Moving along the roadside: A social history of Mwinilunga District, 1870s-1970s

Pesa, I.

2: Production
Meat, meal and markets

> Subsistence agriculture is giving way to petty commodity cultivation and hunting is almost extinct.[496]

Throughout the colonial and post-colonial period government officials, agricultural experts and traders have frequently denounced methods of production and related forms of knowledge in the area of Mwinilunga as 'primitive'.[497] Reports might label local agricultural, hunting or fishing practices as exclusively geared towards 'subsistence' or 'self-sufficiency', being averse to change and potentially detrimental to natural resources. Alternatively, officials proposed to make production the focal point of various schemes of 'development':[498]

> The Africans in this province still need educating in regard to providence. Much instruction and advice is needed to improve upon the variety as well as the quality and quantity of foodstuffs (…) Everyone thinks in terms of (costly) "progress".[499]

The requisite education would necessarily be initiated by external actors, in particular by agricultural experts summoned by the government, propagating scientific innovations.[500] The rationale behind these schemes was that established practices had to be improved and transformed, as the meagre subsistence level of agricultural production should be substituted by market production.[501]

What underlay such ideas and policies was the conviction of an inevitable transition 'from a subsistence-oriented, egalitarian, isolated natural society to a market-dependent, class-riven, peasant society that is inextricably tied to centers of wealth and power.'[502] This binary between 'subsistence' and 'market' production has continued to underpin studies of rural history in Central and Southern Africa. Such works suffer from two major shortfalls.[503] Firstly, most studies postulate assumptions about the course of history, presupposing a transition from hunting and gathering to herding and settled agriculture. Similarly, they take the transition from subsistence to market production of cash crops for granted. A second problem is the overwhelming focus on external causes of change. Particularly imperialism and colonialism, coupled with forces of global capitalism, are considered to have wrought major change in areas such as Mwinilunga. Notwithstanding whether this had resulted in positive development or negative underdevelopment, the supposition was that previously self-

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[496] V.W. Turner and E.L.B. Turner, 'Money-economy among the Mwinilunga Ndembu: A study of some individual cash budgets', *Rhodes-Livingstone journal* 18 (1955), 36.

[497] References to Lunda being 'primitive agriculturalists', producing in a crude manner for 'subsistence' only reappear continuously throughout annual reports of the colonial and post-colonial periods (NAZ).

[498] J.M. Hodge, *Triumph of the expert: Agrarian doctrines of development and the legacies of British colonialism* (Ohio, 2007); K. Crehan and A. von Oppen (eds.), *Planners and history: Negotiating 'development' in rural Zambia* (Lusaka, 1994).

[499] (NAZ) SEC2/193, Kaonde-Lunda Province Newsletter, Second Quarter 1945.

[500] J. McCracