinilunga as they were located much closer to home than many of the mines in Southern or even Northern Rhodesia, and the employers in Congo offered relatively attractive terms of service. Furthermore, agents of the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau (RNLB) carried out labour recruiting within Mwinilunga district for the mines in Southern and Northern Rhodesia. Next to working on and around the mines, employment was also found on European farms along the line-of-rail and during the First World War people from Mwinilunga were engaged in war transport as porters. The details and effects of labour migration will be illustrated in the following chapters, for now it is sufficient to know that labour recruiting and migration out of the district did occur, though not yet to a large extent.

More significant initially were the various means of local employment, either for the government, local mission stations or for visitors to the area, such as the boundary commissions. People were employed to act in various functions, as porters (commonly called carriers), messengers, carpenters, road labourers, cattle herders, etc. In 1927 it was estimated that out of a total of 5.500 taxable males, 3.000 had earned their tax money by seeking local employment, and in addition 1.000 men had earned their tax money by selling (agricultural) produce locally.

Selling various kinds of produce locally contributed significantly to tax earnings. Produce that was sold ranged from honey and beeswax, mats, hoes and axes, to rubber and ivory, but also included agricultural produce. Agricultural produce could either be sold to the local missions, government officials on tour, or to grain-buying capitaos touring the district with the purpose of acquiring food from villagers for the Boma and government employees. Sales of agricultural

356 Interview with Mr. Brian Kandamba, September 9th 2008, Kampemba.
357 NAZ: SEC 2/131: The annual report of the Kasempa province in 1929 reports that a mere 59% of taxable males had paid their tax in Mwinilunga district that year.
358 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook.
359 Macpherson, Anatomy of a conquest, p.166.
360 NAZ: KSE 6/1/5, estimates of people employed outside the district were put at 800 in 1925, 250 in 1926, 200 in 1927, 150 in 1928 and 120 in 1929. However, these census figures are merely estimates and of doubtful authority.
361 NAZ: KSE 6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1926.
362 NAZ: KSE 6/3/2, Mwinilunga sub-district Indaba, May 1929.
363 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook.
364 NAZ: KSE 6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1927.
365 NAZ: KSE 6/3/2, Mwinilunga sub-district Indaba, May 1929.
366 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook.
produce from villages rose especially when the pay date for taxes was approaching, and other strategies to earn tax money had failed. People would then offer their produce for sale in order to earn some money and pay their tax. In exceptional cases, when an individual lacked money, taxation would be accepted in kind, and a chicken or goat could then be offered as payment.

The introduction of taxation to the area, causing dissent and disruption at first, was hesitatingly yet increasingly accepted by the population. Means were sought to earn tax money, either by wage employment within or outside the district, or by selling local produce, thereby stimulating the circulation of and trade in local goods.

The missionary influence – Missions as economic centres

Mission stations, next to being spiritual centres aimed at the spread of Christianity, also had a more secular impact on the economy and agricultural production in the areas in which they operated. As Mwinilunga district had but a limited number of European inhabitants and a low population density in general, the mission stations and missionary personnel soon came to figure as centres of activity on which the surrounding population and villages focused, offering (otherwise limited) employment opportunities and markets for agricultural produce.

The first, and arguably most influential, mission station in Mwinilunga district was established early in 1906, even before colonial administrative penetration of the area formally commenced. This mission station was founded by Dr. Walter Fisher of the Christian Missions in Many Lands (CMML), an offshoot of the Plymouth Brethren, at Kalene Hill in Chief Ikelenge’s area in the extreme northwest of the district. Kalene Hill mission, after establishing itself in the area, soon expanded by building a hospital and sanatorium, an orphanage, several local schools, an international boarding school at Sakeji (for the children of overseas missionaries in the area), various trading stores and a cattle farm at Hillwood.

The mission and the various amenities surrounding the mission station offered a wide variety of labour opportunities to the local population. People were employed by the mission for construction work, as porters, but also as medical orderlies, teachers and gardeners. Next to offering possibilities for employment, the mission station also came to function as a market for agricultural produce. Because there was an absence of food supplying stores in the area, alternative avenues needed to be found to ration the workers, feed the hospital patients, school children, orphans, visitors and missionaries themselves. The missionaries had their own gardens in which they predominantly grew various types of fruits and vegetables, and they relied on supplies of meat, dairy and vegetable produce from Hillwood farm from its establishment in 1921 onwards. Furthermore, certain goods that could not be obtained or were scarce locally, such as sugar, flour and salt, were imported. However, these means were not sufficient to satisfy the large demand. The acquisition of food was a daily pre-occupation and it was essential for the mission to assure steady supplies. Therefore, the mission resorted to food-buying from the surrounding villages on a regular basis:

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367 NAZ: KSE 6/6/2, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district tour report, February 1926.
374 NAZ: HM 8 FI 4/2/1, Singleton Fisher papers and memoirs: Missionary work among the African people – Life at Kalene Hill.
She [Mrs. Anna Fisher] held a market every day with the village women and bought from them all the food she wanted for the in-patients [of the hospital]. Crowds of women could be seen coming on to the place carrying baskets balanced on their heads containing manioc [cassava] meal, maize, mushrooms, bunches of sweet potato leaves, sweet potatoes, yams, pumpkins, smoked fish, eggs, fowls, and other commodities according to the time of the year. These had to be bartered for with much bargaining and haggling, for coinage had not yet been introduced, and everything was bartered for calico, beads, or salt. A couple of hours each day would be spent in the midst of a seething mass of these women, all eagerly presenting their goods for sale.\textsuperscript{377}

The mission station, thus, offered the surrounding villages a steady and reliable market for agricultural produce. For example, in the late 1940s as much as 20 tons of cassava meal was issued on a monthly basis to the workers employed by the mission and surrounding enterprises.\textsuperscript{378} The Fisher family propagated eating “the food of the country”, and accepting the different types of food offered for sale by the population.\textsuperscript{379} Nevertheless, there were certain types of food and specific crops that were in larger demand and preferred by the mission. Thus, even though cassava, beans, sorghum and pumpkins found a market at Kalene Hill, rice, wheat, dried fish and specific fruits and vegetables were in particularly large demand. This spurred some villages close to Kalene Hill to focus more specifically on the production of these goods, the cultivation of which increased subsequently.\textsuperscript{380} Furthermore, the mission station through agricultural education and demonstration disseminated certain crops, such as pineapples, rice and various vegetables, for instance cauliflower, Brussels sprouts and cabbages, and certain agricultural techniques, such as irrigation and ox-drawn ploughing, to the surrounding villages.\textsuperscript{381}

Besides buying food for day to day requirements, ffolliott Fisher of Hillwood farm also engaged in various other trading activities. From 1926 onwards, for instance, he started exporting beeswax in large quantities, and honey to a lesser extent, from Mwinilunga via Lobito Bay in Angola to South Africa and England.\textsuperscript{382} Furthermore, he from time to time provided contractors, boundary commissions and even the administration with food, mostly in the form of cassava meal. ffolliott would buy the produce from the population, gather it in a central place and offer it in bulk to buyers, providing transport for the goods when necessary.\textsuperscript{383} Walter Fisher commented that this practice was desirable, as “it encourages cultivation and makes it easier for the people to pay taxes without going elsewhere. Also it gives employment to boys who are worth good pay.”\textsuperscript{384} As the Fisher’s traded throughout the whole district, and not just in the north western area around Kalene Hill, this trade had a widespread influence, inducing people in the whole district to step up agricultural production.

How did the population react to the economic and agricultural opportunities offered by the mission establishment? Initially, their reaction was somewhat hesitant. Occasional fleeing of villagers into the bush on approach of the missionaries was not unknown, as people initially expressed distrust towards the missionaries.\textsuperscript{385} However, this distrust was gradually overcome and villages started grouping themselves around Kalene Hill. Whereas in 1906 merely a few villages had surrounded the mission, during the colonial period the Kalene Hill area became one of the most densely populated of the whole district, as people gathered around the labour opportunities and the agricultural markets provided by the mission.\textsuperscript{386} Even though population numbers in the area rose, agricultural production did not suffer. To the contrary, the area became the largest and most reliable

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{377} Fisher and Hoyte, \textit{Ndotolu}, p.148-149.
\item \textsuperscript{378} NAZ: SEC 2/955, F.M.N. Heath, Mwinilunga district tour report, June 1947.
\item \textsuperscript{379} Fisher and Hoyte, \textit{Ndotolu}, p.190 and Burr, \textit{Kalene memories}, p.54.
\item \textsuperscript{380} Interview with Mr. John Kapaypi, September 16\textsuperscript{th} 2008, Ikelenge, and interview with Headman Samahina, September 16\textsuperscript{th} 2008, Samahina Ikelenge.
\item \textsuperscript{381} Summerton, \textit{Fishers of men}, p.79-80.
\item \textsuperscript{382} NAZ: KSE 6/6/2, C.H. Hazell, Mwinilunga sub-district tour report, September 1927.
\item \textsuperscript{383} NAZ: HM 8 F1 2/1/1, Walter Fisher correspondences to Singleton Darling, October 29\textsuperscript{th} 1926.
\item \textsuperscript{384} NAZ: HM 8 F1 2/1/1, Walter Fisher correspondences to Singleton Darling, 1917.
\item \textsuperscript{385} Fisher & Hoyte, \textit{Ndotolu}, p.132.
\item \textsuperscript{386} Interview with Mr. Paul Fisher, September 27\textsuperscript{th} 2008, Hillwood farm Ikelenge.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
producer of cassava and other foodstuffs in the district. The market for agricultural produce at Kalene Hill encouraged surrounding villages to expand their production, and furthermore, people increasingly started answering the specific demands of the mission. This entailed the cultivation of some crops which had previously been little known, or even completely unknown, encouraging the cultivation of pineapples, rice and coffee. The mission station, thus, apart from merely attracting surplus agricultural produce from surrounding villages, motivated the population to increase agricultural production and cultivate crops especially for the mission demand. Whereas during the early colonial period other avenues for disposing of crops and produce locally were restricted, the mission offered opportunities by providing a market for labour and produce, thereby acting as economic centre in the area.

Next to Kalene Hill mission, several other mission stations were established throughout the area during the colonial period. The CMML further founded Kamapanda mission in 1923 in Kanongesha area and Mujimbeji mission in 1933 in Sailunga area. In addition, the Franciscan order of Roman Catholics established a mission in 1948 in Kanongesha area. All these missions, to a similar though lesser extent, resembled the role that Kalene Hill mission played from an economic point of view, becoming mini-centres in the district and providing markets for agricultural produce in addition to labour opportunities for the surrounding population.

Drawing and crossing boundaries – Relations with Angola and Congo

Colonial presence affected Mwinilunga through international cartography, even before physical rule on the ground was established. During the Berlin Conference and in subsequent years, international boundaries were defined with increasing precision. Advances were made from mere spheres of influence, through the delimitation of boundaries and the effective occupation of territory, to the eventual demarcation of boundaries on the ground. The relatively fluid frontiers and states of the pre-colonial period were replaced by rigid territorial concepts of boundaries, reflecting the way in which African territories were viewed through a European lens. Boundaries were defined on the basis of astronomical, mathematical or geographical features in order to simplify administration, which resulted in the fact that boundaries often poorly reflected the allegiances of the local population and the reality on the ground. Boundary markers such as ‘the ideal Congo-Zambezi watershed’ or ‘the 24th meridian east’, to which was rigidly adhered when delimiting international boundaries, did not always reflect the situation on the ground in an adequate way.

The previous chapter has shown how during the pre-colonial period Mwinilunga, through the broader Lunda entity, had been closely connected to neighbouring areas, which during the colonial period came to fall under Angolan and Congolese administration. Today people still say that: “We [people in Mwinilunga] and the people in Angola and Congo, we are the same people!” Notwithstanding these connections, colonial boundaries cut right through the pre-existing Lunda entity, and divided the area between three different colonial states, falling under British, Portuguese and Belgian rule respectively. F.V. Bruce-Miller, a colonial administrator writing in 1913, recognised that “from a purely native point of view this decision was extremely unwise”, but continued to say

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389 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook.
390 Bustin, Lunda under Belgian rule, p.39-40.
395 Interview with Mr. John J. Chiyuka, September 10th 2008, Kanongesha.
that “boundaries tho’ are usually fixed up by our “arm-chair” politicians at home.” 396 It was not until the end of the 1920s, however, that exact boundaries were demarcated on the ground, and until then it remained unclear if certain villages located close to the boundary were situated in British or Belgian/Portuguese territory. 397

Until far into the colonial period, the boundary areas remained loosely administered and difficult to control. The villages located directly along the boundary often formed a refuge for various ‘undesirables’ smuggling ivory, rubber, guns and slaves, next to being engaged in various illegal activities, which were difficult to control. 398 Therefore, the administration attempted to induce villages to settle away from the boundary, well into British territory. Furthermore, international boundaries formed areas of refuge for the local population themselves. Bellis remarked how: “in them [the international boundaries] they [the population] see ramparts beyond which we may not at present operate, and beyond which they are safe and secure.” 399 As has been shown previously, fleeing across international boundaries was a strategy which could be adopted to evade administrative influence. Musambachime in his article “Escape from tyranny”, deals with this cross-boundary fleeing and mentions taxation, the use of military force, forced labour recruitment, the outbreak of epidemics, hunting on game and the dodging of war portage as reasons to cross and re-cross the Northern Rhodesia-Congo boundary. 400 Crossing international boundaries occurred in both directions, also in the case of the Northern Rhodesia-Angola boundary. Periods in which immigration prevailed were balanced by others in which emigration dominated, causing a continuous ebb and flow of population movement and making administration problematic. 401

Even though exact boundary lines for a long time remained ill-defined, boundaries gradually gained administrative and political significance and could increasingly be felt on the ground. Due to various forms of legislation, through import duties and levies, and through the introduction of passes, boundaries were progressively imposed upon the local population. How did the demarcation of boundaries influence the pre-existing contacts that Mwinilunga had with neighbouring areas of Angola and Congo? Did boundaries disrupt pre-existing forms of contact, or were new ways found in which to make use of cross-boundary connections?

In spite of the gradual disruption during the colonial period of pre-colonial long distance trade links with the Angolan coast and the disruption of tribute links between Mwinilunga and the Lunda capital in Congo, other contacts and trade links between Mwinilunga and neighbouring areas of Congo and Angola were sustained or newly developed. 402 These links remain strong even until the present day, as dried fish and game meat in Mwinilunga are still obtained from Angola to a large extent. 403 Trade with Angola in certain ways built upon patterns established during the pre-colonial period. Initially goods such as rubber, ivory, guns and slaves were traded from Mwinilunga in exchange for cloth, beads, salt, guns and powder from Angola. Even though the colonial administration opposed this trade, it proved difficult to control and the trade continued well into the

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396 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook, F.V. Bruce-Miller entry.
397 The Anglo Portuguese Boundary Commission (APBC) was active in the area during 1915, and boundaries were reconfirmed in 1925 (International boundary study: Angola-Zambia boundary, No.119 February 14th 1972, Department of state USA). The Anglo Belgian Boundary Commission (ABBC) was active in the area from 1911-14 and again from 1926-33.
401 NAZ: KSE 6/3/1, Mwinilunga sub-district report Indaba, October 1916.
403 Pritchett, The Lunda-Ndembu, p.281-283 and interview with Mr. Maimbo, September 13th 2008, Kanongesha.
colonial period. Nevertheless, this trade was gradually and increasingly replaced by trade in other items. Especially beeswax and honey proved to be important and profitable in this respect. Part of the beeswax and honey trade was recorded and took place through various intermediaries, such as ffollott Fisher, who exported beeswax through Lobito Bay in Angola. However, a very large part of the trade remained unrecorded. Beeswax was traded from Mwinilungu directly to different Angolan traders, in order to evade the various levies and maximise profits to producers. Furthermore, trade in foodstuffs between neighbouring areas could be significant. For instance, large supplies of dried fish from Angola were imported to Mwinilungan for mission and Boma demands. In addition, during the 1910s when local food supply was not adequate to meet administrative and missionary demands, meal and grain were imported from Angola. However, foodstuffs from Mwinilungan at times also found a market in Angola, as rice, cassava meal, beans and millet were bartered for fish and game meat, or sold for cash. Relationships with Congo were to a large extent influenced by the presence of mines directly across the international boundary, in Elisabethville (Lubumbashi), Kipushi, Jadotville (Likasi), Kolwezi and Dilolo. These mines attracted labourers from Mwinilungu, but also formed a market for non-perishable foodstuffs, in the form of cassava meal, livestock (goats, sheep and poultry), etc. Furthermore, there was an extensive trade in clothes, pots, pans and later bicycles, which could cheaply be bought in the mining towns and were thereafter sold or bartered in Mwinilungu, or brought home by workers returning from the mines. The mines in Congo formed important centres of economic activity, and their role remained important, even as the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt started operating on a large scale in the late 1920s. Mines in Congo continued to attract large amounts of labour and goods throughout the colonial period, as they were located closer to Mwinilungu than most of the mines in Northern Rhodesia itself.

In spite of the increasing demarcation and control of boundaries on the ground, cross-boundary contact persisted and remained significant. Boundaries, arguably, could be seen as avenues of opportunity. On the one hand they could serve to evade colonial influence, offering refuge to ‘undesirables’ or enabling cross-boundary fleeing. On the other hand, crossing boundaries could offer access to alternative economic opportunities not present in the area itself. Throughout the colonial period contact with Angola and Congo offered the area of Mwinilungu markets for labour and agricultural produce and the possibility of obtaining consumer goods, and was thus crucial in many respects.

The centre and the periphery
Mwinilungu district, during the colonial period, was often described as being remote and standing at the periphery of the Northern Rhodesian state. Williams referred to the area as “(...) the most elementary place in this elementary country [Northern Rhodesia].” This situation can be contrasted to the pre-colonial period, when Mwinilungu in various ways stood at the centre, or was

404 NAZ: KSE 6/3/1, Mwinilungu sub-district Indaba, October 1916.
405 NAZ: SEC 2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilungu district annual report, 1935. During 1935 ffollott Fisher purchased 10 tons of beeswax from the local population. The direct beeswax trade between Mwinilungu and Angola remained unrecorded but was most probably extensive.
408 NAZ: KSE 6/6/2, C.H. Hazell, Mwinilungu sub-district tour report, July 1927: This trade took place throughout the whole colonial period, but especially flourished during the 1940s and 1950s.
409 NAZ: KSE 6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Annual report Mwinilungu sub-district, 1926 and confirmed in various interviews.
410 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilungu district notebook.
otherwise closely connected to the centre, of the long-distance trade with the Angolan coast.\textsuperscript{413} During the colonial period, however, the marginality of Mwinilunga was defined vis-à-vis the areas which were of more central importance to the commercial interests of the state, namely the line-of-rail area and later the Copperbelt.\textsuperscript{414} As Mwinilunga lacked mines and did not seem to hold potential for large-scale cash crop production, the area came to be regarded mainly as a labour reserve.\textsuperscript{415} The remoteness and marginality of Mwinilunga was further aggravated by the long distance which separated the district from the line-of-rail, in combination with the poor infrastructure and haphazard communication facilities.\textsuperscript{416} Whereas the colonial state attempted to govern the central mining areas more tightly, district administration in Mwinilunga suffered from a lack of funds, personnel and even attention from the political centre.\textsuperscript{417}

Zooming into a more micro level, however, it becomes apparent that the concepts of centre and periphery were relative rather than absolute. The line-of-rail, being central from a national perspective, was rather remote when viewed from Mwinilunga. It was only in the 1930s and 1940s that labour and agricultural produce from Mwinilunga were increasingly drawn towards the mining centres along the line-of-rail, and even then people continued to focus more on local, nearby centres of activity. The Boma and mission stations were such local centres. Kalene Hill mission was described by the visiting British High Commissioner as being a separate “mini-civilisation”, containing important social and economic amenities.\textsuperscript{418} It was not long before the local population started concentrating settlement around such local centres, “to feel in the hub of things” and in order to make use of the labour and marketing opportunities offered.\textsuperscript{419} Furthermore, the population focused on nearby centres in Congo and Angola, in spite of their division by porous international boundaries. Especially the mines in Congo, due to their geographical proximity, offered a variety of labour and marketing opportunities.

Even though from a macro perspective Mwinilunga district indeed appeared to be marginalised within Northern Rhodesia, on a local and regional level this marginalisation appeared to be far more relative, as the population of the area found alternative centres of activity and economic avenues on which to focus. Marginalisation on a macro level was thus alleviated and to a certain extent averted by making use of and focusing on nearby centres of activity.

**Exchange, currency and monetisation – Multiple circuits enabling growth?**

The introduction of colonial currencies to Africa, in the case of Mwinilunga the pound sterling, has been referred to as a “currency revolution”.\textsuperscript{420} Monetisation indeed accelerated during the 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} century, and the impact of colonial rule was clearly felt by the attempt to impose a single standardised currency.\textsuperscript{421} However, currencies or money were not unknown in pre-colonial Mwinilunga. Any good that is not immediately perishable and is exchanged on a repetitive basis, can come to serve as money, assuming the functions of a standard of measurement, a store of value, a

\textsuperscript{413} Vellut, “Angola-Congo”, p.159-183.
\textsuperscript{414} Phiri, *A political history of Zambia*, p.12.
\textsuperscript{415} Slinn, “Commercial concessions and politics”, p.366.
\textsuperscript{416} NAZ: SEC 2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1935.
\textsuperscript{418} Interview with Mr. Paul Fisher, September 27\textsuperscript{th} 2008, Hillwood farm Ikelenge.
\textsuperscript{419} NAZ: SEC 2/958, D.G. Clough, Mwinilunga district tour report, 1950.
medium of exchange and a standard of deferred payment. Especially goods such as beads, shells, salt and cloth, but also iron and copper rods or bars were used as currency in order to facilitate exchanges during the pre-colonial period in the area. Next to the fact that monetisation was not a new phenomenon brought by the colonial administration, the penetration of colonial currency was also highly incomplete, especially during the early period of colonial rule. Missionaries and even colonial administrators themselves used calico, salt and beads as items of exchange with the local population. One administrator visiting the district remarked how: “The utilisation of beads is economical. Beads are very popular amongst these people, and the smallest spoonful of beads obtains wonderful value in meal”, and even wages of porters and other workers were at first paid in an equivalent value of calico. Therefore, the term “currency revolution” probably attributes more transformative power to the pound sterling than was initially the case.

Nevertheless, in particular the introduction of taxation marked the beginning of increasing usage of colonial currency in everyday life. Tuck, for the case of Uganda argued that: “the imposition of taxes to be paid in cash initiated waves of change that swept through society.” The spread and use of colonial currencies was apparently such by the 1950s, that Turner and Turner were impressed by “the extent to which money economy was replacing the traditional economy of barter and exchange (...) money economy, in fact, is penetrating into all the pores of social life.” Indeed, colonial currencies became increasingly accepted and widespread in the area of Mwinilunga. Cash was used not only for the payment of wages, the marketing of agricultural produce and the purchase of consumer goods, but also in the sphere of social relations, such as for marriage payments, and the financing of funerals. Various economic theories have argued that monetisation can act as a stimulant to economic growth, as it can promote specialisation, exchange and accumulation. Monetisation can serve to widen the market and enable specialisation and exchange which transcend social and cultural boundaries. The main aim of the introduction of taxation and the ensuing spread of colonial currency was indeed to draw people into the monetary economy linked to world commodity markets, both by labour migration and cash crop production. Did the introduction of colonial currency in any way stimulate economic activities in Mwinilunga and how did pre-existing systems of barter and exchange relate to the increasing monetisation of society?

Due to the need to pay taxes, the desire to purchase various consumer goods, but also the need to pay for school fees, hospital visits, etc. the necessity to earn money became more direct and pressing for a large part of the population of Mwinilunga district. This money was earned by various means such as the sale of crops, the sale of locally manufactured goods and wage employment within and outside of the district. It could therefore be argued that the need to earn money did stimulate economic activity, in that it promoted industry in the form of increased crop production and wage employment. Various informants proudly recalled their remembrance of colonial currency denominations, ranging from penny to sixpence to shilling, which indicates the importance of currencies to their remembrance of colonial rule. However, what is perhaps more remarkable is the fact that so many forms of exchange and trade remained outside of the formal, monetised economy. Various forms of intra and inter village exchange persisted in which money did not change hands. Fish continued to be bartered for cassava, and locally manufactured axes could be exchanged

423 Von Oppen, Terms of trade and terms of trust, p.211-235 and Vellut, “Notes sur le Lunda”, p.84-93.
424 NAZ: KSE 6/6/1, Stennett, Balunda district tour report, August 1909.
425 NAZ: KSE 6/1/1, G.A. McGregor, Balunda district annual report, 1908-09.
430 Interview with Mr. John J. Chiyuka, September 10th 2008, Kanongesha.
for game meat directly. Both Berry and Guyer argue that the persistence of barter and non-monetary exchange had to do with the instability of colonial currencies. 431 In order to cushion the effects of instability, people diversified their monetary and economic portfolios. 432 What can in addition be argued, however, is that in particular the existence of multiple circuits, namely of colonial currency, barter, but also Angolan and Congolese currency, served to stimulate economic activity. People were motivated by the existence of multiple options to expand their productive activities, so that they could take part in various circuits. Goods which could not be obtained or exchanged by the use of colonial currency, could be bartered, or could perhaps find a market across the international boundary, and the access to these various avenues and opportunities in turn stimulated overall production. It was thus not so much the introduction of colonial currencies in itself which stimulated economic growth, but the complex interplay and co-existence of the pound sterling, the Belgian franc and the system of local and regional barter which led to the most influential changes and stimulated production.

Concluding remarks
Far from being all-pervasive and hegemonic, the initial establishment of colonial rule in Mwinilunga district was gradual and wrought with numerous difficulties. On paper colonial administrators held extensive administrative, political and socio-economic powers, but in practice they often lacked effective control over the local population. Even though early colonial rule was at times harsh and coercive, and could cause occasional fleeing and distress, this did not disrupt agricultural production and village life permanently. In spite of the occasionally disruptive incursions of colonial rule, people nevertheless sought to upkeep agricultural production, as they were dependant on agriculture for day-to-day food supplies. Agriculture did not merely remain static, though, as producers sought to take advantage of the possibilities which remained open to them. These possibilities were either pre-existing but altered due to the colonial setting, or newly arising.

Even though throughout the early colonial period the availability of markets for disposing of agricultural produce was rather limited, especially when compared to the period of pre-colonial long-distance trade, and even though the demarcation of international boundaries restricted cross-boundary contacts and in addition the area of Mwinilunga came to stand at the periphery of the Northern Rhodesian state, people nevertheless sought and found alternative avenues to make a living. Mission stations, areas in Congo and Angola and the colonial administration itself provided the population with opportunities to trade their agricultural produce and earn an income. However, these avenues remained rather restricted. It was not until the 1930s and 1940s that a wider range of opportunities opened up to the population in Mwinilunga district and limitations such as poor transport linkages and the lack of marketing facilities were gradually overcame, stimulating and enabling the expansion of agricultural production. The appearance of and reactions to these increased opportunities will be the subject of the final chapter. The next chapter will first pay attention to the ways in which colonial and local ideas about ‘proper’ agricultural practices interplayed and were shaped.

432 Berry, “Stable prices, unstable values”, p. 302 and p. 309.
Illustration 5: Tomatoes, onions and bananas grown by the Ovimbundu in Samahina

Illustration 6: Harvested cassava roots

Illustration 7: A field of cassava – Note the round mounds

Illustration 8: A maize cob (kahila kabaka) – Note the coloured kernels
Chapter 4: Imposing, contesting and shaping ideas

Ideas about agriculture, crops and nutrition in colonial Mwinilunga were shaped by the multifaceted interplay between the colonial government, missionaries, immigrants and the local population. The diffusion of European knowledge, science and technology was sometimes seen as a ‘tool of empire’, facilitating colonial domination and expansion and enabling the ‘development’ and ‘improvement’ of local agriculture. Various individuals, such as agricultural experts, settlers, missionaries and administrators spread European ideas about ‘proper’ and ‘progressive’ techniques of agricultural production, crops and nutrition to the local population. However, ideological diffusion was not a simple one-way process, as ideas were subject to contestation and had to be adapted to pre-existing agricultural practices and techniques. The local population did not simply accept innovations and ideas propagated by colonial authorities, but shaped and altered them in order to make them suitable to their specific situation. Furthermore, existing ideas and local agricultural practices could at times influence and shape European ideas. Ideas, therefore, were not neutral but influenced by socio-economic and political power relations, dynamic and flexible and based on communication, exchange and control.

This chapter will explore the shaping and diffusion of various ideas concerning agriculture, crops and nutrition in Mwinilunga. It will be shown that colonial administrators and the local population often had differing views concerning proper and desirable agricultural production, subsistence and scarcity, primitiveness and progressiveness and nutrition. Furthermore, it will be shown how the colonial administration through various schemes tried to ‘develop’ agricultural production, especially from the 1940s onwards. The effects of and reactions to these various schemes will be examined and finally, innovations brought by immigrants and the reactions to these innovations will be assessed. It will be argued that the diffusion and formation of ideas, being subject to constant negotiation and power struggle, was not a simple act of imposition, but was always adapted to and shaped by the specific situation on the ground.

Subsistence, surplus and scarcity – Perceptions or realities of agricultural production?

Observations of food scarcity and the primitive nature of agricultural production in Mwinilunga district could coexist with reports of extensive, well-tended gardens and food abundance, as has been illustrated by the differing views expressed during McGregor’s period of administration. Complaints about (local) food scarcity and the low level of agricultural development in the area frequently recurred throughout the colonial period. Were these complaints necessarily well-founded, or can they be traced back to differing perceptions and expectations of agricultural production, not shared between the colonial administration and local producers? How were ideas about subsistence agriculture, food scarcity and food abundance given shape?

First of all, the abundance or scarcity of food was linked to seasonality. Food supplies were not uniform throughout the year, as millet and sorghum were most abundant in the post-harvest period after April and mushrooms could only be obtained during the rainy season. Cassava production to a certain extent mitigated the influences of seasonality, as it could be harvested throughout the year, thereby preventing periods of scarcity. Cultivators who relied more on sorghum and millet, however, experienced what colonial officials often referred to as a ‘hunger period’ or ‘hungry season’ preceding the harvests, roughly between January and April, when previous


436 NAZ: KSE 6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1926.
stocks had been depleted. However, the concept of hunger was not absolute. The population adopted alternative strategies to assure sufficient food supplies during these months, such as gathering, hunting and fishing, thereby preventing situations of (outright) hunger. The colonial administrations sometimes regarded these strategies as being highly primitive, as is illustrated by the following extract:

“(…) all villages are still in shelters until March (…) None of the villages have any cereal food such as mealies [maize], kaffir corn [sorghum], etc. They are living on honey, wild fruits, rats and other game.”

To the local population, however, this was not necessarily a primitive situation, but was regarded as normal and even desirable. Pritchett described how: “Men may subsist adequately in the village, but in the bush they feast”, having access to a “varied and exciting diet.” Whereas the colonial administration expected a steady and especially uniform food supply throughout the year, the population accepted seasonal fluctuations. Colonial administrators did not necessarily complain about the complete absence of food in the villages, but mostly about the absence of grain crops (sorghum, millet, maize and rice). This had to do with different expectations and valuations of food and agricultural production, not necessarily shared between colonial administrators and the population. Because colonial administrators expected a uniform supply of grain crops throughout the entire year, complaints were, for example, voiced against the making of beer:

“The Alunda have yet to learn the value of conserving their supplies for the lean months ahead. Grain is to-day being made into beer; Grain and meal is now being sold which should really be stored in the villages for consumption in October, November and December when frequently whole villages exist on wild roots, fruits, rats etc.”

Beer, however, was highly valued by the population, being used during various ceremonies, rituals and in order to host work parties. Additionally, beer held considerable nutritive value. Nevertheless, articles of diet such as beer, wild fruits and even cassava, were regarded by the colonial administration as inferior to crops such as sorghum, millet and maize, the supply of which they expected to be uniform and steady throughout the year, whereas producers regarded seasonal fluctuations as a normal part of the agricultural cycle.

Secondly, geographical locality was an important factor influencing the availability of food. In general it can be said that the areas of chiefs Kakoma and Kanyama, in the eastern part of Mwinilunga district, enjoyed less abundant food supplies than for instance the areas falling under chiefs Ikelenge and Nyakaseya, in the northeast around Kalene Hill mission. While this had something to do with soil characteristics, as Kakoma and Kanyama suffered from poor, leached soils of low fertility supporting but low population densities, this was not the sole contributing factor. As the northwest of the district did not boast of highly fertile soils either, a more important reason was that the north western area had access to a relatively large and stable market for agricultural produce, namely Kalene Hill mission, which stimulated increased agricultural production in the whole surrounding area. In contrast, Kanyama and Kakoma were relatively isolated, and long transport hauls made marketable agricultural produce, if it was available, difficult to dispose of. One district commissioner described this situation as follows: “The keenest agriculturalists are those in proximity to the main areas of demand; those at a distance are apt to consider it not worth their while

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437 NAZ: KSE 6/6/2, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district tour report, February 1928.
438 Interview with Mrs. Judy Mudimina, September 19th 2008, Ikelenge.
441 NAZ: KSE 6/6/2, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district tour report, June 1928.
442 Interview with Mrs. Alfonsina Chingangu, October 15th 2008, Ntambu.
cultivating larger gardens than will supply their own needs.”\footnote{NAZ: SEC 2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1935.} Since areas which were situated at a distance from markets had difficulty in disposing of their agricultural produce, they were also poorly motivated to produce large amounts of food. Market access, therefore, was a major factor in explaining local variations of agricultural productivity within the district.

Thirdly, the colonial administration did not necessarily have the same ideas concerning ‘proper’ techniques of agricultural production as the local population. Administrators frequently referred to local agricultural techniques as ‘primitive’ and even ‘backward’, denouncing chitemene due to the damage it did to “valuable timber resources.”\footnote{NAZ: KSE 6/6/2, A.M. Alexander, Mwinilunga sub-district tour report, August 1927.} Contrastingly, European ‘scientific agricultural methods’ were propagated, which included crop rotation, fertilisation, irrigation and the use of draught animals.\footnote{NAZ: KSE 6/6/2, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district tour report, June 1928.} These methods were not necessarily better suited to the soils and pre-existing agricultural practices of the area, though. The following section will pay more attention to which methods of cultivation were propagated by the colonial administration and why.

In addition, the concept of subsistence agriculture has to be analysed. The concept was predominantly defined in a negative manner by colonial officials, as signifying an absence of surplus agricultural production. Complaints were frequently voiced that villagers merely produced enough to satisfy their own needs.\footnote{NAZ: KSE 6/1/1, G.A. McGregor, Balunda district annual report, 1908.} This lack of surplus, however, was not merely due to ‘apathy’ or a ‘lethargic’ attitude of producers, but it was equally caused by a lack of incentives to increase agricultural production. Markets were largely absent or erratic and therefore the population was not motivated to produce large amounts of surplus of which it could not dispose.\footnote{Interview with Mr. Daniel Chinshe, October 13th 2008, Ntambu.} Colonial officials on tour had large demands, often travelling with groups of 100 porters, or even more. They would only announce their arrival several days in advance, not giving villagers a chance to pound grain and cassava into flour and prepare their produce properly. Bellis described how announcing his arrival in advance could have beneficial effects: “Cassava and grain flour, beans in large quantities, mealies [maize] on the cob, sweet potatoes, and pumpkins was what they offered and the longer the notice they had of our coming, the greater the proportion of flour to the other foods.”\footnote{NAZ: KSE 6/5/1, C.H. Bellis, Balunda district monthly report, February 1910.} The failure of the population to meet the demands of touring officials was associated with laziness and mere ‘subsistence production’, but could thus equally be attributed to the irregular and sudden nature of these demands.

The concept of subsistence agriculture, however, did not necessarily have to be defined negatively. Allan speaks of a “normal surplus”, as subsistence cultivators always aimed to produce a (small) surplus in order to have sufficient supplies even in years of adversity.\footnote{Allan, The African husbandman, p.38.} Therefore, in a ‘normal’ year, a surplus would remain and could be traded, bartered or used for ceremonial purposes.\footnote{Ibidem, p.44-45.} Subsistence agriculture could then also be seen in a more positive light, as being the aim to produce enough even in years of difficulty. Even though the concept of a normal surplus has been criticised and somewhat discredited in recent years, it remains useful here in explaining the more positive expressions of subsistence agriculture. This positive view could be connected to the situation prevailing during the period of political unrest following McGregor’s administration and the introduction of taxation. Even when people fled the territory and left their gardens behind, they aimed to return in order to harvest their crops, or otherwise adopted coping strategies in order to mitigate the effects of temporary scarcity. As agriculture was crucial to the general food supply and even survival of a large part of the population, the aim was always to produce a sufficient amount to
at least satisfy personal demands and preferably also a ‘surplus’ to trade and to act as a buffer during years of difficulty.455

However, the concepts of ‘subsistence’ and ‘surplus’ might not be so clear-cut and easily distinguishable as appears at first sight. Even though the main aim of small-scale agricultural producers has often been described as “producing all their subsistence needs”, true self-subsistence was rare or even non-existent.456 Not only individuals, but also households and even whole villages were dependant on others for the provision of (sometimes basic) goods and needs, which were supplied by the various means of exchange, barter and trade. Part of individual agricultural production was always diverted into exchange mechanisms, and it is therefore difficult to distinguish exactly what was needed for ‘subsistence’ and what could be regarded as a ‘surplus’.457 Surplus has frequently been defined as “an excess of goods over the minimum demands of necessity”, but it then remains difficult to discern what this ‘minimum demand of necessity’, or subsistence, is.458 ‘Subsistence needs’ could be defined in different ways, as colonial officials and local producers had diverging ideas as to what a balanced diet was and what was needed to provide basic needs. Moreover, each individual had real needs which went above mere eating and feeding, but were nevertheless regarded as crucial in economic, social and political respects.459 These needs included food requirements for trading purposes, but also for rituals, ceremonies and for tribute purposes, to name just a few. Because applying a sharp dichotomy between subsistence and surplus seems to be problematic, the derogatory denunciation by colonial administrators of local agricultural production as merely geared towards ‘subsistence needs’ appears to be based on a dubious foundation, instead of on simple or neutral observation.

In this light, the concept of ‘overselling’ of agricultural produce to traders, about which colonial officials occasionally complained, seems somewhat ambiguous. The following passage, written by a provincial commissioner, illustrates this ambiguity:

“The problem of food shortage has been with us (...) It is not a question of prices, or of too much or too little rain, but the fact that three years ago cassava was fetching such a high price in the Congo markets that growers pulled out mature and immature plants alike and carried them off to the Congo to make the easy money that was going there (...) The District is now reaping what it did not sow (...) The villager has enough to see him through, but local missions, farmers and the township have felt the pinch considerably (...) The Native Authority reacted to this by making an order that each adult male should cultivate each year a cassava plot of a prescribed minimum size.”

Due to the high prices offered for cassava by traders, the population would have allegedly oversold their produce leaving them in a state of scarcity and even hunger. Therefore the future selling of cassava for export would “have to be carefully controlled, to prevent any repetition of the disaster of 3 and 4 years ago, when immature crops were sold to catch the high prices in the Congo, leaving insufficient food for today.” In order to alleviate the ensuing food scarcity, recourse was even taken to minimum cultivation rules, which ordered each individual to plant at least a prescribed amount of cassava. It was described how: “the Chiefs, as well as the people, prefer money and a ‘tightened belt’ for a few months than well stocked grain bins in their villages.” However, the food scarcity did not seem to be universal, as it mainly affected the missions and Boma personnel, whereas the local population had sufficient food to see them through. This view was confirmed in numerous interviews, as people declared never to sell such quantities of food as to leave insufficient

455 Interview with Mr. Solomon Kanswata, September 8th and October 18th 2008, Mwinilunga.
456 Tosh, “The cash-crop revolution”, p.89.
457 Von Oppen, Terms of trade and terms of trust, p.237. He speaks of the “myth of the subsistence economy”.
stocks for their own needs (merely selling the relative ‘surplus’). Nevertheless, administrative personnel did voice complaints about ‘overselling’ if insufficient stocks were available to supply the missionary and administrative demands.

The negative remarks made by many colonial officials, of hunger, scarcity and mere subsistence, did thus not necessarily reflect the situation on the ground. Negative remarks could be due to differing perceptions and expectations of normality, subsistence and desired agricultural production, in addition to being linked to market access and market demands. Colonial officials did not necessarily complain about ‘absolute’ scarcity, but mostly about a lack of provisions in order to satisfy administrative, missionary and market demands.

Colonising the cooking pot? Different views on crops, nutrition and diet

Colonial officials and the local population did not always share the same ideas about what constituted proper food, nutrition and diet. This was sometimes due to misapprehension and lack of knowledge, as the colonial officials were not accustomed to the uses of various local crops and plants, and the local population was not always used to grow the crops which the colonial administrators propagated. Furthermore, the development of nutrition as a scientific specialism induced colonial officials to apply their new-found knowledge of vitamins, minerals and proteins to creating a more ‘balanced diet’ for the local population and thereby preventing (supposed) dietary deficiencies.\(^{463}\) However, at times these differing views on nutrition and diet were not merely benevolent advices to improve the local diet, but also attempts to ‘colonise the cooking pot’ and control which crops were grown and eaten. Whereas certain foods were promoted, others were discouraged and degraded to an inferior status. Concepts such as malnutrition were not neutral, but socially and politically constructed and could change over time.\(^{464}\) Which foods and which ideas about proper nutrition were promoted in colonial Mwinilunga and with what outcome?

Fruits and vegetables

“...only a very small minority of the villages could boast of tomatoes or potatoes and none had green vegetables; and few had more than an odd mango tree, if that, in the way of fruit.”\(^{465}\)

“For a large part of the year hardly any fruit and vegetables appear to be eaten and it is surprising that the lack of vitamins A and C which must result does not cause more disease.”\(^{466}\)

Colonial officials often voiced complaints about the lack of fruits and vegetables in the area. This does not seem to be in line with the wide variety of wild and cultivated fruits and vegetables which could be found in and around the villages. For example, wild fruits from the surrounding forests were gathered, which added nutritional diversity to the daily diet and offered food security in times of scarcity.\(^{467}\) Each season offered a different variety of fruits, providing important vitamins and other nutrients.\(^{468}\) Colonial officials often only recognised these gathering practices as hunger strategies, recording people who were living in the bush on wild fruits due to food scarcity.\(^{469}\) However, the gathering of wild fruits was by no means merely a hunger strategy, even though the practice might be intensified in times of hardship. Some fruits were regarded as true delicacies, especially mabula (of the *Uapaca kirkiana* tree) and nfungu (of the *Anisophylea boehmiit* tree) and could be highly nutritious.\(^{470}\) Many different varieties of vegetables were also available. Firstly, the leaves of cassava,

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\(^{466}\) NAZ: NWP 1/2/17, R.C. Dening, Mwinilunga district tour report, No.6/1947.  
\(^{469}\) NAZ: KSE 6/6/2, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga district tour report, September 1928.  
\(^{470}\) Interview with Mrs. Judy Mudimina, September 19th 2008, Ikelenge.
sweet potato and pumpkin plants were used as relish accompanying the main meal. These were highly nutritious, cassava leaves for instance being rich in proteins, minerals, Vitamin B1, B2 and C. Furthermore, a wealth of local vegetables was cultivated, including mulengu (Amaranthus hybridus), kateti (Solanaceae spp.) and wusi (Hibiscus sabdariffa). However, these were often not recognised by colonial officials as being true vegetables, even derogatively being called ‘weeds and grasses’. Instead of these fruits and vegetables, colonial officials propagated fruits such as bananas, mangoes, pawpaws, pineapples and citrus fruits. Furthermore, the growing of ‘European vegetables’, such as tomatoes, onions, cabbages, Irish potatoes and peas was promoted, even though most of these crops had not originated in Europe but in the Americas and in Asia. These crops were not necessarily more nutritious than the local fruits and vegetables, as one colonial official even admitted that the local vegetables were probably no less nutritious than the varieties proposed by Europeans. Neither did colonial officials always pay attention to whether the proposed crops would grow well in the particular climate and soils of the area, nor if they would fit into existing agricultural practices, as the growing of the proposed vegetables required the clearing of a separate garden and many of the crops were troubled by fungal diseases due to the high rainfall in the area.

The reason that the colonial administration promoted these crops, then, was that they were in high demand at the European centres in the area, namely the various mission stations and the Boma. Initially, the local population was hesitant to adopt the promoted crops (crops such as tomatoes, cabbages, onions, bananas and citrus fruits were grown even prior to colonial contact to a limited extent, but administrators greatly promoted the expansion and further spread of their cultivation) and predominantly grew them for sale at the European centres. Towards the end of the colonial period, however, these fruits and vegetables were increasingly incorporated as a normal article of the daily diet. Nevertheless, the local fruits and vegetables continued to exist and added diversity to the diet, even though reliance upon them was possibly less than in the past.

Sources of protein
Another often-voiced complaint by colonial officials had regard to the lack of proteins in the local diet. During the pre-colonial period game meat and fish, obtained either by fishing in adjacent rivers and streams or by bartering various foodstuffs for dried fish, had provided sufficient supplies of protein to the diet. However, throughout the colonial period game populations were becoming increasingly scarce and various restrictions were put in place to limit hunting. Therefore, even though the Lunda were said to be “great meat eaters”, their favoured source of meat was becoming increasingly scarce and difficult to obtain. In addition fish, previously obtained in large quantities by barter trade with Angola, became difficult to access as international boundaries were more strictly

472 I use the term ‘local’ fruits and vegetables here to distinguish these crops and plants from the vegetables and fruits proposed by colonial officials. This does not mean that all fruits and vegetables were necessarily of local origin, as some had originated in the Americas or Asia.
473 NAZ: SEC 2/955, C.M.N. White, Mwinilunga district tour report, February 1940.
474 NAZ: HM 8/Fi/2/6/1/1, Walter and Anna Fisher correspondences; Eileen to Walter Fisher, 19th March 1909.
476 NAZ: SEC 2/177, Recommendations of the committee on diet and nutrition, May 1938.
477 Interview with Mr. Lorence Floranga, October 10th 2008, Ntambu.
478 NAZ: SEC 2/955, C.M.N. White, Mwinilunga district tour report, February 1940.
479 NAZ: NWP 1/2/83, Loc. 4914, Department of agriculture North western province annual report, 1958.
480 NAZ: MAG 2/9/11, Loc. 171, Department of agriculture on nutrition trends 1959.
481 NAZ: NWP 1/2/83, Loc. 4914, Department of agriculture North western province annual report, 1958.
482 NAZ: KSE 6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1926.
483 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook, 1913 entry.
Domestic animals were held in small numbers, but they were often not used for milking purposes, nor were they slaughtered for meat regularly save on special occasions. Therefore, the colonial government tried to propose alternative protein-sources, initially in the form of beans, cowpeas and groundnuts, but later also in the form of improved breeds of livestock and by digging fish ponds. Even though several varieties of beans and groundnuts had since long been cultivated in the area, in the 1940s and 1950s campaigns were set up by the administration to promote the growing of beans, cowpeas and especially groundnuts on a greatly expanded scale, in order to add variety and to ‘improve’ the local diet. Planting material was distributed through Native Authorities and agricultural demonstrators assisted the people in cultivation, especially of groundnuts as they initially appeared to grow poorly (which was later discovered to be due to ill-conceived cultivation techniques). The promotion of these crops was, however, not only geared towards adding diversity to the local diet, but also served a different purpose, namely of providing the growing mining towns of the Copperbelt with much-needed foodstuffs and possibly even exporting groundnuts overseas. The promotion of groundnuts and beans, at times only hesitatingly received by the local population, thus served a dual purpose. Whereas the crops could on the one hand provide the local population with cheap sources of protein, they on the other hand provided an exportable surplus for the mining centres.

An attempt to boost protein sources was also made by stimulating livestock ownership. For this purpose, both improved breeds of sheep, goats and poultry were distributed and sold, and schemes were devised to promote cattle ownership, initially only by chiefs but later also by other village members. This development met with great success, and the improved breeds were in large demand. The local population, however, saw them not only as sources of protein, but also made use of the new commercial opportunities at the urban meat-markets in the Northern Rhodesian and Congolese mining centres. Milk supplies were also increasingly used to satisfy the demand at local missions and administrative centres, though the provision of milk on a larger scale was difficult due to its perishable nature combined with transport difficulties. In addition, fish ponds were promoted and became highly popular, both diversifying local diets and offering people an opportunity to sell dried fish at European centres in the area.

Behind the aim of adding more proteins and diversity to the local diet an attempt was often hidden to make the population produce a marketable and exportable good, for either the European population or the booming mining towns. The local population, however, was quick to react to the new marketing and cash-earning possibilities and was in no sense a passive actor in the process.

**Staple crops**

The situation with regards to staple crops was somewhat more complex and ambiguous. Cassava, though not indigenous to the area, had gradually been adopted as a staple crop by the population throughout the district. Even though the practical use of cassava was recognised by colonial officials, as it was easy to grow, it grew exceptionally well in the area and it was resistant to droughts and diseases, the nutritional deficiencies of the crop were also often underlined. Early district commissioners described the Lunda as a “weakly tribe” and “physically inferior”, due to their cassava-based diet, and the growth of too much cassava was even actively discouraged. In spite of

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486 NAZ: NWP 1/2/37, Loc. 4903, D. Clough, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1950.
488 NAZ: MAG 1/18/6, Ministry of agriculture, North western province tours and tour reports, 1963.
489 NAZ: SEC 2/177, District commissioners conference Western Province, March 1937.
490 NAZ: MAG 1/10/1, Loc. 76, Agricultural development north western province, April 1955.
493 NAZ: Mutende June 1936.
this discouragement, the acreage under cassava cultivation actually expanded during the colonial period, as the crop greatly increased food security.\textsuperscript{495} Cassava could offer food all year around, as it did not have to be harvested during specific short intervals, and thus prevented ‘hungry periods’ while awaiting the harvests.\textsuperscript{496} Next to cassava, sorghum and millet (either finger or bulrush millet) were grown as subsidiary grain crops and for beer-making purposes. Their cultivation was revived when urban markets arose and these crops could be exported to the beerhalls on the Copperbelt.\textsuperscript{497}

The colonial administration, though acknowledging the use of cassava, sorghum and millet, promoted other staple crops, such as rice, maize and even wheat. Rice was promoted in the south and the northwest of the district, where it could be grown in riverside gardens. Initially, people were hesitant to adopt rice in their daily diet and predominantly considered it as a cash crop, to be sold to the local European population and to be exported to Copperbelt markets.\textsuperscript{498} Nevertheless, rice cultivation and eating was gradually adopted, though only hesitatingly so, as its cultivation required the clearing and working of separate dambo fields, and could therefore not easily be combined with the cultivation of other crops.\textsuperscript{499} Even wheat was promoted as being a more nutritious alternative to sorghum and millet, but this met with little success as the crop did not grow well in the soils and climate of Mwinilunga.\textsuperscript{500}

The growing of maize, even though the crop was not particularly suited to the soils of Mwinilunga and was often affected by diseases and weevils due to the high rainfall in the area, was nevertheless promoted by the colonial government.\textsuperscript{501} A development can be traced, in which people initially grew maize intercropped with cassava or on small patches along the rivers and ate the maize in its ‘green stage’ off the cob, but later on started adopting maize as a subsidiary staple crop and as part of the main meal in the form of \textit{nshima}, or thick porridge.\textsuperscript{502} Maize thus developed from being used mainly as a vegetable crop, to increasingly being adopted as a staple grain crop. Initially people said that eating maize would have “made them sick”\textsuperscript{503} and that porridge made of maize meal had a “strange colour, texture and taste”,\textsuperscript{504} nevertheless it was gradually adopted in increasing quantities. Maize was first adopted by schools, missions and hospitals, but increasingly spread to the workers at the Boma, to whom maize had a cosmopolitan appeal, whereas they denounced cassava as a backward village crop.\textsuperscript{505} Maize also became the staple crop of the urban and mining population and enquiries were made into the possibilities of exporting maize from Mwinilunga to the Copperbelt, though this proved to be uneconomic.

The promotion of rice and maize did not cause cassava consumption and production to diminish, even though cassava was degraded to the status of being a famine or security crop. The local population continued to grow and consume cassava as it offered many advantages. Cassava, however, largely lacked marketing and export possibilities, whereas maize and rice could be sold to the local European population and to the mines and therefore came to stand in higher regard than cassava, sorghum and millet.

\textit{Dietary change}

Dietary change did not occur overnight, but took many years, sometimes even decades to materialise. Neither were dietary changes always (completely) voluntary:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{495} NAZ: SEC 2/135, R.C. Dening, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1952.
\item \textsuperscript{496} Von Oppen, “Endogene Agrarrevolution”, p.280-281.
\item \textsuperscript{497} NAZ: Mutende, No. 368, 30\textsuperscript{th} January 1951.
\item \textsuperscript{498} NAZ: NWP 1/2/33, D.G. Clough, Mwinilunga district tour report, No.6/1950.
\item \textsuperscript{499} Ibidem.
\item \textsuperscript{500} Interview with Mr. Paul Chitadi, September 8\textsuperscript{th} 2008, Kampemba.
\item \textsuperscript{501} NAZ: MAG 1/10/1, Loc. 76, Programme of work for the North western province, June 1960.
\item \textsuperscript{502} NAZ: SEC 2/962, P.L.N. Hannaford, Mwinilunga district tour report, June 1954
\item \textsuperscript{503} NAZ: SEC 2/967, W.D. Grant, Mwinilunga district tour report, No. 5/1959.
\item \textsuperscript{504} Interview with Mr. Mwangala, September 8\textsuperscript{th} 2008, Mwinilunga.
\item \textsuperscript{505} Interview with Mr. Paul Fisher, September 27\textsuperscript{th} 2008, Hillwood farm Ikelenge, and NAZ: Department of agriculture annual report for the year 1954.
\end{itemize}
“There is reluctance on the part of many natives to modify their present diet, and it will be necessary gradually to cultivate the taste for new forms of food and gradually to educate the people up to the stage of realising the benefits which would result from varied and improved diets (...). The question of bringing pressure to bear through suitable authorities might have to be considered and close and constant supervision would undoubtedly be necessary.”

Some crops that were promoted by the colonial administration did not grow well in the particular environment of Mwinilunga district, nor did they always fit well into existing agricultural practices. Nevertheless, these crops were promoted under the veneer of ‘dietary improvement’, but often they were promoted with the dual purpose of being marketable and being desired by the European population. Even though colonial officials sometimes forcibly propagated the growing of certain crops, the population was not passive in this process. They reacted to the (newly arising) marketing possibilities whenever these were suitable to them and the promoted crops were gradually, though at times hesitatingly, included in the local diet to add variety to it. While studying dietary change in Tanganyika, Little concluded that colonial recommendations regarding food habits and promoting export crops led to the crumbling down of “the once-diversified indigenous food systems of Africa”. However, the process was not this univocal. Local foods continued to exist, and some even thrived next to the crops promoted by the colonial administration. Even though reliance on certain local fruits and vegetables diminished because of the introduction of ‘European’ fruits and vegetables, they did not fall into complete disuse, whereas cassava cultivation in spite of being discouraged even increased.

Colonial ideas about improved nutrition, though sometimes merely stemming from the misapprehension of the local diet, were not always benevolent and neutral. Often they hid socio-economic and political paradigms which promoted the production of marketable crops, without regarding what was best for local dietary requirements or what fitted into existing agricultural systems. An attempt was thus made to colonise the cooking pot, but this attempt was not received by the population in a unanimous way. Whereas certain new crops and goods were readily accepted and people made use of the ensuing marketing possibilities, other crops and goods were but hesitantly adopted or rejected altogether.

Promoting improved farming – Colonial policies aimed at ‘developing’ agriculture

Both colonial officials and European immigrants described agricultural practices in Mwinilunga district as marked by primitiveness, backwardness and subject to but minimum amounts of change, with few exceptions. Remarks such as the following were not uncommon: “To say that the Lunda (...) do no more than scratch at the earth, is no understatement (...) the overall production of crops (...) would hardly do justice to the Sahara desert.” Furthermore, it was said that: “Native methods of grain growing are in-nate, their ancestors cultivated in this manner and they have been taught no other.”

To remedy this perceived state of affairs, colonial officials proposed to educate the population and to install technical officers in order to promote ‘progress and development’ of agriculture. This was attempted by the installation of various schemes, such as school gardens, demonstration plots, irrigation schemes, peasant farming schemes, the use of agricultural demonstrators and the issuance of improved livestock, poultry and cattle breeds. Attention was focused, amongst other things, on crop rotation, the use of compost and manure, ploughing, anti-erosion measures and irrigation. How did these schemes materialise and which influence did they have on the ways in which agriculture was practiced by individual cultivators? In order to examine

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506 NAZ: SEC 2/177, Committee on nutrition, District commissioners conference Western province, 1937.
this, attention will be paid to two broad categories of policies aimed at improving local agricultural practices. Whereas one category of policies focused mainly on demonstration, including school garden schemes and the work performed by agricultural demonstrators, the other category focused on the practice of improved farming by individual cultivators, finding expression in the appearance of ‘farms’ and the attempted establishment of the peasant farming scheme.

Especially during the 1930s and 1940s, when increasing numbers of schools were established throughout the district, school gardens received much attention. It was stated how: “One of the most important functions of a garden in an African School is to ensure from the outset that book learning is not regarded as a means of emancipation from the hoe or from manual labour generally.”

School gardens were not only established so that food for students, especially boarders, could be grown, but from the outset had educational and demonstrative aims. Through these gardens children were taught the value of agricultural production and, in addition, new crops and techniques were introduced and disseminated. Not only did school gardens experiment with the cultivation of crops such as rice, maize and various fruits and vegetables, the cultivation of which was not yet very common in the area, but they also promoted different agricultural techniques, such as the use of manure, compost, irrigation and the practice of crop rotation. School gardens were often used as experimental grounds for the introduction of new crops or techniques, which thereafter gradually spread to the surrounding population.

Demonstration of agricultural techniques and new or improved strains of crops was also carried out by especially appointed African agricultural demonstrators, who toured the district from the 1940s onwards. Not only did they disseminate seeds, recommend crop rotations and encourage individuals to expand their plot sizes, but they also educated cultivators as to appropriate planting techniques. Agricultural demonstrators discouraged both intercropping and chitemene cultivation, instead of which they recommended the use of compost, manure and the planting of single crops in rows as opposed to mounds. Agricultural demonstrators, being part of the Ministry of Agriculture, co-operated with both the colonial administration and Native Authorities. The measures advocated by these demonstrators were not merely suggestions but were at times forcefully insisted upon, as women were fined in court for not making rice gardens exactly as the agricultural demonstrators had proposed, even though no rice seeds were available to them.

Next to mere demonstration, the development of individual ‘progressive’ farms was encouraged. The peasant farming scheme of the 1940s and 1950s was a direct attempt to do this. This scheme not only promoted the practice of permanent, as opposed to shifting cultivation, the integration of animal husbandry and agriculture (by the use of manure, draught power and fodder cultivation), and various cycles of rotation, but also paid attention to methods of soil conservation, irrigation and promoted the growing of cash crops. However, due to lack of money and personnel the scheme did not materialise in Mwinilunga district, as priority was given to neighbouring Kasempa and Solwezi districts. Instead numerous ‘farms’ did appear in the area of Mwinilunga from the 1940s onwards. Turner described these farms as follows:

“The ifwami or ‘farm’ consists of one or more Kimberley-brick houses bordered by a few mud huts and it is occupied by the farm head, his elementary family and a small fringe of kin and unrelated persons (...) Farm heads were disencumbering themselves of many of the obligations of kinship, and retaining for their own use and for the use of their elementary families money they earned as wages and by the sale of cash-crops or surplus subsistence crops.”

513 Interview with Mr. Kawangu, September 6th 2008, Mwinilunga.
514 Interview with Headman Chimbila, September 18th 2008, Ikelenge.
516 Interview with Mr. Kamwana, October 18th 2008, Mwinilunga.
519 Turner, Schism and continuity, p.10 and p.133.
Farms were thus small settlements, sometimes merely consisting of one household, located at a distance from the main village settlement. These separate settlements appeared due to quarrels within existing villages, due to weakening kinship links (as Turner suggested) and/or due to a desire to establish a progressive agricultural enterprise on an individual basis. Even though individuals resident in these farm settlements did occasionally resort to commercial agriculture and cash crop production, it was often remarked how “a “farm” in this Province is no more than an excuse to escape from village obligations.” Therefore the colonial administration sought to limit the appearance of farms and set up minimum rules as to standard of housing, accessibility and quality of agricultural practice to which farms should adhere. Which ideas stood at the base of these various schemes of agricultural demonstration and improvement and how did these ideas and schemes influence individual production?

The impact and sense of agricultural improvement

Agricultural development and improvement was greatly restrained by the limited availability of monetary funding and personnel. Even though this was a problem in the whole of Northern Rhodesia, the North Western province and especially Mwinilunga district suffered to a particularly large extent. Administration complained about this fact by saying that: “we have suffered from a paucity of funds and personnel with which to pursue our plans for raising standards of living, agricultural extension work and various other aspects of development.” Not only did this result in the failure to materialise the peasant farming scheme, as mentioned previously, but the lack of funds and personnel could also be felt in other schemes. School gardens, for instance, lacked attention from agricultural demonstrators whose numbers were limited and who were poorly educated, which in turn affected their efficiency. This limited the influence of schemes geared towards agricultural development, as they were sometimes but half-heartedly and partially implemented.

The rationale behind colonial schemes to improve agriculture was not merely an expression of ‘scientific colonialism’, or an attempt to socially engineer African societies. Motivations behind improving agriculture included increasing cash crop and export production, preventing famine, raising levels of domestic trade, improving land tenure and settlement policies, addressing issues of soil erosion and improving nutrition. Even though attempts to boost cash crop production were hardly altruistic, research into agriculture and veterinary issues and the dissemination of pesticides, fertilisers, disease-resistant and higher yielding seeds and the spread of irrigation facilities, could and did facilitate agricultural production and led to higher yields. Even though not all attempts at improving agricultural production were well-founded, and some were even ill-conceived and (potentially) detrimental, others were beneficial and became popular amongst agricultural producers. Attempts to induce the population to plant in ridges instead of mounds, to abandon chitemene cultivation in favour of permanent cultivation on one plot of land and to abandon intercropping in favour of monocultures, all elicited resistance as they required a reorganisation of existing patterns of agricultural production, more labour input, yet did not lead to significantly higher

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yields. However, other measures, such as the dissemination of improved cassava strains, irrigation schemes and cattle and livestock schemes did become highly popular, as they could increase agricultural output while fitting into existing patterns of production. Colonial agricultural policies, though by far not always perfectly suited to local circumstances, were increasingly based on local research and knowledge, and could therefore be fitted into existing patterns of agriculture which in turn enhanced their popularity and adoption.

Especially from the 1940s onwards, increasing attention was paid to schemes of agricultural development and improvement, in order to stimulate general economic development. However, due to a lack of money and personnel these schemes were at times but partially realised on the ground and influenced only a handful of agricultural producers. Nevertheless, these schemes did spread some new crops, improved strains and novel agricultural techniques to local producers, which adopted them in so far as they readily fitted into pre-existing patterns of agricultural production and offered benefits in terms of increased yields and reliable harvests, but resisted or even rejected schemes which were clearly in opposition to existing practices or required large amounts of extra labour inputs without yielding high returns.

‘Progressive immigrants’ and their impact on local agriculture

Immigrants often brought new agricultural ideas, practices and crops with them. Both Europeans, either missionaries or administrators, and immigrants from Angola and Congo introduced various crops and methods of cultivation to the area of Mwinilunga. What impact did these introductions have on existing agricultural practices prevailing in the area? Were the crops and methods of cultivation brought by immigrants simply accepted, or was there a process of contestation and negotiation as the crops and techniques were adapted to the specific situation prevailing in Mwinilunga?

European immigrants – Colonial administrators and missionaries

Both missionaries and administrators engaged in gardening, either as a leisurely pastime or to supplement their daily diets. In their gardens they planted crops which they expected would do well in the climate and soils of Mwinilunga, but especially crops which were unavailable locally yet desired by them from a nutritional point of view. Theodore Williams, a colonial official who had spent considerable periods of time in Jamaica, asked his mother to send him planting seeds:

“I don’t see why tree tomatoes, custard-apple-granadilla, star-apples and mangoes should not be given a trial here. And I would like to see Ponsiana and Spathodea here: and does Bougainvillea Moralinha grow from seed? Does morango grow from seed? And cow foot would not look bad in a small way. Please put together all you can think of and all that would survive the 12 week journey. When you send the parcel you should send hints on to how things should be treated. Red clay soil is the commonest, but there is good black soil as well in which the bananas and vegetables thrive. Pumpkins and sweet potato and cassava do well – the few that these natives bother to grow. They have no yams or cocoa in this country, though. There is a terrific dry season, but afterwards the rains are one of the best in the whole of Africa. So suggest what things should be planted here, in what time (as regards rains) things should be planted out. Give me every chance in fact!”

This extract serves to exemplify in which way new crops, but also flowers and other plants, were introduced by Europeans to Mwinilunga district. Williams kept a garden near his house at the Boma, but later on reported that many of the seeds that his mother had sent him were performing badly or even failed altogether. Even though the environmental circumstances in Mwinilunga district were in

528 Interview with Mr. Kamwana, October 18th 2008, Mwinilunga.
Williams’ eyes similar to those prevailing in Jamaica, the soils and climate differed significantly which caused certain plants which had prospered in Jamaica to fail in Mwinilunga.

In addition to administrators, missionaries engaged in gardening as well. The missionaries at Kalene Hill had a garden which provided fruits and vegetables for their own needs and for those of the hospital patients. In this garden they planted trees of banana, peach, granadilla, guava, lime, orange, grape, strawberry, blackberry, fig and Cape gooseberry. In a published memoir, the Fisher family was described as being:

“(…) evidently keen to introduce to the African the benefits of agricultural improvement and the industrial age that the west was experiencing (...) [they] taught the Africans the value of crop rotation and irrigation (...) Natives from miles around would come in seeking work, because they had observed that everything at Kalene grew so well. The missionaries sincerely believed that these practical aspects of western civilisation would be of great philanthropic benefit to the African, and in particular by way of diet and of employment to Christians.”

These various introductions were not merely neutral, however, but concealed a complex power struggle between European and local ideas about desirable, proper and progressive crops, techniques and methods of cultivation. The promotion of certain crops and methods of cultivation by Europeans often sharpened the dichotomy between ‘progressive’ European crops and ‘subsistence’ or even ‘primitive’ local crops. This led to the fact that for instance, orange, fig and Cape gooseberry, planted by the missionaries at Kalene Hill, came to stand in higher regard than locally gathered fruits, notwithstanding the fact that local fruits and vegetables were perhaps more nutritious and better suited to prevailing environmental circumstances.

However, European introductions were not blindly copied by local cultivators. For one, many of the attempted introductions met with little success. Williams’ garden fared badly and it is probable that there were many more of such attempted unsuccessful introductions which remained unrecorded. However, even the crops which were successful and suited to the local environmental circumstances were not necessarily copied by the population, or were adopted but hesitatingly and slowly. As the European population in the district remained small, the demand and market for crops introduced by Europeans was equally small. Since these crops were not yet widely adopted in standard local diet, only a small number of people ventured to produce these crops especially for the European demand. One notable exception was the group of Angolan Ovimbundu immigrants.

Angolan immigrants – The Ovimbundu of Samahina

Even today the Ovimbundu immigrants, centred at Samahina near Kalene Hill mission, are still regarded as being ‘progressive’ agricultural producers, cultivating a great variety of crops. People proclaim that: “those Mbundu, they can grow everything!” These Ovimbundu immigrants first came to the area with Dr. Walter Fisher in 1906, but their numbers increased during the 1920s and in subsequent years when unrest in Angola induced them to settle in Mwinilunga district. The Ovimbundu remained a rather close-knit entity, even though their relationship with the Lunda neighbours was peaceful and generally good, as colonial officials testified:

“The Ovimbundu villages, who came in some decades ago, have remained almost solidly Ovimbundu. The state has now been reached, however, where all the Ovimbundu children are speaking Lunda, and are in fact being absorbed as natives of the area.”

The colonial administration described the Ovimbundu immigrants as “progressive agriculturalists” and declared their methods of soil conservation, irrigation and crop rotation to be “most impressive and very encouraging”. The crops cultivated by the Ovimbundu included coffee, wheat, rice, (Irish)

534 Summerton, Fishers of men, p.79-80.
536 Fisher and Hoyte, Ndotolu, p.144-145.
potatoes, pineapples, citrus fruits, palm trees and various types of vegetables, all of which found a ready market at the local missions and at the Boma.\textsuperscript{539} The agricultural practices of the neighbouring Lunda were negatively compared to the progressive techniques of the Ovimbundu, and the Lunda were accused of a passive and lethargic attitude, refusing to copy their neighbours by saying that “the Ovimbundu understand these things, we do not.”\textsuperscript{540} Why did this sharp dichotomy arise and why did neighbouring villages fail to copy Ovimbundu crops and practices if they were truly so progressive and remunerative?

It is probable that the variety of crops grown and the techniques adopted by Ovimbundu immigrants depended less on their inherent aptitude for agricultural production, than on close contact with the European population of the district. The Ovimbundu claimed to have acquired their agricultural knowledge from their long-standing and close contact with the Portuguese, with whom they had traded for centuries.\textsuperscript{541} However, once they arrived in Mwinilunga they became highly dependent on the Kalene Hill missionaries and colonial administrators for seed provisions, technical assistance and marketing facilities.\textsuperscript{542} The crops which the Ovimbundu grew found a ready market among the European population of the district, and in turn the Ovimbundu received technical assistance and support from these Europeans in expanding and developing their agricultural enterprises.\textsuperscript{543} This interplay between colonial administration, missionary influence and Ovimbundu immigrants led to the fact that the Ovimbundu were put forward as ‘agricultural missionaries’ and their cultivation techniques were suggested as potentially advancing the ‘traditional agriculture’ of their Lunda neighbours.\textsuperscript{544}

The crops grown by the Ovimbundu immigrants had a ready market at the local mission, but this market was rather limited. Therefore the Ovimbundu, even though they were but few, could satisfy this demand and virtually monopolise the market.\textsuperscript{545} Ovimbundu producers already experienced difficulty in the marketing of their crops, and therefore the Lunda neighbours were not stimulated to copy these crops and techniques as there was no market to dispose of the produce.\textsuperscript{546} In addition, the Ovimbundu received preferential treatment from the European population who provided them with seeds and technical assistance, which in turn encouraged and enabled the Ovimbundu to focus especially on the satisfaction of European needs. Once (limited) markets arose on the Copperbelt and in Congo for goods such as pineapples and coffee, however, the Lunda also started producing these crops and were able to effectively answer the rising demand.\textsuperscript{547} Thus, the Lunda were not inherently less apt at agricultural production or less willing to copy or adopt progressive agricultural techniques, but lacked incentives to do so when markets were absent. The designation of Ovimbundu immigrants as progressive and Lunda cultivators as ‘primitive’ therefore had more to do with the presence or absence of markets and the close connection which the Ovimbundu enjoyed with the local European population, than with an inherent proclivity towards ‘advanced’ methods of agricultural production. In comparison, the concept of ‘progressive’ or ‘useful’ immigrants is not peculiar to the case of Mwinilunga, but has been adopted in other contexts for various socio-economic, political and ideological reasons as well.\textsuperscript{548}

\textsuperscript{539} Interview with Mrs. Margaret Mulopa, Mr. Harry Ventina and Mr. Larson Samahina, September 16\textsuperscript{th} 2008, Samahina, Ikelenge.

\textsuperscript{540} NAZ: NWP 1/2/33, K.Duff-White, Mwinilunga district tour report, September 1950.

\textsuperscript{541} NAZ: NWP 1/2/17, C.M.N. White, Mwinilunga district tour report, August 1946.

\textsuperscript{542} Interview with Mr. & Mrs. Sawita, 24\textsuperscript{th} September 2008, Jimbe, Nyakaseya.

\textsuperscript{543} NAZ: SEC 2/962, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga district tour report, June 1954.

\textsuperscript{544} NAZ: MAG 2/9/4, Loc. 170, Director of Agriculture, Mwinilunga district, February 1937.

\textsuperscript{545} NAZ: SEC 2/967, R.J. Short, Mwinilunga district tour report, June 1959.


\textsuperscript{547} NAZ: NWP 1/2/102, Loc. 4919, H.T. Bayldon, North western province annual report, 1961.

Concluding remarks
Ideas about agricultural production, crops and nutrition, which were often not shared between Europeans and the local population of Mwinilunga district, were not only shaped by cultural or ideological factors, but in addition were influenced by social, economic and political factors. Ideas were not merely neutral, but concealed valuations of what was ‘progressive’ as opposed to ‘primitive’ and attempted to shape or even alter the prevailing situation. Europeans tried to impose their ideas of ‘proper’ agricultural production on the local population, but these ideas were never simply accepted or copied. The success or failure of the adoption of new crops and agricultural techniques depended on the extent to which they could fit into pre-existing patterns of agricultural production and the extent to which they were regarded as beneficial by local producers. Ideas were not simply imposed, but subject to a complex mediation which resulted in the adoption, partial or gradual acceptance, or complete rejection of crops, cultivation methods and ideas.

The influence of economic factors, such as marketability, proved to be especially significant in shaping prevailing ideas. Whether or not a specific crop had a ready market (among the European population or at the Copperbelt and Congo markets) to a large extent influenced whether a crop was designated as desirable or progressive. Cash crops were often termed progressive, and much attention was paid to the technical support of these crops. This resulted in the fact that many local agricultural practices and crops were termed ‘primitive’ or ‘subsistence’, whereas crops commanding a ready market and cultivation methods propagated by the colonial administration or various immigrants were termed ‘progressive’, because they were geared towards market production. How increased marketing opportunities influenced agricultural production from the 1930s and 1940s onwards, will be the subject of the following chapter.
Illustration 9: A grass nkunka
(Source: NAZ SEC2/964, Mwinilunga district tour report, Accompanying photographs)

Illustration 10: A chief (seated on the chair to the right) discussing village affairs with the male population
(Source: NAZ SEC2/964, Mwinilunga district tour report, Accompanying photographs)

Illustration 11: A group of villagers awaiting the touring district commissioner
(Source: NAZ SEC2/964, Mwinilunga district tour report, Accompanying photographs)

Illustration 12: Early roads and transport – A motor car on its way to Mwinilunga
(Source: NAZ SEC2/964, Mwinilunga district tour report, Accompanying photographs)
Chapter 5: Tapping the potential?

From the 1930s onwards, but increasing in scope and intensity after 1945, attempts were made by the colonial administration to develop and open up Mwinilunga district, in order to tap its potential. One of the means to do this was by encouraging increased agricultural production. The building of roads and the expansion of lines of communication, which in turn facilitated access to an increased number of markets and traders, served to lift some of the limitations to increased agricultural production existing during the early colonial period. Furthermore, a concerted effort was made to find viable ‘cash crops’ which could stand high transport costs and could be readily marketed. Even though some of these ‘cash crops’ were new introductions to the area and necessitated the adoption of novel agricultural techniques, many of the marketed crops had been grown in the area since long, their cultivation building upon pre-existing knowledge and patterns of agricultural production.

And indeed, building upon these efforts to increase agricultural production, a trend towards rapidly increasing agricultural production could be observed throughout the district from the 1930s and 1940s onwards. This trend prevailed in spite of the increasing number of labour migrants leaving the area for long stretches of time, draining the area of essential agricultural labour force. The aim here will be to investigate how this increase in agricultural production could come about. Factors such as infrastructural development, increased access to markets and the presence of traders have to be taken into account. However, the relationship between production for the market and the production for subsistence needs also has to be assessed. It will be argued that the availability and divisions of labour, the changes in modes of agricultural production and the repertoire of cultivated crops need to be at the centre of the analysis, as they played an important role in enabling increased production. In order to explain the expansion of agricultural production, all the previously studied factors (environmental, socio-economic, political and ideological) have to be taken into account and combined, so as to explain how “the ‘Cinderella Province’ is at last beginning to get the ball at its feet”.

Roads, transport and lines of communication – Opening up the district

“There were no roads then, only narrow footpaths (...) indeed the term ‘road’ was only a courtesy title for the rough track through the bush (...) Today motor roads run like great ribbons (white, red or grey, according to the changing soil) through the Central African bush in all directions, and cars can be used to get quickly from place to place.”

This description given by Elsie Burr, a worker at Kalene Hill mission, reflects the changes which took place in transport facilities within Mwinilunga district between the time she arrived in the early 1920s and the 1950s. It has frequently been argued that the expansion of the transportation network was a critical factor in enabling economic growth. Was this also the case in Mwinilunga? How did infrastructural facilities affect marketing opportunities, communication and thereby agricultural production in the area?

Before the first motor car reached Mwinilunga Boma in 1930, transportation in the district was confined largely to porters carrying head loads or making use of push carts, and occasionally bicycles. Both water transport and animal traction were limited, the former by the frequent occurrence of rapids and the irregularity of water flows in the rivers, and the latter by the presence of tsetse fly belts throughout the area. The road network consisted mainly of inter-village paths, the upkeep of which was delegated to chiefs and headmen by the colonial administration.
had sufficed for communication purposes within and outside the district and in order to transport high-value, low-weight goods, such as ivory, rubber and cloth, in large caravans. However, the inadequacy of footpaths for quick communication and for the purpose of transporting and marketing low-value high-bulk commodities, such as most agricultural produce, became increasingly clear as the colonial period progressed.\textsuperscript{554}

The geographically remote position of Mwinilunga district was frequently emphasised by colonial officials, as long transport hauls were necessary before major markets could be reached.\textsuperscript{555} The distance separating Mwinilunga district from Congolese, Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt and overseas markets complicated the marketing of agricultural and other produce, especially where perishable goods were concerned. High transport costs meant that only high-value goods, such as for instance beeswax, coffee and livestock, could stand the cost of transport and could thus be marketed.\textsuperscript{556} The area of Mwinilunga lacked easy access to train transport, the cheapest mode of transport available for landlocked areas throughout the colonial period. During this period only areas directly along the line-of-rail could market heavy bulk goods over long distances, as in other cases transport costs inhibited the profitability of the enterprise. Access to the Benguela railway, which ran from Lobito Bay in Angola to Chilongo in the Congolese area of Katanga and passed Mwinilunga district to the west and north, was problematic. The railway could either be accessed via the Jimbe Bridge to Angola, or via Mutshatsha in Congo, being 80 miles removed from the Boma. From the 1940s onwards use was increasingly made of the railway connection at Mutshatsha by various traders from Mwinilunga. Maize and cassava exports to the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt via the railway were attempted, but proved unprofitable due to transport costs. Therefore higher value cash crops were sought, such as groundnuts, rice, cattle, etc., the marketing of which nevertheless remained problematic. High transport costs and a poor road network even caused exportable surplus produce to remain underutilised, because of the difficulty of finding remunerative market outlets. These difficulties could, to a certain extent, be overcome by the expansion and improvement of existing infrastructural facilities. Improved road and transport networks could act as economic assets, as they could open up remote areas and enable access to markets for agricultural produce.\textsuperscript{557}

The 1930s marked the first period of large-scale road building in Mwinilunga, as motor roads were built from Solwezi via the Boma to Hillwood farm, from Kalene Hill over the Jimbe Bridge to Caianda in Angola and from Hillwood farm to Mutshatsha in Congo, linking the district to the Benguela railway. After 1945 a rapid expansion of roads and communications within the district could be witnessed, as the Boma was linked to the various chiefly capitals of Sailunga, Ntambu, Kanyama, Kakoma, Kanongesha, Chibwika and Mwinimilamba.\textsuperscript{558} The construction of these roads had a marked effect on agricultural production and on the economy in general. In 1949 the district commissioner remarked that: “All road extensions and improvements in this district have so far lead to increased [agricultural] production.”\textsuperscript{559} Road extensions were even said to have ‘revolutionised’ agriculture, as they facilitated the access to markets and thus offered an outlet for increased production.\textsuperscript{560} Roads enabled villages which were far removed from the Boma to bring in their produce for sale at the central food buying depots more easily, which stimulated the economic role

\textsuperscript{555} NAZ: SEC 2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1935.
\textsuperscript{556} NAZ: SEC 2/962, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga district tour report June 1954.
\textsuperscript{557} NAZ: SEC 2/258 Vol.I, Industries and trade, general development and improvement, December 1931.
\textsuperscript{558} NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook. To give an indication of distances – Boma to Kalene Hill: 49 miles/79 kilometres, Boma to Hillwood farm: 41 miles/66 kilometres, Boma to Sailunga: 64,4 miles/104 kilometres, Boma to Ntambu: 88 miles/142 kilometres, Boma to Kanongesha: 44,5 miles/72 kilometres, Boma to Mwinimilamba, 46,5 miles/75 kilometres, Boma to Chibwika: 27,5 miles/44 kilometres, Boma to Kakoma: 81 miles/130 kilometres, Boma to Kanyama: 54 miles/87 kilometres, Boma to Cazombo (Angola) via Jimbe: 182 miles/293 kilometres, Boma to Solwezi:183 miles/295 kilometres, Boma to Mutshatsha (Congo): 80 miles/129 kilometres, Boma to Kolwezi (Congo): 180 miles/290 kilometres.
played by the Boma. In addition, European and African traders started touring the district, some using lorries for transport, in order to buy up agricultural produce for sale at markets within and outside of the district, at the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt and in Congo. These traders also stimulated the establishment of food buying depots in central places, for instance in the various chiefly capitals, from which transport and marketing could more effectively be organised.\(^{561}\) Expansion of infrastructural facilities thus enabled even remote areas to access markets, which in turn stimulated increased agricultural production. In order to make use of these increasing opportunities, villages moved their settlements to places close to or directly along the roads (either of their own accord or in reaction to urging by the colonial government), enabling them to sell their produce to passing travellers and traders.\(^{562}\)

On a local and regional level the expansion of infrastructural facilities thus had a stimulating effect on the economy, propelling increased agricultural production. However, on a more macro level Mwinilunga district remained rather remote from the line-of-rail and major markets. Inhibitions to the marketing of goods such as cassava and maize remained and were difficult to overcome, as long distances caused transport costs to soar, necessitating a constant quest for high-value low-weight cash crops. Transport was thus somewhat of a double-edged sword, enabling local development but underlining the remote position of the district from a macro level.

**Traders, lorries and markets**

“Local people are only beginning to realise that being near a road and European traders’ stores makes it possible for them to have access to a market where they had none before.”\(^{563}\)

The argument that trade and the presence of markets could serve as incentives to occupational specialisation and increased (agricultural) production has been advanced by numerous economic theories. It has been argued that an efficient allocation of markets could enable the productive exploitation of natural resources and eventually lead to economic growth and higher levels of overall welfare.\(^{564}\) How did the presence or absence of traders and marketing facilities influence agricultural production in Mwinilunga district during the colonial period? It will be argued that marketing policies could serve to both encourage and discourage agricultural production, due to the accessibility markets and the role played by price incentives. How and in which markets did traders in Mwinilunga district operate?

**Traders**

Several distinct groups of traders existed in Mwinilunga district, namely European traders, African traders and the colonial administration. On top of this, occasional exchange and marketing of produce in neighbouring areas of Angola and Congo took place, involving contact with traders across the international boundaries. How did these distinct groups organise their trading enterprises in Mwinilunga district and which effects did this have on agricultural production?

European traders had been present in Mwinilunga district throughout the entire colonial period. During the early days of colonial rule, trading concentrated mainly on items such as rubber and ivory, but later on the focus came to lie increasingly on beeswax, and to a lesser extent honey.\(^{565}\) Also, there were several traders in the area (most notably ffolliott Fisher of Hillwood farm) who traded and sold consumer goods, such as clothes, soap, salt and cooking utensils to the local population in exchange for beeswax, honey, locally manufactured goods (mats, baskets, hoes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes, axes)

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\(^{565}\) NAZ: A 5/2/1, Loc. 4003, G.A. McGregor, Balunda sub-district annual report, 1908-09 and NAZ: SEC 2/41, Development of Mwinilunga: Benguela railway, 1937.
etc.), agricultural produce and money. The activities of these European traders expanded considerably from the 1940s onwards, and it is especially in the buying of agricultural produce that they came to play a crucial role. Once traders had obtained a food buying licence from the district administration, they would either establish a store, a (semi-permanent) food buying depot or they would send a buying capitao to collect and buy up agricultural produce from the surrounding villages. The first trading stores were opened up at the Boma, in areas where population was concentrated and in areas with high agricultural production, but during the 1950s increasingly stores were also established in more ‘remote’ areas, further removed from the Boma. The expansion of infrastructural facilities enabled traders to transport consumer goods from the Copperbelt in lorries, sell these goods in their stores to the local population and thereafter transport the agricultural produce which they had bought in return to available markets. In this sense, the expansion of transport facilities and the possibility of accessing traders and markets went hand in hand, which in turn had a stimulating effect on agricultural production, as was noted by one official: “The extension of produce buying facilities has resulted in the increased production this year of many crops. The opening of a road has awakened an interest in agriculture as a money producing occupation.”

The presence of European traders and the establishment of food buying depots encouraged the population to expand agricultural production, since a profitable outlet was provided for agricultural produce in the form of trading stores. Traders, in turn, benefitted from encouraging agricultural production and offering high prices for agricultural produce, as the money earned locally by the sale of foodstuffs was likely to be ploughed back into traders’ stores by the increased purchase of consumer goods from these stores. If the population was able to sell agricultural produce to traders, they could spend the money earned by this sale on the purchase of clothes, soap, sugar and other items from the trading stores. However, European traders were not merely attracted to trading in Mwinilunga district because of the high profits they aspired to make. As already noted, ffolliott Fisher, running a farm in the Kalene Hill area, also did business as a trader. To a certain extent, therefore, his farm and his trading activities were interconnected and mutually reinforced one another. Other farmers in the area, such as Robinson of Matonchi farm, also engaged in trading as a side-business. Furthermore, some traders were attracted to the area by transport contracts with the government, in order to supply government goods, passengers and sometimes foodstuffs to the Boma. Even though they might have different motivations, European traders handled transactions of large amounts of foodstuffs, especially during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Although foodstuffs could be bought directly from individual producers, use could also be made of intermediary traders from which goods could be bought in bulk. African traders occasionally took up the role of such intermediaries, although their activities were by no means restricted to this.

Many African traders operated on a somewhat smaller scale than their European counterparts. Due to lack of capital and transport facilities the initial establishment of African trading enterprises at times proved to be problematic, but from the 1940s onwards, nevertheless, many African traders established themselves throughout the area. Among these, there were many hawkers, collecting several pounds worth of consumer goods (usually in the range of £4 to £8) from the Copperbelt or other centres and selling these locally in exchange for agricultural produce or

573 NAZ: KSE 6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1926.
574 Sardanis, *Africa, another side of the coin*, p.27.
locally manufactured goods.\textsuperscript{576} For transport and supplies these traders used bicycle carts, and some depended on European traders to supply them with trade goods,\textsuperscript{577} which limited the scope of their activities. African traders, furthermore, played an important role in the food-buying process, acting as intermediaries for the colonial administration and for European traders. In this case African traders would handle individual transactions with agricultural producers and offer the produce in bulk to the administration or European traders.\textsuperscript{578} This function was successfully promoted by the administration and by traders themselves, to such an extent that it was stated that “African traders have practically a monopoly in the meal buying business.”\textsuperscript{579} In addition, African traders played a role in spreading trade geographically, as they established themselves in areas and villages where Europeans did not operate.\textsuperscript{580} Thus, even though the scope of their enterprises was often limited, African traders did play an important role in providing consumer goods to individuals and buying up agricultural produce from producers who would have otherwise lacked a market outlet.

Even though the colonial administration might not fall under the strict category of traders, the administration did play a considerable role in the food buying and trading process within the district. Especially once the district staff started expanding during the 1940s and 1950s, and increasing numbers of employees, road labourers, schools, dispensaries, etc. needed to be provided with food, the administration had to secure regular and steady supplies of food.\textsuperscript{581} For the provision of food supplies, the Boma either depended on direct sales from producers, or on provisions from European or African traders.\textsuperscript{582} Furthermore, a ‘Boma meal store’ was set up, where buying, storage and distribution of agricultural produce took place. One district commissioner described the importance of the Boma meal store as follows:

“The closing of the Boma meal store would disrupt the whole economy of the district. It is true to say that since it was started, the District has changed from a District of food shortages to one having a surplus for export.”\textsuperscript{583}

This was due to the fact that the administration provided a stable outlet for agricultural produce and therefore stimulated surrounding producers to increase agricultural production. As a matter of illustration, the district administration in 1962 required 90 tons of cassava, 35 tons of maize, 15 tons of beans, 15 tons of fish, 10 tons of meat, 5 tons of fruits and vegetables and 2 tons of rice for their own supplies, the majority of this being obtained from local producers.\textsuperscript{584} Furthermore, the district administration played a role in agricultural marketing by imposing buying control on traders and by agreeing and even fixing (bottom) prices for agricultural produce, in this manner regulating the marketing process.\textsuperscript{585}

Next to these trading avenues within the district, trade was occasionally conducted with neighbouring areas of Angola and Congo, sometimes via formal but at times also via less formal channels. Customs regulations and import/export control posed limits to this trade, but did not prohibit it.\textsuperscript{586} Especially during the period of protracted boom on the Congolese mines from the 1940s onwards and following the development of mining towns such as Kolwezi just across the

\textsuperscript{577}NAZ: NWP 1/2/37, Loc. 4903, D.G. Clough, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1950.
\textsuperscript{580}NAZ: SEC 2/963, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga district tour report, June 1955.
\textsuperscript{581}NAZ: SEC 2/960, K.J. Forder, Mwinilunga district tour report, June 1952.
\textsuperscript{582}NAZ: SEC 2/963, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga district tour report, June 1955.
\textsuperscript{583}Sardanis, Africa: Another side of the coin, p. 43 and p.69, NAZ: SEC2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1935.
\textsuperscript{584}NAZ: NWP 1/2/102, Loc. 4919, Department of Agriculture, North western province annual report, 1962.
\textsuperscript{586}NAZ: NWP 1/2/63, Loc. 4910, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga district tour report, August 1954.
international boundary, markets for agricultural produce from Mwinilunga district arose.\textsuperscript{587} Exports mainly consisted of cassava meal and livestock, being bought up by local traders within Mwinilunga and sold in bulk to traders in Congo, or being brought to the markets in Congo directly by individual producers and traders from Mwinilunga. In return, consumer goods, mainly goods such as cigarettes, clothes and bicycles, were imported to Mwinilunga from the Congolese line-of-rail.\textsuperscript{588} Next to this regulated trade, however, there was also a good deal of unregulated trade and smuggling going on across the international boundaries. During the early colonial days, a lively trade in rubber and ivory from Mwinilunga district with Portuguese and Angolan traders was carried on, in exchange for guns, powder, calico and liquor.\textsuperscript{589} But even in later periods, unrecorded trade went on in order to avoid custom regulations and to maximise profits. Beeswax, honey, livestock, etc. was for instance sold directly from Mwinilunga to traders in Angola and Congo, in return for which cloth and other consumer goods were obtained.\textsuperscript{590}

All in all, the presence of these various groups of traders, operating in distinct niches, served to stimulate agricultural production by providing an outlet for (surplus) agricultural produce and by making markets accessible to rural producers. However, trade and marketing could also have more ambiguous and less positive effects on agricultural production. In order to illustrate this, the influence of pricing policies and marketing slumps needs to be assessed.

*The role of price incentives and marketing slumps*

Price incentives, though not a determining factor, could influence the production and sale of certain crops.\textsuperscript{591} On the one hand, low prices could discourage the growing of (certain) crops for sale, as market production had to be profitable, at least to some extent, in order to attract agricultural producers.\textsuperscript{592} One district commissioner even recorded how people were complaining that: “the Government should put up prices if it wants us to produce more food.”\textsuperscript{593} On the other hand, offering high prices for agricultural goods could stimulate production and sale. During the 1950s, for instance, the district administration offered a disproportionately high price for groundnuts, as compared to other goods, in order to stimulate and increase their production.\textsuperscript{594} Another example is the high price offered by traders for rice in Ntambu’s and Nyakaseya’s area in order to encourage production and sale. These price incentives were successful to such an extent, that complaints were even voiced that “no attention is paid to other staple foodstuffs which are badly required for local consumption”, as attention was only given to rice cultivation.\textsuperscript{595} Next to these direct price incentives, traders sometimes offered high prices to producers in connection to the ‘back load argument’. This argument entailed that lorries coming to Mwinilunga with supplies and goods from the Copperbelt had to make a return journey in any case. Rather than returning with empty lorries, it was therefore profitable for traders to offer slightly higher prices in order to fill their lorries with back loads of agricultural produce which they could thereafter sell on the Copperbelt.\textsuperscript{596} Sardanis, one of the traders operating in Mwinilunga during the 1950s and 1960s, connected this argument to the previously mentioned one that, by offering high prices for agricultural produce people would have more money in their pockets and so spend this money in trading stores, thus benefitting the traders


\textsuperscript{589} NAZ: KSE 6/1/1, C.H. Bellis, Balunda district annual report, 1910.

\textsuperscript{590} NAZ: SEC 2/952, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga district tour report, June 1939.


\textsuperscript{592} NAZ: MAG 1/10/1, Loc.76, C.E. Johnson, Development of the North western province, 1959.

\textsuperscript{593} NAZ: SEC 2/962, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga district tour report, August 1954.

\textsuperscript{594} NAZ: SEC 2/136, R.C. Dening, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1953.


\textsuperscript{596} NAZ: SEC 2/137, Forster, North western province annual report, 1955.
in the long run. He recalled how: “it was in the interest of the trader to pay higher prices than might be economically prudent in order to secure return loads and in the knowledge that he would get that money back as sales in his shop.”

However, prices were not solely dependent on traders and the district administration but were connected to factors such as transport costs, consumer demands, national and even international pricing policies, which all posed certain limitations to the profitability of producing crops for sale in Mwinilunga district. For instance, due to high transport costs and the discriminating policies of the Maize Marketing Board (and later the Grain Marketing Board), the marketing of agricultural produce from Mwinilunga district on the Copperbelt markets was severely curtailed, as in most cases it proved to be unprofitable. However, even these apparent impediments could be circumvented, as will be shown in the following section, and in this especially the quest for low-weight, high-value cash crops played a crucial role.

Even though various markets for (surplus) agricultural produce were found during the (late) colonial period, the problem of volatility and instability of markets remained. Whereas within the district there was a more or less steady demand, from the Boma, missions, schools, etc., which stimulated increased production, the markets outside of the district were far more unstable. Throughout the colonial period marketing possibilities in Congo (mainly for livestock and cassava), Solwezi (for cassava and maize), Barotseland (for cassava) and the Copperbelt (for various produce such as maize, cassava, millet, sorghum, rice and livestock) appeared, but none of these markets provided long-term stability. Even though there would be a large demand for foodstuffs at these markets initially, this demand would often collapse or disappear equally suddenly and a marketing slump would follow, sometimes leaving producers with large amounts of unsold agricultural produce. The instability of markets, thus, could be a major ‘stopcock’ to increased agricultural production.

One district commissioner complained about this fact, by blaming the matter on an African lack of ‘business sense’, by saying that: “The growers do not understand such things as market fluctuations and tend to despair when the price and demand fall and blame Government for their effort in encouraging increased production.”

Even though marketing slumps and a fall in prices could indeed discourage the production of crops in following years and could even lead to general food shortages, what is perhaps more remarkable and deserves further investigation is how rapidly and readily producers reacted to newly arising marketing possibilities, even after an initial period of slump. In order to look at this development, two examples will now be presented of relative agricultural ‘boom’ within Mwinilunga district, one being the trade in agricultural produce with the Copperbelt in the late 1940s and early 1950s and the other being the development of Chief Ntambu’s area as a major crop producer from the 1940s onwards.

The Copperbelt within reach

Ever since its initial development during the 1924-29 period, the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt rapidly and progressively expanded output and production, due to the large international demand for copper. Even though the influence of the worldwide economic depression was painfully felt in the early 1930s, as copper prices plummeted and several mines stopped operations, production resumed within several years and rapidly increased thereafter, especially during and after the Second

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597 Sardanis, Africa: Another side of the coin, p.105.
600 NAZ: SEC 2/962, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga district tour report, August 1954.
602 Several examples can be given of instances in which the fall in prices and the disappearance of markets led to the diminished production or even complete abandonment of certain crops. Examples are provided by the fluctuations in rice production in Ntambu and Nyakaseya areas during the 1950s, and the decline in cassava production after several years of extensive sales to Congo markets in the late 1950s.
World War. This expansion of mining enterprise necessitated both increased amounts of labour and food for workers' rations, as the number of African employees on the copper mines rose from 5,000 in 1925 to 30,000 in 1930 and peaked at 38,000 in 1964. Vickery argued that the Copperbelt “had a dramatic impact on the country’s foodstuffs market”. Whereas previously territorial markets had been largely absent and export had been confined to the Katangese markets in Congo, with the rise of the Copperbelt internal demands for food soared. Although during the earlier years of operation on the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt, and especially during the slump of the early 1930s, occasional overproduction of agricultural produce (and particularly maize, which became the staple crop of the Copperbelt population) had still occurred, during the 1939-53 period all produce could be consumed internally and recourse even had to be taken to costly food imports, as demands outstripped supplies.

In order to assure a steady and cheap supply of food to the mines, the Maize Control Board was set up in 1935 by the colonial administration, handling sales to consumers, setting prices and overseeing all imports and exports of maize on the Copperbelt. The Maize Control Board underlined the growing dualism between black producers and white settler farmers who had established themselves along the line-of-rail, as whites consistently fetched higher prices and received a disproportionately large market share for their produce. Government interference in marketing and pricing increased further, as in 1942 a policy of fixed prices for maize marketed at the line-of-rail selling depots was instituted, in order to stimulate maize production by both white settlers and small-scale African producers. Favourable treatment towards white production continued, however, as African producers received less than the fixed price for their produce. In addition to this, the government in effect began subsidising cheap food supplies to the mines and urban areas, by selling maize to consumers at prices lower than those guaranteed to producers. Interference in pricing and marketing increased even further as next to maize, also prices of sorghum, millet, beans and groundnuts were regulated at the line-of-rail selling depots after 1945.

Even though the effects of the Maize Control Board and other marketing and pricing regulations slowly pattered out in districts removed from the line-of-rail, except when produce was marketed directly on the Copperbelt, the increased demand for agricultural produce could be felt throughout the whole of Northern Rhodesia. In spite of the fact that Mwinilunga district was 306 miles removed from the line-of-rail, and transport costs therefore seemed to pose a clear impediment towards profitable exports of agricultural produce, such exports nevertheless became an established fact, especially during the 1947-51 period. Pritchett described how “European farmers (...) could not meet the sudden increased demand of the boom economy [on the Copperbelt mines] of the late 1940s and early 1950s. The mine owners, in desperation, sent out trucks to scour the countryside for surplus food to feed their African workers.” Part of the necessary food supplies could be found in Mwinilunga district and therefore it will be examined how the trade between Mwinilunga and the Copperbelt developed, which shape it took and how it was eventually transformed after several years.

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610 NAZ: Mutende, No. 220, June 1946.
As late as 1949 the district commissioner still regretted that “the distance from Mwinilunga to the Copperbelt markets would appear to rule out all hope of transporting agricultural surpluses to the labour centres. This may be discouraging, but the economics of the matter cannot be entirely ignored.”

In spite of these problems, from 1947 onwards an attempt was made by European traders (especially by Fisher and Ritchie) to lift impediments and export foodstuffs from Mwinilunga to the line-of-rail. The chosen route was to transport produce from the northwest of the district by road to Mutshatsha in Congo, in order to export it from there via the Belgian Congo railway to Ndola, where the produce could be bought up by the Maize Control Board. Via this route in 1947 30 tons of maize and 10 tons of rice were sold and in 1949 120 tons of cassava, 45 tons of maize, 30 tons of millet and 30 tons of sorghum were marketed. This trade received support from the district administration, as administrators actively encouraged increased production of maize, cassava, beans and rice, and in addition negotiated tariff and rail agreements with the Belgian authorities.

However, already in the 1950-51 agricultural season it became apparent that exports of this type could not be sustained. Transport costs were too high and the maize which arrived at Ndola was badly affected by weevils. Produce was even left to rot at Mutshatsha due to lack of marketing opportunities. In 1951 a short-term solution to the problem was found when a Greek trader, Raftopoulos, proved willing to buy up all surplus cassava from Mwinilunga, providing his own transport. In the long run, however, it became apparent that low-value bulk goods, such as cassava and maize, could not be profitably exported to the line-of-rail and therefore lacked a large-scale market. Limited exports of higher valued goods, such as rice, beans, groundnuts, sorghum and millet to the Copperbelt continued by road, though, mainly in the form of backloads of European traders’ lorries.

This short interlude of large-scale exports from Mwinilunga to the Copperbelt can serve to illustrate several points. For one, it illustrates that the geographical remoteness of Mwinilunga district from the Copperbelt could not be simply or completely overcome. Even though a high demand existed on the Copperbelt, and a supply of cassava and maize was available in Mwinilunga district, this supply was not put to effective use due to high transport costs and geographical impediments. Only higher-valued goods could stand the cost of transport and still then only in the form of backloads of otherwise empty lorries. Secondly, this case illustrates the volatility of markets. Whereas during the late 1940s producers in Mwinilunga had been encouraged to expand production, in the early 1950s they discovered that the market was no longer available, and they were forced to seek other outlets for their produce, which could be highly discouraging.

However, one important question remains unanswered, and that is how such large quantities of food could be produced in the first place. How is it possible that producers in Mwinilunga district were able to expand their production, rather suddenly, and provide a marketable surplus of more than 100 tons of cassava, on top of the existing requirements within the district? It is towards the answering of this pivotal question that the final part of this chapter will be geared, but first one other example of relative agricultural success will be presented, namely the case of Ntambu chiefdom.

Ntambu – The land of plenty

“The area [Ntambu] is agriculturally one of the most advanced in the District and grows a great diversity of crops (...) Some of the farms visited were outstandingly well tended and productive and deserve all possible help and encouragement [from the administration and agricultural officials].”

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617 NAZ: NWP 1/2/37, Loc. 4903, D. Clough, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1950.
Ntambu chiefdom, located in the southeast of the district along the Kabompo River, came to be one of the most agriculturally productive areas of the district during the 1950s and 1960s. Whereas during earlier periods complaints were occasionally voiced against the low productivity of the area, and food shortages were even reported, the potential of the area was nevertheless recognised at an early stage. The proximity of the Kabompo River, the alluvial plains, and the presence of pockets of rich red soil all seemed to provide favourable conditions to agricultural production.

The main factors limiting agricultural production in Ntambu prior to the 1940s seemed to be its geographically remote position, and connected to this the difficulty of accessing markets. Ntambu’s capital was 88 miles, or 142 kilometres, removed from the Boma and markets closer at hand were largely absent. This caused agricultural production to be mainly geared towards satisfying local needs and occasionally bartering surpluses with neighbouring areas in Angola or Congo. The lack of outlets for agricultural produce discouraged the production of large surpluses, as these could not be disposed of. Even though the large variety and general abundance of crops grown in the area of Ntambu was noted by the colonial administration, complaints were voiced that better use was not made of this:

“Ntambo’s was much like other areas of Mwinilunga i.e. “in a state of rather indolent contentment typical of the general pace of progress of the Alunda” (…) The Kabompo provides a large supply of fish and there is a great demand both at the Boma and at Missions in Mwinilunga for dried fish – a demand which has not by any means been met; cassava grows exceptionally well and when the normal sources of cassava in the northwest of Mwinilunga [surrounding Kalene Hill] were failing to produce adequate supplies as happened in early 1939 the inhabitants of Ntambo’s could have easily disposed of their large surpluses.”

The market at the Boma for cassava was rather unstable and remote, and therefore did not invoke increased production. Thus, the potential riches of Ntambu’s area were left unutilised, as transport and marketing both posed major difficulties.

This situation started to change rather rapidly after 1945, though. Once a new road link between Solwezi and Mwinilunga was opened which provided a connection to Ntambu’s area, and in addition two European trading stores were established in the area, agricultural production was greatly stimulated and increased subsequently. Agricultural encouragement was also given by the establishment of school gardens, the presence of an agricultural demonstrator, the distribution of groundnut and rice seeds and propaganda by the Native Authority and Chief Ntambu. This sequence of events clearly shows how the different factors of infrastructure, marketing and technical assistance were intricately bound together and effected agricultural expansion in conjunction with one another:

“Apparent natural advantages together with the undoubted encouragement given by two local European traders has made Ntambo’s a promising crop producing area (…) since the opening of a road link, in 1947-48, between Chief Ntambo’s area and the main Mwinilunga-Solwezi road, the local European traders (Messrs. T. Ritchie and ffolliott Fisher) have found it worthwhile to export varying quantities of the local produce to the line of rail. These surpluses are bought through the traders’ own stores and transported to the Copperbelt in their own lorries (…) Great encouragement has been given to rice growing and plots have been doubled in many cases for next years’ crop. There are also many new growers, some of them the more enterprising growers from other areas (…) Traders have found it economic to buy even cowpeas and beans for export. The exporting of maize or cassava, except perhaps to the Boma or Solwezi, is unthinkable except in times of famine on the line (…) An increasing

624 NAZ: KSE 4/1, Mwinilunga district notebook.
625 Interview with Mrs. Alfonsina Chingangu, October 15th 2008, Ntambu.
626 NAZ: SEC 2/954, C.M.N. White, Mwinilunga district tour report, February 1939.
amount of cash is circulating in the area – from trader to cultivator and, at present, back into the traders’ stores.”

The establishment of trading stores and central buying depots where people could individually market their agricultural produce strongly encouraged increased agricultural production. Special attention was given to rice production, as the seasonally flooded plains along the Kabompo River were particularly well suited to this. The cultivated area and output of rice, as noted above, doubled within a single year. The problem, however, was that initially the quality of the rice was low, as methods of hand hulling were rather rough, leading to a high percentage of broken kernels, and in addition the rice seeds were not of a pure but of a mixed strain, causing the rice to be classed as low-grade. In spite of this, rice became the main cash crop of the area and was preferred to groundnuts, which were propagated by the colonial administration. Even though groundnut seeds were distributed on a large scale and agricultural demonstrators promoted the growing of the crop, groundnuts did not meet with widespread success, due to the ill-conceived methods of planting which led to low yields, the heavy labour demands of the crop and because of the low prices offered for groundnuts in comparison to rice.

In spite of the increased agricultural production in Ntambu, several difficulties remained. One of these was the limited technological basis of agricultural production. Hoes and axes remained the main agricultural implements which were used in cultivation, and this caused agricultural expansion to be dependent on increased labour inputs, which were limited. Cultivation continued to be highly labour intensive, which limited agricultural output, as labour was increasingly becoming scarce due to the high rates of labour migration out of the district. Furthermore, in spite of improved infrastructure, transport remained a problem. Transport costs to the major markets limited the range of marketable produce, as low-graded rice could not compete on the Copperbelt markets with rice produced in areas closer to the line-of-rail. In addition to this market and price fluctuations inhibited an assured outlet for agricultural produce. Market availability and the prices paid for rice proved highly unstable, as traders could offer high prices one year, but refuse to buy the crop in the next year, which could discourage producers from growing the crop. When the prices paid for producers for the rice crop started falling after 1955, the district commissioner commented that: “The main grievance at present is the lack of markets for rice”, and he continued to say that because of the low prices, “many producers are threatening to stop producing.” It can therefore be stated that even though Ntambu area provided a relative success story within Mwinilunga district, as agricultural production increased rapidly from the 1940s onwards, this increase remained subject to limitations and was neither unconditional nor stable. Arguably one of the main limiting factors to increased agricultural production was the availability of labour, to which attention will now be paid.

Seeking the bright lights – Labour migration and the impact on agricultural production

A frequently expressed view, advanced among others by Pritchett, is that labour migration caused agricultural crisis as it “siphoned off much male labor, impoverishing village life.” As has been described previously, labour migration from Mwinilunga district to mining areas in Congo, and later on the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt, was a common practice and increased over time. Whereas in 1935 7.5% of the taxable male population was reported to be at work outside of the district, this

630 Interview with Mr. Jonas Luvey, October 11th 2008, Ntambu.
631 NAZ: NWP 1/2/65, Loc.4910, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga district tour report, November 1954.
633 Interview with Mr. Helford Masamba, October 9th 2008, Ntambu.
number rose to 21% in 1947, 33% in 1952 and even 56% in 1960. Colonial officials, while on the one hand promoting labour migration as a means to earn tax money, also voiced concerns against the practice: “The mines can’t ‘have it both ways’, that is have cheap labour and at the same time expect an abundance of cheap food from the villages which they have depopulated.” Emphasis was placed on male absenteeism and the supposedly deleterious effects this had on agricultural production and the make-up of the village: “there is a lack of men [who left for the mines] which seriously impairs the village labour force. I frequently met old men and hungry women and children in the same community as possessed miles of good but uncultivated land.”

These views of disruption and even breakdown do not seem to be in congruence with the fact that, whereas large numbers of men (but also women) were leaving the district to seek employment at the mines, agriculture in fact boomed and production in Mwinilunga increased rapidly during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. While some colonial officials complained about the lack of ‘able bodied men’ in the villages, others noted that in spite of large-scale absenteeism there were relatively few outward signs of disorganisation in the villages. How can sense be made of these radically opposing views, of disruption on the one hand and boom on the other, especially once the fact that labour was one of the main inputs and bottlenecks of agricultural production is taken into regard? By analysing census data, the dominant stereotypes of the migrant labourer and by looking at the motivations of people to move away from their villages, an attempt will be made to assess the effects of labour migration on agricultural production and to counter the view of labour migration as necessarily being in contradiction to increased agricultural production.

**Challenging received wisdom**

The census data presented above, indicating the percentages of taxable men at work outside of the district, have to be carefully examined. It is difficult to assess the accuracy of these figures. Cases in which people reported to be ‘at work’ while they were in fact avoiding tax payment by hiding in the bush or by visiting relatives, are numerous. People found various means to deceive the tax registrar, by using false names, claiming to have paid taxes across the border, etc. Even though the accuracy of individual percentages can be doubted, the general trend of increasing labour migration nevertheless clearly stands out. How can this increasing out-migration from the district, and thus a loss of labour force in agricultural production, be reconciled with increased agricultural production? Perhaps these figures make more sense if the increasing numbers of labour migrants are linked to the simultaneous population increase and immigration into the district from Angola and Congo. As has been outlined in the first chapter, population numbers in Mwinilunga district increased from 10,866 in 1920 to 42,781 in 1962, indicating a quadruplication of the population, although these census figures once again cannot be taken at face value. Nevertheless, population increase and immigration did occur and immigration from Angola and Congo intensified due to political instability in those areas. Therefore, increasing out-migration might have been balanced, to a certain extent, by a general rise in population numbers and a degree of immigration. This, in turn, could have meant that the loss of labour force due to the trend of increasing labour migration was less dramatic than is suggested by merely looking at the percentages of absent males.

Moreover, the dominant view of the young male migrant going to the mines by himself, leaving his wife and children behind in the village, needs to be nuanced. Whereas colonial

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642 NAZ: NWP 1/2/17, R.C. Dening, Mwinilunga district tour report, October 1947.
643 Ferguson, “Mobile workers, modernist narratives”, p.387-388.
documents did not register the numbers of female migrants, women and even children did move to the mining centres, either accompanying their husbands and fathers or going of their own accord. Informants often presented the view that married men would make the initial move to the mining centres alone, but after having decided to remain in the urban areas for a longer period of time and (semi)permanently settle there, they would soon return to their villages to take their wives and children with them to town. The view of labour migration as depopulating villages of young men, leaving only bunches of women, children and old men behind is therefore not necessarily accurate. Labour migration could be, and often was a family strategy, as even in the case of unmarried men and women the broader family network influenced the decision to migrate. Even though it is possible and even probable that larger numbers of men than women migrated out of Mwinilunga, the sex ratio of those remaining in Mwinilunga need not have become extremely disproportionate. Furthermore, if male labour in agriculture was scarce, women could make use of various strategies, such as relying on kin and hosting work parties to compensate the deficit of male labour in tasks such as tree cutting and heavy hoeing. Also, it has to be noted that many of the agricultural products which were regarded as cash crops during this period, such as rice, groundnuts and vegetables, were predominantly if not exclusively grown by women in streamside gardens, and could thus be grown relatively independent of male labour inputs. The production of these cash crops, which increased so rapidly from the 1940s onwards, had thus always depended more on female than on male labour, the lack of male labour being most heavily felt in the production of sorghum, millet and cassava.

In addition, the view of the predominantly short-term and circular nature of labour migration needs to be reconsidered. Colonial officials often presented the motives behind labour migration as being merely to earn tax money, and perhaps additionally buy some elementary goods such as clothes, pots and pans. In order to do this, short contracts of a few months would suffice, after which labour migrants would presumably return to their villages and resume life as before. Even though this type of short-term migration in which people returned to their home villages after several months did occur, especially during the earlier periods of the 1920s and 1930s, it was neither the only nor the dominant form of labour migration. In the 1950s an estimate was made that on average migrants spent four years away, some even staying away permanently and not returning to their home villages. Furthermore, it was noted that contact and remittances between migrants and the home community were often erratic and sometimes even non-existent. Migration, therefore, appears as not only a short-term strategy to earn tax money by single men, but also as a more long-term practice involving whole family units.

It could be argued that short-term circular migration by men was potentially more disruptive of agricultural production than long-term migration in which whole families took part, even though an extensive grey area of different forms of labour migration existed between these two (somewhat simplistic) typologies. As has been argued previously, agricultural production was mainly organised on an individual and household level. Household units often co-operated internally in agricultural production, men and women complementing and assisting one another in various tasks. If men were absent, household production was likely to suffer, as women and children would be deprived of male labour inputs. If however, whole household units were absent this did affect the village structure as a whole, but did not significantly disrupt the production of other households within the village. Households were not structurally dependent on one another for agricultural production, though they could benefit from each other’s presence by mutual co-operation. Furthermore, it could be argued that short-term migration was likely to be more disruptive of agricultural production than long-term

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646 Ferguson, “Mobile workers, modernist narratives”, p.395.
647 NAZ: KSE 6/1/6, G. Hughes-Chamberlain, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1929.
migration. Re-establishing agricultural production after a period of absence could be rather cumbersome, as new fields had to be cleared and worked and it could take a considerable amount of time before new fields yielded any produce. Several short-term migratory trips involved having to embark on this potentially problematic process frequently, whereas if migration was on a long-term basis new fields only had to be opened up once, upon return.

Labour migration could be viewed as an alternative, though sometimes complementary, strategy to agricultural production, adopted by individuals or entire families for longer or shorter periods of time. Labour migration did not necessarily have to be disruptive of agricultural production and could even contribute to its development by remittances and money investments in agriculture made by migrant labourers. Even though agricultural production expanded rapidly from the 1940s onwards, the markets for agricultural produce were neither unlimited nor stable. Therefore labour migration was adopted as an alternative strategy, in the hope of securing a steady income and in order to avoid the volatility of agricultural production and marketing. How did the two strategies of agricultural production and labour migration interact?

Motives for labour migration
Labour migration, far from being a simple expression of the desire to earn tax money, was underlain by a complex set of motivations. An important motive to resort to labour migration was indeed the variety of monetary needs and requirements. Next to purchasing basic consumer goods, such as clothing, pots and pans, many people made larger purchases, such as bicycles, furniture, hoes, axes and even livestock. Furthermore, money was increasingly required to pay for school fees and hospital visits, among other things. Money transactions even penetrated social relations, as money was starting to be used to pay for doctoring and curative ceremonies, marriage payments, births, funerals and initiation ceremonies, but was also used as an expression of social prestige and for the hosting of work parties. However, the choice for labour migration was often motivated by a complex interplay of various factors, going beyond mere monetary concerns. Each individual migrant had different and sometimes highly personal motives to migrate to industrial centres. Life in urban centres held various attractions, as it offered excitement due to the presence of beerhalls, tea rooms and other facilities, all of which in the eyes of colonial administrators appealed to the “village African.” In the cities people, next to seeking monetary income, were arguably also seeking the “bright lights”, progress and prosperity, in order to escape from “village boredom.”

Labour migration offered prospects of an assured, steady income, whereas the income from agricultural production was sometimes more uncertain, as markets were limited and rather unstable. To which long-term uses was the income earned from labour migration put, once and if migrants returned to rural areas, and could this income in any way benefit or advance agricultural production? Turner and Turner, studying the area of Mwinilunga in the late 1950s, sketched the following picture of returning migrants:

“Many of the migrants purchase the standing-crop in gardens rather than wait for eighteen months for the cassava crop to mature. Some migrants are beginning to start small ‘businesses’ with their savings. Some buy sewing machines and set up as tailors, others start ‘tea-rooms’ on the motor roads, and others again become hawkers and small traders.”

They, thus, proposed the view that returning migrants relied more on trade and small business enterprises, than directly on agricultural production. However, even these small businesses and trade

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651 Interview with Headman Kazovu and Headman Kashiku, September 12th 2008, Kanongesha.
652 Interview with Mr. Tedson Kanjima, October 12th 2008, Ntambu.
653 NAZ: KSE 6/1/6, G. Hughes-Chamberlain, Mwinilunga sub-district annual report, 1929.
could advance agricultural production, by increasing the circulation of goods, among which were also agricultural products. Furthermore, money earned from labour migration was at times ploughed back into agriculture, by purchasing hoes, axes or even by investing in livestock husbandry on a small scale. Therefore, it becomes apparent that agricultural production and labour migration, instead of being radically opposed and conflicting with one another, could go hand in hand and could even prove to be mutually beneficial. The proposition to view labour migration and agricultural production as separate yet interconnected strategies will be further advanced in the following section, when an attempt will be made to explain the increase of agricultural production in spite of labour bottlenecks.

‘Cash crops’ and ‘forgotten crops’
Whereas the first part of this chapter has served to illustrate the factors which could stimulate and enable the increase of agricultural production, this enabling environment in itself does not yet explain how individuals were able to expand agricultural output in the first place. One important explanatory factor must be sought in the repertoire of crops which was grown by individuals and households. Even though mention has already been made of various ‘cash crops’ and ‘subsistence crops’, these deserve closer attention. The production of crops for sale received much attention from the colonial administration as well as from traders, who stimulated the development of ‘cash crops’. This could lead to the relative neglect of (some) ‘subsistence’ crops, making them into ‘forgotten crops’, as their cultivation did not receive technical assistance or encouragement by positive price incentives. However, it will be argued here that there was in fact not always a clear-cut distinction between cash crops and subsistence crops. Crops grown for ‘subsistence’ could be, and often were, marketed, whereas crops grown for the market were frequently also consumed as food locally. Furthermore, the production of a wide array and combination of subsistence food crops could serve as a basis which enabled the production of cash crops, as subsistence crops provided food and could free up labour for other tasks within or outside of agriculture. Tosh, in his article on the “Cash-crop revolution”, has argued that the production of food crops for sale was potentially less disruptive of existing agricultural patterns than the production of non-food cash crops, such as cotton and tobacco. He argued that “(…) the staple food crop could be marketed, then the tricky problem of how to distribute labour at times of peak demand was greatly eased.” This argument could also be applied to the case of Mwinilunga, as most crops which were produced for the market could also be used as a source of food, whereas cassava, the main source of food, was also marketed in large quantities. This, however, does not mean that the co-existence of cash crops and subsistence crops was always harmonious. In order to illustrate the relationship between cash crops and subsistence crops, the two categories first have to be illuminated for the specific case of Mwinilunga district.

Cash crops
Throughout the entire colonial period, but especially from the 1940s onwards, the colonial administration made a concerted effort to find remunerative cash crops, the cultivation of which was further stimulated by the presence of various traders in the district. The range of possible cash crops was conditioned by environmental factors, as explained in the first chapter, but also by consumer demand and by profitability, which was in turn influenced by factors such as pricing policies, transport and production costs. The production and cultivation of various cash crops was attempted throughout the colonial period in Mwinilunga district, with varying degrees of success. Experiments were conducted with for instance coffee, castor oil seed, fruit and vegetable cultivation and marketing. The focus here, however, will be on three specific cash crops, namely maize, groundnuts and rice, as they came to play a particularly important role in the area. In addition, something will be said about livestock, cattle and fish farming which were all three closely related to

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659 Interview with Mr. Frank Kafolesha, September 24th 2008, Nyakaseya.
661 For indications of crop sales during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, see Appendix II.
agricultural production and received particular attention during the 1950s and 1960s. How were these cash crops produced and marketed and how did their production fit into general patterns of agriculture prevailing in the area?

Maize cultivation in the district changed considerably throughout the colonial period. The crop developed from being grown primarily as a subsidiary vegetable crop, intercropped with cassava in the same field, to becoming a staple grain crop, marketed in large quantities and increasingly grown as a single crop in dambo fields. As the population living near the Boma and the various mission stations, such as civil servants and mission employees, gradually started to replace cassava by maize meal, the demand for the crop increased and large amounts of maize could be marketed within the district. In addition to this, maize found a limited market outside of the district, for instance in neighbouring Solwezi district and on the Copperbelt markets during the 1940s and 1950s. Next to the fact that maize could be readily marketed, maize production was also encouraged by the colonial administration and by Native Authorities, who regarded the crop as a more nutritious alternative to cassava, and therefore gave technical assistance to maize cultivation. However, environmental factors limited the viability of maize cultivation in Mwinilunga. The high rainfall in the area, combined with the specific soil characteristics, caused maize yields to remain low and the crop to be of generally poor quality. In spite of these limitations, maize production in the area increased. Producing maize as a cash crop did not necessarily entail a dramatic shift in previous patterns of production or agricultural methods. Maize continued to be intercropped with cassava, but even if the crop was grown in separate dambo fields this did not necessarily mean a serious addition of tasks or a change in methods of cultivation. Dambo fields would be opened up and cultivated, even if maize was not grown as a cash crop on them. The cultivation of maize for sale in many cases mainly meant that the scale of production was expanded, and with the general availability of cultivable land this but rarely posed a problem. Furthermore, the fact that maize was also consumed locally as a food crop meant that if the demand for maize suddenly fell, the harvest could be used as food and need not go to waste. This meant that maize production for sale was predominantly dependent on increased labour inputs and on an expansion of scale, which was not always simple as will be illustrated in following sections, but did not require a dramatic overhaul of existing agricultural practices.

Groundnuts presented a somewhat different case. Their production was promoted by the colonial government, because the nuts were high in calorie and protein content. In addition, the cultivation of groundnuts was promoted because of the global fats and oils shortage after the Second World War, which could be alleviated by large-scale groundnut cultivation. The crop had a market within the district, as a relish crop for government employees, and if production could be organised on a sufficiently large scale, exports to the Copperbelt and even overseas markets were possible, as demand was large. However, groundnut cultivation met with various difficulties. Most notably, the crop produced ‘pops’, meaning that empty shells, containing poorly developed nuts or even no nuts at all, appeared on the plant. Later on it was discovered that the occurrence of pops was caused by a calcium deficiency in the soil, but ill-conceived planting techniques also played a role in the poor yields and quality of the crop. In order for groundnuts to prosper, the crop needed to be planted in separate fields, preferably of freshly burnt virgin forest, or otherwise of fertile clayey red soils. Because the groundnut crop depleted soil nutrients rapidly, fields had to be shifted every year.

666 Muliokela, Zambia seed technology handbook, p.149.
667 Correspondence with Mr. Phiri, October 2008, Chibwika.
670 Correspondence with Mr. Ambrose Musanda, September-October 2008, Mwinilunga.
671 Muliokela, Zambia seed technology handbook, p.188.
Initially, groundnut cultivators in Mwinilunga district lacked knowledge and therefore practiced planting techniques which lead to poor performance of the crop, as groundnuts were intercropped with cassava, maize, etc. Nevertheless groundnut cultivation continued to be promoted. Seeds were distributed by the administration and Native Authorities, in addition to which agricultural demonstrators assisted cultivators with technical advice and traders offered high prices for the crop. In spite of this encouragement, groundnut cultivation did not develop on a large scale within the district and the crop did not become very popular among the population. Perhaps this lack of appeal can be attributed to the fact that groundnut cultivation, in order to be successful, required a rather cumbersome reorganisation of the existing labour patterns and the clearing of a new field which made heavy demands on labour inputs. On top of this, in spite of the positive price incentives given to groundnut production by the colonial administration and by various traders, the price of groundnuts relative to the other major cash crop in the area, namely rice, remained low (whereas in 1952 rice was bought from producers for 4d-6d a lb, groundnuts were bought for only 2d-3d a lb, although the price was raised to 4d a lb in 1954). In the late 1950s, when groundnut production gradually started increasing, another blow was dealt to its production, as a levy of 1,5d per lb was imposed on groundnuts exported to the Copperbelt. Traders acknowledged the fact that this levy and the low prices paid for groundnuts discouraged production, as Sardanis said that: “at the proposed price and the prevailing yields farmers could no longer make a living out of groundnuts,” and crop sales decreased once again.

Rice cultivation, on the other hand, even though it was highly labour intensive and perhaps the most strenuous addition to existing patterns of agriculture, proved to be rather successful and popular. Rice could not be grown throughout the whole of Mwinilunga district, but only in the seasonally flooded dambo fields, predominantly found in the areas of chief Nyakaseya and Ntambu. In these areas rice production was eventually developed on a large scale and rice became a major cash crop. In order to cultivate rice, the land first had to be cleared and thereafter worked with hoes to remove all the grass and roots, which were subsequently burnt to fertilise the soil. Thereafter the rice was sown and the seedlings were transplanted and dug into the land. After the rice was sown birds had to be scared off the crop and after harvesting hand-hulling was necessary in order to remove the husks off the grains. Thus, the whole process of rice cultivation was highly demanding in terms of labour inputs and required the adoption of new agricultural techniques and methods of cultivation. Rice cultivation required the clearing and opening up of separate fields and entailed tasks which could not be easily integrated with the cultivation of other crops, such as cassava, millet and maize. Nevertheless, rice cultivation was developed on a large scale in Nyakaseya and Ntambu areas, possibly due to the positive price incentives offered by traders, enabled because of the high demand for rice on the Copperbelt markets. Rice was one of the few crops in Mwinilunga district which were grown mainly for marketing purposes, as internal consumption of the crop was low and rice was not consumed as a major food staple by the local population. In spite of this, and in spite of the high labour demands of the crop, rice production proved to be a profitable undertaking and developed on a large scale.

In addition to these cash crops, livestock, cattle and fish farming received ample attention from colonial (veterinary) officials throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Livestock, cattle and fish were promoted as they could add protein to the local diet and because there was a large market for these goods both in Congo and on the Copperbelt. Various schemes were put in place in order to

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672 NAZ: NWP 1/2/37, Loc. 4903, D.G. Clough, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1950.
674 Sardanis, Africa: Another side of the coin, p.139.
675 NAZ: NWP 1/2/33, D.G. Clough, Mwinilunga district tour report, October 1950.
676 Interview with Mr. Benja Sampoeko, October 9th 2008, Ntambu.
678 NAZ: NWP 1/2/33, K. Duff-White, Mwinilunga district tour report, October 1950.
stimulate animal husbandry and introduce improved breeds. Improved poultry, goat and sheep breeds were distributed and cattle rearing was promoted, at first only under chiefs but thereafter also among other villagers. This resulted in the fact that in 1963 558 head of cattle were owned by the local population in Mwinilunga district. In addition to this numerous fish ponds were constructed, dug and stocked, amounting to a total of 285 fish ponds in 1963.\(^{680}\) Animal husbandry and fish farming schemes proved to be highly popular and participation in these schemes was eagerly sought after. Next to the fact that meat and fish could be readily marketed, animal husbandry and fish farming could easily be integrated into existing patterns of agricultural production. Labour demands for agriculture and animal husbandry did not clash, and in many cases a gendered division of labour arose wherein men focused on animal husbandry and fish farming whereas women focused more on agricultural production. This was also due to the fact that colonial schemes for improved animal husbandry mainly targeted men and largely excluded women, whereas animal husbandry had previously been a task in which both men and women had participated.\(^{681}\) The two enterprises of animal husbandry and agriculture could even be mutually beneficial, if animal manure and draught power were adopted in agricultural production. However, this development was only starting to take place in the 1960s and still then not on a large scale.\(^{682}\) Additional motives for engaging in animal husbandry existed, as animals were viewed as a store of wealth and rearing animals could lead to social prestige, as has been described previously.\(^{683}\)

Motives for cash crop production ranged from price incentives given by traders or government and general marketability of a crop, to technical assistance offered by the colonial administration, but also included factors such as labour concerns and suitability of a crop to prevailing environmental conditions. Labour concerns in this regard were particularly important. As has been shown, many of the marketed crops such as maize but also livestock, cattle and fish farming could be readily integrated into existing patterns of agriculture. Rice and groundnuts proved to be a different case, though, as they required large amounts of extra labour input and changes in existing agricultural production patterns. How was cash crop production integrated with the production of ‘subsistence crops’?

Forgotten crops

Colonial officials occasionally expressed concern regarding the fact that cash crop production could lead to the neglect of subsistence cultivation, possibly causing a decline in the quality and diversity of the local diet and leading to a general scarcity of food.\(^{684}\) This concern did not seem to be well-founded, though. During interviews respondents recalled food security increasing progressively throughout the colonial period and even in colonial documents the general abundance and variety of available foodstuffs was often mentioned during the 1950s and 1960s, when cash crop production was at its peak.\(^{685}\) However, cash crop production did lead to a relative neglect of subsistence crops by agricultural officials and the colonial administration. Whereas rice, groundnut and coffee production received technical assistance and support, cassava cultivation was not encouraged by the same means. Some new strains and varieties of cassava were introduced from Congo, but cassava, millet and sorghum did not receive the same concerted attention as the cash crops mentioned in the previous section.\(^{686}\) Therefore arguably, staple food crops (to a certain extent) became ‘forgotten crops’, suffering from a lack of attention from both traders and the colonial government.

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\(^{681}\) Interview with Mrs. Yesta Muyutu, October 9\(^{th}\) 2008, Ntambu.

\(^{682}\) NAP: NWP 1/2/102, Loc.4919, H.T. Bayldon, North western province annual report, 1962.

\(^{683}\) NAP: SEC 2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1937.

\(^{684}\) NAP: NWP 1/2/33, D.G. Clough, Mwinilunga district tour report, October 1950.


In spite of the rather rigid separation adopted until now between ‘cash crops’ and ‘subsistence crops’, the two categories could in many cases not be clearly distinguished. Beans, similarly to maize, to a certain extent straddled the boundary between subsistence and cash crops. Beans had been grown in the area of Mwinilunga since long before the establishment of colonial rule, and were consumed locally in large quantities. The colonial administration, next to seeing beans as a subsistence crop, also promoted their cultivation and development as a cash crop. Bean seeds were distributed via Native Authorities and technical assistance was given to their cultivation by agricultural demonstrators. In addition high prices were offered by traders for beans, causing production to increase. However, it was not only the dividing line between cash crops and subsistence crops which proved to be blurred and potentially misleading.

When analysed closely the terms ‘subsistence crop’ and ‘cash crop’ proved to be problematic and misleading themselves. Cassava, millet and sorghum, next to being staples were in fact also cash crops, produced in large quantities and sold to traders on a regular basis. One district commissioner stated that: “Agriculture here is based largely on cassava (...) I suspect that the surplus is itself becoming smaller, now that higher priced cash crops are such an attractive proposition”, suggesting that cassava cultivation was subordinated to cash crop production, of rice and groundnuts for instance. This statement overlooked the fact that especially cassava, but also sorghum and millet to a lesser extent, were in fact marketed in much larger quantities than groundnuts, rice, or even maize. Crop sales for the year 1955 clearly illustrate this. During that year 610 tons of cassava was marketed for a total of £4.530, whereas rice output amounted to 132 tons raising £4.991. Groundnut sales amounted to a total of 14 tons for £118, whereas 66 tons of sorghum and millet were marketed for £689 and a total of 57 tons of maize was disposed of for an amount of £662, furthermore 104 tons of beans were sold for £1.296. From these figures it becomes apparent that cassava sales, looking at mere quantity, far outstripped the sales of all other crops. In spite of this, monetary income from rice sales was higher, because rice fetched much higher prices than cassava per unit of weight. Crops regarded by the colonial administration as ‘subsistence crops’ were thus produced in very large quantities, and also marketed to a considerable extent (and could in fact be regarded as true ‘cash crops’), but nevertheless crops such as rice and groundnuts could in some cases prove more profitable as the prices paid by traders for cassava, sorghum and millet generally remained low. In addition, ‘cash crops’ such as maize, groundnuts and rice, were widely consumed as food, making the boundary between cash crops and subsistence crops appear even more artificial and blurred.

The production of such large quantities of surplus staple crops (sorghum, millet, cassava, etc.) could be explained, at least partially, by referring to Tosh’s propositions mentioned earlier. Tosh argued that the marketing of staple food crops alleviated the problem of labour allocation at times of peak demand, during planting and harvesting for instance. If a surplus of staple food crops was produced for the market, production could be expanded by intensifying existing patterns of cultivation and investing extra labour into one crop, instead of dividing attention between numerous crops and applying new agricultural methods of cultivation to cash crops such as rice and groundnuts. Cultivation techniques for millet, sorghum and cassava had been developed and adapted to locally prevailing circumstances since at least the 18th century and therefore expanding their production on a larger scale was less onerous than going in for relatively new crops such as coffee or certain types of vegetables, which required the adoption of new and sometimes unknown techniques. In addition Tosh argued that the staple food crop could be held back as a famine reserve when harvests proved disappointing. But food crops could also serve to alleviate the

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689 NAZ: SEC 2/137, North western province, Mwinilunga district annual report, 1955 – Agricultural produce and native foodstuffs.
690 Tosh, “The cash-crop revolution”, p.89.
692 Tosh, “The cash-crop revolution”, p.89.
impact of market fluctuations. When the staple food crop could be marketed, production could be expanded as land was generally abundant. When marketing slumps occurred, however, the surplus which remained and could not be marketed could be held back for home consumption and in the following year the cultivated acreage could be decreased. In this context, cassava proved to be particularly beneficial, as the crop could remain in the ground for long periods of time, only to be harvested once marketing opportunities arose. This enabled producers to react to marketing fluctuations rather rapidly, as they could expand or reduce the size of their fields in reaction to the demand which existed for their crops.  

However, staple food crops could also serve to free up labour for the production of other crops, which will be illustrated by referring to examples of cassava cultivation. Throughout the colonial period, cassava cultivation became even more widespread in the area of Mwinilunga than it had been previously, and cassava increasingly replaced sorghum and millet as staple food crop. Commenting on Chief Kakoma’s area, one district commissioner remarked how: “It seems likely that this area will show fewer signs of food shortage, as increasing quantities of cassava are grown; indeed it may well become a surplus area, as has happened in other parts of the district.” This not only implied that cassava production was spreading throughout the district, but also that the crop held the potential to turn areas of relative food scarcity into areas of food abundance. When speaking of cassava today, people proudly proclaim that “cassava is our staple food, it feeds us three times.” Not only can cassava roots be eaten, but the leaves can be used as a vegetable dish and in addition the stems can provide planting material for next year’s crop. Moreover, the practice of intercropping of different crops with cassava meant that the cassava field could provide a varied diet in itself, as it could also yield sweet potatoes, pumpkins, etc. Cassava as a crop is very high yielding and is resilient in the face of droughts and pests, and therefore cassava was adopted as a widespread staple throughout the area of Mwinilunga. In addition, cassava cultivation requires relatively low labour inputs, compared to other crops. Even though the clearing of the land and the making of mounds is a rather laborious enterprise, this is not necessarily confined to tightly restrained periods of time, and after the crop has been planted it can be left to grow without much further attention, except for occasional weeding. In addition, if necessary the cassava crop can be planted on the same plot of land several times, without clearing a new plot of land each year. Even though cassava yields do benefit from fertile soils, when labour availability is limited, cassava can be planted on the same soil numerous times. In this sense, then, cassava can be adopted as a labour saving crop, freeing up labour for other tasks in agricultural production. Thus, cassava cultivation could enable increased food security for the individual and the household in combination with enabling surplus production for the market, either in the form of increased amounts of cassava and other staples, or in the form of cash crops such as rice and groundnuts.

Sorghum and millet to a certain extent fulfilled similar roles, as their production also provided food security while enabling the increased production of other crops. Sorghum and millet were somewhat lower yielding and more labour-intensive crops than cassava, as planting and harvesting had to occur within tightly constrained periods of time and bird scaring was an additional burden. However, the production of these staples could also provide a stable food basis, thus enabling the deployment of labour to other tasks within or outside of agriculture. It is in this sense that staple crop production could be enabling in the expansion of agricultural production and served to complement market production of crops. Thus, even though staple food crops might be relatively ‘forgotten’ and neglected by the colonial administration and by traders, the role played by crops such

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693 Correspondence with Mr. Raymond Ngambi, December 2008, Kanyama.
695 Interview with the Deputy of Lwawu High School, September 10th 2008, Kanongesha.
698 Pritchett, The Lunda-Ndembu, p. 29.
as cassava, sorghum and millet in enabling increased agricultural production (of both staple and cash crops) was pivotal in many respects.

**The vent-for-surplus model revisited – Labour, gender and agricultural production**

“Although the Lunda-Ndembu could have made significant contributions to the food needs of the new colony [Northern Rhodesia], they were prevented from doing so (...) The capacity to produce surplus cassava remained greatly underutilized (...) During the 1940s and 1950s the Lunda-Ndembu’s capacity to generate surplus cassava in abundance was rediscovered (...) With the lifting of regulations confining the population to overcrowded registered villages, ambitious individuals rushed to establish commercial farms along the roadways (...) A group of elite farmers emerged virtually overnight.”

It is in these and similar terms that Pritchett described the increase in agricultural production in Mwinilunga district during the late 1940s and 1950s, speaking of ‘underutilised’ potential and farmers emerging ‘overnight’ once opportunity arose. By using such terms, Pritchett suggested that the productive capacity of agriculture had always been present in the area of Mwinilunga, but was neglected and remained untapped during the early colonial period. When given the chance, however, the population could exploit this potential and increase agricultural output without facing major difficulties. This view in fact closely resembles the vent-for-surplus model advanced by Adam Smith, Hla Myint and J.S. Hogendorn. This model argued that both land and labour could constitute underutilised factors in agricultural production, and that their full potential would only be released when an area was confronted with international trade, providing a ‘vent’ for the surplus land and labour available. It was argued that by offering access to markets, international trade could provide an outlet for surplus productive capacity without negatively affecting levels of domestic production, thus being virtually ‘costless’.

Pritchett did not suggest that the production boom in Mwinilunga was a new phenomenon during the 1940s-1950s, but drew parallels with the period of pre-colonial long-distance trade when Mwinilunga was a supplier of large amounts of surplus cassava to passing caravans. It was only during the early colonial period that this productive capacity collapsed due to restrictive colonial policies and a lack of opportunities, Pritchett argued, but when during the 1940s these restrictions were lifted by a rising demand from Copperbelt markets, agricultural producers eagerly reacted to the heightened opportunities and expanded production.

The vent-for-surplus model suffers from the fact that it presents increased agricultural output as natural and almost effortless once previous limitations are lifted, whereas in the case of Mwinilunga this was by no means so. Indeed, land was generally abundant, though towards the end of the colonial period land scarcity started occurring in the north western area around Kalene Hill, expressing itself in longer periods of cultivation combined with shorter fallows and even uninterrupted land use. Labour, however, could by no means be regarded as an abundant factor. Population densities were low and agricultural production was labour-intensive, due to technological bottlenecks which prevented the adoption of labour-saving implements in agriculture (such as ploughs or mechanised tools).

The previous section has suggested viewing cassava, and other staple crops to a lesser extent, as labour-saving crops enabling agricultural expansion, either by expanding the production of staple food crops (millet, sorghum, cassava, beans, etc.) or by investing in the production of crops such as rice and groundnuts. Labour was one of the most important factors in explaining the expansion of agricultural production from the 1940s onwards. A re-organisation of existing labour patterns was necessary, and this was in the first place expressed by a


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re-configuration of gender roles within agricultural production, but also became apparent in the variety of different strategies adopted by individuals and households in order to make a living.

The re-configuration of gender roles and the expansion of agricultural production

The production of crops for the market and the general increase of agricultural production did not affect men and women equally, and brought about alterations in existing gender roles. Turner and Turner summarised the changes in gender relations in the following words:

"In the new cash economy men are acquiring an economic supremacy vis-à-vis women which they never possessed in the past when the women provided the regular and stable sources of nourishment from their cassava and maize gardens. On the other hand while women continue to retain an independent sphere within the subsistence economy and exercise control over the moneys obtained from the sale of their produce, they have a means of asserting their social independence from their husbands. The sexes are less interdependent than in the past and economic individualism both in production and consumption seems to be the keynote of the new cash economy."

It is exactly this, apparently contradictory, duality between women on the one hand being subdued by men and by the onerous tasks of agricultural production and on the other hand retaining their independence due to the rising income-earning possibilities presented by market production, which has been subject of debate in many agricultural studies focusing on gender. On the one hand it has been argued that women often stood at the ‘underside of development’, as their agricultural tasks of weeding, making mounds and preparing food became more burdensome in the face of expanded agricultural production and women were often restricted to the subsistence sphere of production, whereas men frequently monopolised the more profitable income-earning possibilities, such as cash crop production and extra-agricultural wage employment. On the other hand, however, it has been argued that women also had access, though perhaps to a more limited extent than men, to market production of crops and women were thus able to retain their economic independence of men.

In similar terms, cassava cultivation has been described as being somewhat of a double-edged sword. It has been argued that cassava cultivation freed up male labour from agricultural production, as tasks such as the clearing of fields and harvesting no longer necessarily required male labour inputs. Therefore cassava made women more independent of men and the sale of surplus cassava offered women an income earning possibility, but on the other hand it also greatly increased female workloads as the tasks of mound building and the processing of cassava roots after the harvest were highly laborious and fell increasingly on women, some argue even ‘enslaving’ them.

How did gender relations in Mwinilunga district relate to these ongoing debates and which form did changes in gender relations assume in Mwinilunga district from the 1940s onwards?

In general, the gendered divisions of labour within agricultural production, as described previously, remained intact. Men, although they were responsible for some highly laborious tasks such as the clearing of fields, performed less agricultural tasks on a day to day basis than women, who were responsible for most repetitive and constant tasks. From the 1940s onwards, however, when labour migration, cash crop production and general agricultural expansion made themselves felt in the area, previously existing gender relations were somewhat modified. Women increased labour inputs in agricultural production, in order to produce larger amounts of food and crops for sale. Output could only be increased by investing more labour in agricultural production, which in effect meant working harder and longer. Men, on the other hand, were to a certain extent freed from agricultural production which enabled them to go into local wage employment, labour migration and animal husbandry. Some men, however, did intensify agricultural production, especially of crops such as millet, sorghum, maize and cassava, and produced large amounts of these


Interview with Mrs. Judy Mudimina, September 19th 2008, Ikelenge.
If men moved away from agricultural production, however, women relied on close kin or hosted work parties in order to find male labour for large tasks such as tree cutting and heavy hoeing. Cassava proved a convenient crop for women, as it enabled them to maximise labour productivity and expand agricultural production, with a minimum of male labour requirements.

It was not only in staple crop production that women intensified their labour inputs. Cash crop production was in no sense monopolised by men, as was the case in some other parts of Zambia and Africa, but to the contrary women produced and controlled most cash crops in Mwinilunga. Cassava proved a convenient crop for women, as it enabled them to maximise labour productivity and expand agricultural production, with a minimum of male labour requirements. Rice, groundnut and vegetable production were (almost) exclusively female domains, practiced in the streamside or dambo gardens without male interference, often not even in the marketing process. Therefore, cash crop cultivation could offer women economic independence from men, as they could earn an income from crop sales and determine how and on what this money was spent. On the other hand, however, men most probably had a larger share in animal husbandry, fish farming and experimental coffee cultivation. Turner and Turner, having examined household budgets, noted that women earned more than men from overall sales of crops (including cassava, rice, etc.), but that men had access to a wider range of income earning possibilities, most notably in the form of non-agricultural wage employment.

Thus, women to a large extent intensified their agricultural activities and thereby expanded production of both staple food crops and cash crops. This was by no means easy, but to the contrary made burdensome additions to their already heavy workload. Nevertheless, cassava was a convenient crop in this respect, as its production was relatively undemanding in terms of labour inputs. By expanding production and marketing part of the harvest, women gained economic independence vis-à-vis men. Men, on the other hand, were to an increasing extent able to engage in non-agricultural activities such as wage labour. However, not all men moved out of agricultural production, as some intensified their engagement in agriculture and animal husbandry, by focusing on market production. Men and women, though at times choosing different strategies of agricultural production or wage labour, remained complementary to one another, both in terms of food provision and in terms of cash income.

Combining different strategies – Making use of the range of opportunities

The expansion of agricultural production, far from simply being effected by formerly unutilised surplus labour, came about by an intensification of labour inputs and by the adoption of different strategies by various individuals. Whereas markets for agricultural produce were unstable and local employment possibilities were limited, individuals had to choose a particular strategy in order to make a living, as no one activity could provide sufficient employment and income for the entire population. Whereas some individuals chose the path of labour migration, and others engaged in small-scale trading, still others invested in intensifying agricultural production and producing crops for sale. These different strategies, however, were not detached, but to the contrary interdependent on one another and mutually beneficial. Wages of labour migrants could be invested in agricultural production, and trading enterprises could stimulate the production of crops for sale. Whereas some individuals focused on rice production, others focused on groundnuts and this specialisation enabled

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710 Interview with Mr. Solomon Kanswata, September 8th and October 18th 2008, Mwinilunga.
711 Interview with Mrs. Alfonsina Chingangu, October 15th 2008, Ntambu.
715 Turner and Turner, “Money economy among the Mwinilunga Ndembu”, p.34.
a more efficient allocation of resources. In addition, knowledge and expertise could be developed by focusing on one activity instead of engaging in a wide range of different activities.\(^716\)

Co-operation on the household and village level remained important. Even though various village members engaged in different occupations, these occupations were often complementary to one another and this specialisation enabled both diversification and access to a wide range of resources. This co-operation and the complementary nature of intra-village relations also expressed itself in the fact that wealth inequalities within the village remained relatively small. Turner and Turner in their survey of household income showed that most individuals were earning between £0 and £15 per year, the highest income not exceeding £40.\(^717\) This is also reflected in the fact that field sizes in agricultural production did not diverge greatly, averaging 3 acres.\(^718\)

Even though specialisation most probably increased during this period, people still retained access to different livelihood sources. Agricultural producers continued to cultivate a wide variety of crops and did not specialise in just one crop. In addition, migrant labourers had often formerly been engaged in agricultural production and sometimes returned to agricultural production after several years on the mines. It was exactly this combination of different crops, occupations and income sources which was crucial in explaining the possibility of expanded agricultural production and increased levels of prosperity in the district overall.

**Concluding remarks**

As the pre-existing limitations of the poorly developed infrastructural network and the lack of markets were gradually lifted, and a more generally enabling environment was created by the expansion of transport and trading facilities, agricultural production in Mwinilunga district increased rapidly. Not only products such as rice and groundnuts, but also large quantities of cassava, sorghum and millet were marketed. However, increasing agricultural output was not a simple case of tapping the unutilised surplus or potential, but could only be effected by intensifying labour inputs and by efficiently making use of the available opportunities and resources. In this regard, cassava was crucial as a labour-saving crop and in addition female labour could serve to free men from agricultural production and enable their engagement in other activities, such as wage employment and trading, but also cash crop cultivation. Even though agricultural production within the district did increase, some basic difficulties remained. Transport remained a problem, as distances to major markets were often large and stable agricultural production was further jeopardised by price fluctuations and the instability of markets.

Nevertheless, what stands out during this entire period is the flexibility with which agricultural producers reacted to (newly arising) possibilities. By making use of a wide range and combination of strategies, people were able to respond to marketing opportunities but also overcome periods of slump. Even though limitations continued to exist, individuals were able to make use of the available socio-economic, environmental and political opportunities.

\(^{716}\) Various economic theories have focused on the relationship between specialisation, the allocation of resources, the build-up of a knowledge base and economic growth. See for instance: Rostow, "The stages of economic growth", p. 1-16.


\(^{718}\) NAZ: NWP 1/2/102, Loc. 4919, Department of agriculture, Provincial annual report north western province, 1962.
Conclusion

Agricultural production in Mwinilunga district, throughout the period under study, has been subject to both constraints and enabling conditions, and has undergone numerous changes, not only concerning methods of cultivation, but also labour relations and crop repertoires. What stands out, however, is the extent of resilience and adaptability to change of agricultural production and agricultural producers themselves, expressed especially in various forms of diversification, co-operation and the adoption of numerous strategies of livelihood procurement. It has been argued that, even though socio-economic, environmental, ideological and political factors could and did influence agricultural production, these factors did not determine its shape. Individual agricultural producers in Mwinilunga district, though apparently faced with overwhelming conditions, such as environmental problems, colonial rule and market demand, struggled and succeeded to make sense of and even give shape to these conditions, making them palpable and compatible to their own needs and desires.

Recapitulating the debate

Even though the structure-agency debate, outlined in somewhat abstract terms in the introduction, has been left largely out of scope, it is time to return to it now and place the arguments advanced thus far in the terms of this debate. The main point seems to be, as Lonsdale and Ranger have also argued, that even though agency is sometimes situated in “tight structural corners”, it can “still bear remarkable causal fruit”.

This argument has been advanced, both implicitly and explicitly, throughout the chapters of this work. Starting out with environmental factors, it has been argued that the environment neither determines, nor is irrelevant to agricultural production. Even though environmental factors conditioned which crops could be grown and which methods of cultivation were most suited to the prevailing soil and climatic circumstances, individual agricultural producers could also give shape to their environment. This remained true even in times of environmental crisis, as methods of crop diversification, the combination of different livelihood strategies (hunting, fishing and gathering) and mutual co-operation with neighbouring villages and areas was adopted to overcome times of hardship. Diversification, co-operation and trade were crucial to individual agricultural production, in order to gain access to a wider base of resources, diversify individual livelihood bases and thereby maximise profits, in addition to making use of the differential allocation of resources in an efficient manner.

These methods of diversification, co-operation and the use made of the opportunities offered by the natural environment were crucial in dealing with the socio-economic and political context of which individuals formed a part. A long-term temporal approach has been adopted, looking at similarities and trends connecting the pre-colonial and colonial periods. What stands out is the primacy placed on adequate food production, which could be seen both as a positive aim and as a potential basis for expansion. Even though agricultural producers were faced with a number of constraints during the early colonial period, both social, economic and political, they strove to upkeep the levels of food production and found ways in which to make use of the opportunities which did remain open to them (by trading with missionaries, the colonial government and neighbouring areas). It has been argued that the domination of the colonial state was by no means complete, but to the contrary, that individuals could always find ways in which to make sense and use of the opportunities open to them, as they were never left powerless. Similarly to Giddens’ claim, it has been argued that: “power relations are always two-way; that is to say, however subordinate an actor may be in a social relationship, the very fact of involvement in that relationship gives him or her a certain amount of power over the other.” Even though agricultural producers were faced with constraints during the early colonial period, as their economic livelihood base was limited and the

720 Giddens, Central problems in social theory, p.6.
district was politically marginalised, individual and collective agency, expressed mainly through the positive aim of food production, served to deal with and give shape to the conditions by which individuals and communities were affected.

Environmental, socio-economic and political (structural) forces, however, should by no means be seen as merely constraining, but could equally be enabling. Enabling circumstances prevailed both during the pre-colonial and during the late colonial period, as markets, trade and political circumstances were favourable to increased agricultural production. The ensuing increase of production was by no means simple or automatic, though. Diversification, co-operation and the opportunities offered by the environment, which had served to make sense of the constraining circumstances of early colonial rule, in this context served as the basis for increased agricultural production. In addition, factors such as crop repertoires, the adoption of different livelihood strategies and adaptations in gender and labour relations formed the basis which enabled individuals to expand production and make use of prevailing opportunities.

Argument has been made to reject both structural determinism and complete voluntarism or individualism (the view that individual action determines structures, and that structures are thus unconditioned creations of human agency). This is also the case for ideology, which has been approached as an expression of the interaction between structure and agency. Ideas, far from being simply imposed by ‘ruling’ or ‘dominating’ groups, were always negotiated and locally situated. Colonial ideas were sometimes based on local knowledge, and individuals often kept hold of their own ideas and the practices to which they were accustomed. Ideology should therefore not be approached as a dominating structure in itself (a ‘tool of empire’), as ideas were always negotiated and shaped by the interaction between different individuals and groups.

Some other dichotomies and divisions should be nuanced, or even altogether rejected, as well. Not only have the sharp oppositions between domination and subordination, autonomy and dependence, centre and periphery been questioned, as all these terms appeared to be far more relative than absolute, but in addition doubt has been cast on sharp chronological divisions as well. Parallels between the pre-colonial, colonial and (though not subject of this study) post-colonial period stand out as significant, even though changes and ruptures existed as well. It has been proposed to step away from the view of colonial rule as hegemonic and radically changing the static pre-colonial state of affairs, not only because the pre-colonial period was far more dynamic than has sometimes been argued, but also because colonial rule itself was far from dominant and absolute, especially in its initial stages. Attention has been paid to individual and local actions and reactions to prevailing conditions and forces. Colonial rule could not only have diverging effects on different individuals and areas, but could also affect gender, class and racial groups in different ways. Taking the district as a unit of study has, in this case, proven to be fruitful. Not only did this enable attention to be paid to individual and local variations, but it also demonstrated that broader socio-economic, environmental, ideological and political developments and conditions influenced the local and individual in numerous ways, and vice versa. By paying attention to this interaction between broader structures and individual or local agency, processes of interconnection, negotiation and struggle stood out.

The centrality of food production – Explaining Cinderella’s cassava

The primacy of food production, expressed in the positive aim of assuring sufficient food supplies even in times of constraint and hardship, in many respects influenced and even conditioned the relationship of agricultural producers with other individuals, but also with socio-economic, environmental and political factors. Some authors have argued that agricultural producers, since they produced for their own subsistence, were more autonomous of outside (dominating) forces:

> “The uniqueness of peasants is the degree of autonomy which they had in relation to the colonial state and the appropriating classes. This autonomy was inextricably linked to their ability to mobilize their own labor power through the household and their access to land, which, together, gave them

command over subsistence (…) limiting the degree to which an authoritative colonial discourse could penetrate rural societies.”

This argument was taken one step further by Hyden, who spoke of the ‘uncaptured peasantry’ remaining outside of state influence by always having access to the ‘economy of affection’ based on ties of kinship, community and religion.

Even though having access to their own modes of production (labour and land) did give agricultural producers a certain degree of power, and arguably even autonomy, with regards to factors such as the state and markets, this autonomy was by no means absolute. This study has aimed to show the interconnected nature of agents and structures, which influence one another mutually. No matter how small-scale or remote agricultural producers might be, they could never completely remove themselves from their broader (environmental, socio-economic and political) context, but were always influenced by it and in turn their actions worked towards shaping and altering this context. If agricultural producers enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy by producing for their own subsistence, this autonomy was at the same time paralleled by a degree of dependence, namely on (sufficient) agricultural production. Even in cases in which the context was largely constraining, such as the situation prevailing at the beginning of the colonial period when political factors caused widespread fleeing, this context was mediated through the basic aim of food production, which individuals persistently struggled to upkeep.

Even though individuals could, in theory, subsist by relying merely on their own production, it has been argued here that it was through contact with others (through exchange, trade and cooperation) that prosperity and success could be achieved. A combination of various methods was adopted, including specialisation, both geographical (expressed by exchange between different areas within the district and with neighbouring areas of Congo and Angola) and occupational (involving the interplay between hunting, fishing, foraging, animal husbandry, agricultural production, etc.), the division of labour (by age and gender), diversification (of crop repertoires and methods of cultivation) and the adoption of different strategies (agricultural production, labour migration, craft production, etc.). It was the interaction between and combination of these different methods which offered individual producers a broad base of options adopted to overcome times of hardship, but also expand agricultural production.

Tentative parallels can be drawn between the late colonial period and the period of pre-colonial long distance trade, when extensive markets for agricultural produce were available and production boomed. In both these cases enabling circumstances prevailed, but nevertheless the expansion of production could not be explained by a simple ‘vent-for-surplus’ argument. It was only by working hard, in addition to making use of and combining the various methods and strategies mentioned here, that individuals were able to respond and make use of the available opportunities. Cassava, indeed, appeared to be a ‘Cinderella crop’, enabling the expansion of output while only making limited labour demands, but in the end both success and the overcoming of hardship were dependent on individual initiative, adaptability and agency.

Exploring avenues for further research
Both the temporal and the spatial boundaries of the present study have remained somewhat limited, and it is in the expansion of and exploration beyond these boundaries that (potentially) interesting avenues for further research lie. First of all, the exploration of the continuity or rupture of trends sketched in the present study with earlier pre-colonial as well as post-colonial periods could prove informative. It deserves attention to see whether the trends and developments outlined in this work were echoed by pre- and post-colonial developments, or whether the developments during these periods followed a different course. Secondly, a comparison of Mwinilunga district with neighbouring areas, especially across the international boundaries in Congo and Angola, could prove interesting.

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722 Isaacman, “Peasants and rural social protest”, p.3.
This would enable the examination of the divergence or similarity of trends between areas formerly connected by the Lunda political entity, but subsequently divided by colonial boundaries. Not only would this provide further insight into the process of boundary formation, but it would also yield information as to the (differential) impact of various colonial regimes, of the Portuguese in Angola and the Belgian in Congo, on local and individual agricultural production. Cross-boundary studies, which have recently been receiving increasing attention, could be fruitful in this case as they could tease out the effects of socio-economic, political and environmental factors on agricultural production in similar yet diverging circumstances.
Appendix

I: List of common crops, wild fruits, wild and domestic animals in Mwinilunga district

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crops</th>
<th>Common English name</th>
<th>Vernacular name (Lunda)</th>
<th>Scientific name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amaranth</td>
<td>Mulengu</td>
<td><em>Amaranthus hybridis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bambara groundnut</td>
<td>Katoyu</td>
<td><em>Vigna subterranea</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>Makondi amasusu</td>
<td><em>Musa acuminata Colla</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>Makondi</td>
<td><em>Phaseolus vulgaris</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulrush millet</td>
<td>Mahangu</td>
<td><em>Pennisetum glaucum</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassava</td>
<td>Makamba</td>
<td><em>Manihot esculenta</em></td>
<td>Grantz.</td>
<td>Many different varieties. Cassava leaves (nsombi/matamba) also consumed as relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Coffea arabica</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>Wanda</td>
<td><em>Gossypium sp.</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indigenous varieties of cotton were also grown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cow pea</td>
<td>Ilanda</td>
<td><em>Vigna unguiculata</em></td>
<td>Walp.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggplant</td>
<td>Indimwa</td>
<td><em>Solanum melongena</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finger millet</td>
<td>Kachai</td>
<td><em>Eleusine coracana</em></td>
<td>Gaertn.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guava</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Psidium</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundnut</td>
<td>Inyimu</td>
<td><em>Arachis hypogea</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Citrus limon</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>Kabaka</td>
<td><em>Zea mays</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flint maize with coloured kernels (kahila) was gradually replaced by white dent varieties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mango</td>
<td>Mbuma</td>
<td><em>Mangifera indica</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mushroom</td>
<td>Wuwa</td>
<td><em>Agaricus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okra</td>
<td>Mwilemberu</td>
<td><em>Abelmoschus esculentus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Many different varieties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil palm</td>
<td>(Mu)ngaji</td>
<td><em>Elaeis guineensis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onion</td>
<td>Sapoli</td>
<td><em>Allium cepa</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Citrus sinensis</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pawpaw</td>
<td>Popu</td>
<td><em>Asimina triloba</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepper</td>
<td>Ndungu</td>
<td><em>Capsicum annum</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineapples</td>
<td>Makondi asanduwa</td>
<td><em>Ananas comosus</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potato (Irish)</td>
<td>Kapa</td>
<td><em>Solanum tuberosum</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumpkins</td>
<td>Mayangwa</td>
<td><em>Cucurbita maxima</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pumpkin leaves (nkengeli) also consumed as relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>Losu</td>
<td><em>Oryza spp.</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Many different seed varieties were introduced, among others the KotaKota and Faya varieties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roselle</td>
<td>Wusi</td>
<td><em>Hibiscus sabdariffa</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sesame</td>
<td>Kasakwa</td>
<td><em>Sesamum indicum</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squash</td>
<td>Machimpa</td>
<td><em>Cucumis spp.</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solanaceous fruit</td>
<td>Kateti</td>
<td><em>Solanaceae spp.</em></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leaves and fruit eaten fresh or dried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorghum</td>
<td>Masa</td>
<td><em>Sorghum bicolor</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vernacular name (Lunda)</td>
<td>Common English name</td>
<td>Scientific name</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soya bean</td>
<td>Glycine max Merr.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberry</td>
<td>Fragaria ananassa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar cane</td>
<td>Musachi</td>
<td>Saccharum officinarum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunflower</td>
<td>Helianthus annuus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet potato</td>
<td>Ntamba</td>
<td>Ipomoea batatas</td>
<td></td>
<td>Different varieties: Chingovwa, chishinda, ntamba yakalulu Sweet potato leaves (kalembwila) also consumed as relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomato</td>
<td>Machamachacha</td>
<td>Solanum lycopersicum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>Nicotiana tabacum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yam</td>
<td>Yilungu</td>
<td>Dioscorea spp.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Different varieties: Kakongi, mada, tunyeye, makaji, insevu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kalengalenga</td>
<td>Spermacoce tenuior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wild fruits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vernacular name (Lunda)</th>
<th>Common English name</th>
<th>Scientific name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ingindu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingindwa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inshiyi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insori</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mabula</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macha</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madata</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matoji</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbwengeneni</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mpachi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nfungu</td>
<td>Wild plum tree</td>
<td>Anisophyllea boehmii</td>
<td>Oil extracted from fruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nsengu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nshindwa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nsombu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tufungwa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wild animals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common English name</th>
<th>Vernacular name (Lunda)</th>
<th>Scientific name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antelope, roan</td>
<td>Ntengu</td>
<td>Hippotragus equinus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antelope, sable</td>
<td>Kaloku</td>
<td>Hippotragus niger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo, African or Cape</td>
<td>Ngombi yesanga</td>
<td>Syncerus caffer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushbuck</td>
<td>Mbala</td>
<td>Tragelaphus scriptus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bush pig</td>
<td>Chombo</td>
<td>Potamochoerus porcus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caterpillars</td>
<td>Mayungu</td>
<td>Lepidoptera</td>
<td>Butterflies and moths Mashonkushonku, masesi, tuswa, mpasu, mazenzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crocodile</td>
<td>Ngandu</td>
<td>Crocodylidae spp.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duck</td>
<td>Patu</td>
<td>Anatidae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duiker, blue</td>
<td>Kasenda</td>
<td>Philantomba monticola</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duiker, brown</td>
<td>Nkayi</td>
<td>Sylvicapra grimmia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eland</td>
<td>Nsefu</td>
<td>Taurotragus oryx</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal</td>
<td>Vernacular name</td>
<td>Scientific name</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elephant</td>
<td>Nzovu</td>
<td>Loxodonta africana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giraffe</td>
<td>Tutwa</td>
<td>Giraffa camelopardis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grubs</td>
<td>Masenda, mapopa, nkuyi</td>
<td>Scarabaeoidea</td>
<td>Beetles, bees, wasps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartebeest</td>
<td>Nguvu</td>
<td>Alcelaphus buselaphus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyena, spotted</td>
<td></td>
<td>Crocuta crocuta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impala</td>
<td>Kapala</td>
<td>Aepyceros melampus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lechwe, red</td>
<td>Insongi</td>
<td>Kobus leche</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leopard</td>
<td>Chisumpa</td>
<td>Panthera pardus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion</td>
<td>Mutupa</td>
<td>Panthera leo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moles, African</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pumba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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**Domestic animals**

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<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>Ngombi</td>
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<td>Capra aegagrus hircus</td>
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<td>Mpembi</td>
<td>Ovis aries</td>
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### II: Crops marketed during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s

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<tr>
<td>Cassava</td>
<td>484 tons</td>
<td>350 tons</td>
<td>384 tons</td>
<td>546 tons</td>
<td>670 tons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>45 tons</td>
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<td>15 tons</td>
<td>40 tons</td>
<td>33 tons</td>
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<td>Rice</td>
<td>50 tons</td>
<td>48 tons</td>
<td>54 tons</td>
<td>40 tons</td>
<td>60 tons</td>
<td>132 tons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groundnuts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 tons</td>
<td>2 tons</td>
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<td>5 tons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>13 tons</td>
<td>34 tons</td>
<td>46 tons</td>
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<td>Millet</td>
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<td>70 tons</td>
<td>22 tons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sorghum</td>
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<td>Fruit</td>
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<td>Vegetables</td>
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<td>6 tons</td>
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Source: District annual reports, Mwinilunga district. Missing information does not necessarily imply that crops were not marketed, merely that there were no statistics on the specific crop or year.
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A 2/1/4 Location: 3981 BSA 2 Tax evasion
A 3/7/1 Location: 3985 North Western Rhodesia correspondence boundaries general 1909-1911
A 3/28/2 Location: 3996 Rubber legislation 1903-1909
A 5/1/5 Location: 4002 Land department annual report 1908-1910
A 5/2/1 Location: 4003 Balunda district annual report 1908-1909
A 5/2/9 Location: 4005 Lunda district annual report 1910-1911

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HM 6/CO3/4/1 Edward Arden Copeman papers
HM 6/CO3/4/3-4 Edward Arden Copeman papers
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HM 8/FI4/2/1 Singleton Fisher papers
HM 17/MI5/1 Frederick Vernon Bruce-Miller papers
HM 17/MI5/2 Frederick Vernon Bruce-Miller papers

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KDD 4/1/1 Kasempa district inspection of Mwinilunga district 1925-1929
KDD 5/1 Kasempa district notebook
KDE 8/1/1 Barotseland annual reports 1906-1907

KSE Files Mwinilunga sub-district 1908-1929
KSE 1/1/1 Mwinilunga sub-district correspondence, recruitment of labour 1914-1917
KSE 4/1 Mwinilunga district notebook
KSE 5/4/1+2 Mwinilunga sub-district, tax register 1925-1929
KSE 6/1/1 Mwinilunga sub-district annual reports 1908-1911
KSE 6/1/5 Mwinilunga sub-district annual reports 1925-1927
KSE 6/1/6 Mwinilunga sub-district annual reports 1928-1929
KSE 6/3/1 Mwinilunga sub-district report Indaba 1916
KSE 6/3/2 Mwinilunga sub-district report Indaba 1927-1929
KSE 6/4/1 Mwinilunga sub-district reports Lunda tribe 1917
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KSE 6/6/2 Mwinilunga sub-district tour reports 1924-1929
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SEC 2/133 Mwinilunga district annual reports 1935-1937
SEC 2/135 North western province annual reports 1951-52
SEC 2/136 North western province annual report 1953
SEC 2/137 North western province annual reports 1954-55
SEC 2/151 Western province annual report 1937
SEC 2/153 Western and Kaonde-Lunda provinces annual report 1939
SEC 2/154 Western province annual report 1947
SEC 2/155 Western province annual report 1948
SEC 2/156 Western province annual report 1949
SEC 2/157 Western province district and provincial organisation annual reports 1950-51
SEC 2/177 Western province district commissioners’ conferences 1936-39
SEC 2/185 Kaonde-Lunda province district commissioners’ conferences 1946-56
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SEC 2/230 Kaonde-Lunda province regional councils 1944-47
SEC 2/257 Native industries – Restrictions on the sale of foodstuffs 1934-47
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SEC 2/279 Kaonde-Lunda province: Five year development plan 1943
SEC 2/326 Native land tenure 1947-48
SEC 2/336 Peasant farm blocks: Experimental schemes 1947-48
SEC 2/346 Native tax ordinance 1938
SEC 2/952 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1932-33
SEC 2/953 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1933-39
SEC 2/954 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1939-40
SEC 2/955 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1940-48
SEC 2/956 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1948
SEC 2/957 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1949
SEC 2/958 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1950-51
SEC 2/959 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1951
SEC 2/960 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1952
SEC 2/961 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1953
SEC 2/962 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1954
SEC 2/963 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1955
SEC 2/964 Photographs as attachments to tour reports
SEC 2/965 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1956
SEC 2/966 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1958
SEC 2/967 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1959
SEC 2/968 Mwinilunga district tour reports 1960
SEC 2/1126 Native newspapers 1930-36
SEC 2/1127 Native newspapers 1936
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<td>Mwinilunga district travelling reports 1934-39</td>
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<td>Mwinilunga district travelling reports 1946-49</td>
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<td>NWP 1/2/21 Loc.4901</td>
<td>Mwinilunga district, Agricultural instructors reports 1949-50</td>
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<td>Mwinilunga district travelling reports 1949</td>
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<td>Angola – Reports and general 1950</td>
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<td>NWP 1/2/33</td>
<td>Mwinilunga district tour reports 1950</td>
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<td>NWP 1/2/37 Loc.4903</td>
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<td>North western province annual reports by departmental officers 1951-53</td>
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<td>North western province tours by ministers and heads of departments 1956-58</td>
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<td>NWP 1/2/52</td>
<td>Mwinilunga district annual report 1952</td>
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<td>North western province departmental annual reports 1954-55</td>
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<td>NWP 1/2/90 Loc.4916</td>
<td>Reports and returns: Labour in Mwinilunga district, 1955-61</td>
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<td>NWP 1/2/101 Loc.4919</td>
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<td>North western province agricultural development 1946-60</td>
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<td>North western province tour reports, Ministry of agriculture 1959-65</td>
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<td>North western province, Provincial team minutes 1953-58</td>
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<td>Native agriculture – North western province tour reports 1939-40</td>
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<td>Ecological survey reports</td>
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<td>MAG 2/9/4 Loc.170</td>
<td>J.N. Clothier Ecological survey report 1932-33</td>
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**Rhodes House Oxford, England**

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<td>Mss Afr. S 780</td>
<td>Theodore Williams correspondences 1915-1918</td>
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**III: Interviews with informants**

*Mwinilunga*

Mrs. Julian Chiyezhi, September 5th 2008.
Mr. and Mrs. Katoka, September 5th 2008.
Mrs. Ethel Muvila, September 5th 2008.
Mr. and Mrs. Samugole, September 6th 2008.
Mr. Kawangu, September 6th 2008.
Mr. Ian Ntambu, September 7th 2008.
Mr. Solomon Kanswata, September 8th 2008 and October 18th 2008.
Mr. Kamwana, October 18th 2008.
Mr. Chitambala, December 12th 2008.
Mr. Mapulanga, December 12th 2008.
Ministry of Agriculture, Officer for marketing Mr. Mwangala, September 8th 2008.
Ministry of Agriculture, Officer for Co-Operatives, Mr. Alfred Lupinda, December 12th 2008.
Ministry of Agriculture, Officer of irrigation and land husbandry, September 8th 2008.
Ministry of Agriculture, Officer for gender relations Mrs. Luvua, September 30th 2008.
Ministry of Agriculture, Officer for communication Mr. Ambrose Musanda, October 1st 2008.

Kampemba
Mr. Paul Chitadi, September 8th 2008.
Mr. Damson Kazeya, September 9th 2008.
Mr. Brian Kandamba, September 9th 2008.
Mr. Boaz Chitokola, September 10th 2008.

Kanongesha
Ministry of Agriculture, Camp officers Mr. Maimbo and Mr. Katongo, September 13th 2008.
Mr. John J. Chiyuka, September 10th 2008.
Chiefly palace – Chiefs mother and uncle, September 11th 2008.
Mr. Daimon Sambongi, September 11th 2008.
Mr. Spoon Kapanga, Headman of Wenga village, September 12th 2008.
Headman Kazovu and Headman Kashiku, September 12th 2008.

Ikelenge
Ministry of Agriculture, Camp officers Mr. Mutale and Mr.Mbewe, September 15th 2008.
Chiefthiness Ikelenge, September 16th 2008.
Headman Samahina and his wife, September 16th 2008.
Mrs. Margaret Mullopa, Mr. Harry Ventina and Mr. Larson Samahina, September 16th 2008.
Mr. John Kapaypi, September 16th 2008.
Mr. Benson Kema, September 17th 2008.
Mr. M. Keshala, September 17th 2008.
Headman, Mr. Felix Ntemba, September 17th 2008.
Mr. Konsul Chinyama, September 17th 2008.
Mr. Paul Soneka, September 17th 2008.
Mr. Morris Chipoya, September 18th 2008.
Headman Chimbila, and Mr. Skin Chimbila, September 18th 2008.
Mr. Martin Muzeya, September 19th 2008.
Mr. Fordson Deyau, September 19th 2008.
Mrs. Alfonsina Kusaloka, September 19th 2008.
Mrs. Argret Otela, September 19th 2008.
Mrs. Florence Mukona, September 22nd 2008.
Mr. Venus Kalusa, September 22nd 2008.
Mr. Edson Pondala, September 22nd 2008.
Headman Frank Chipoya, September 22nd 2008.

Nyakaseya
Ministry of Agriculture, Camp officer Mr. Zaza, September 23rd 2008.
Mr. Aaron Chiyuma, September 23rd 2008.
Mr. Paddy Samakai, September 23rd 2008.
Mr. and Mrs. Sawita, September 24th 2008.
Mr. William Zawwiyi, September 24th 2008.
Mr. Frank Kafolesha, September 24th 2008.
Mr. Gibson, September 25th 2008.
Mr. Ngelekwa Kapenda, September 25th 2008.
Mr. Paul Lumba, September 25th 2008.

Hillwood farm
Mr. Paul Poidevin, Headmaster Sakeji School, September 20th 2008.
Mrs. Mel Ferguson, September 26th 2008.
Mrs. Esther and Hilda, Hillwood farm orphanage, September 28th 2008.
Mr. Paul Fisher, September 27th 2008.

Chibwika
Ministry of Agriculture, Camp Officers Mr. Phiri, Mr. Kalusa and Mr. Kayama, October 2nd 2008.
Chief Chibwika, October 2nd 2008.
Headman Kadoka, October 2nd 2008.
Headman Kasapatu, October 2nd 2008.
Mr. Benwa, October 2nd 2008.
Mr. Elias Kalenga, October 3rd 2008.
Mr. Muhemba, October 4th 2008.
Mr. Kamiji, October 4th 2008.
Mr. Samanjombi (Chiefs brother), October 4th 2008.
Mrs. Maria Samanjombi (Chiefs sister), October 4th 2008.
Mr. Godfrey, October 4th 2008.
Mr. Chiyesu, October 5th 2008.
Mr. Mangalasa, October 5th 2008.
Mrs. Bibiana, October 5th 2008.
Mrs. Agnes Kasweulu, October 6th 2008.

Ntambu
Ministry of Agriculture, Camp Officer Mr. Chinshe, October 13th 2008.
Mr. Masamba, October 8th 2008.
Mr. Helford Masamba, October 9th 2008.
Mr. Han Manyingu, October 9th 2008.
Mr. Benja Sampoko, October 9th 2008.
Mrs. Yesta Muyutu and her mother, October 9th 2008.
Mr. Kasonda, October 10th 2008.
Mr. Harrison Makina, October 10th 2008.
Mr. Andrew Kambowa, October 10th 2008.
Mr. Paul Mapende, October 10th 2008.
Mr. Harrison Zimba, October 10th 2008.
Mr. Lorence Floranga, October 10th 2008.
Mr. Royma Chimansa, October 11th 2008.
Mr. Venus Makariki, October 11th 2008.
Mr. Jonas Luvey, October 11th 2008.
Mr. Tedson Kanjima, October 12th 2008.
Mrs. Alfonsina Chingangu, October 15th 2008.
Mr. Charles Walanga, October 15th 2008.
Mr. Benwell, October 16th 2008.

Kanyama
Ministry of Agriculture, Camp Officer Mr. Ngambi, December 9th 2008.
Headman Kakeza, December 9th 2008.
Mr. Godfrey Masambwisha, December 9th 2008.
Chief Kanyama, December 9th 2008.
Headman Mr. Noah Ipoza, December 10th 2008.
Mr. and Mrs. Lukwesa Kajimoto, December 10th 2008.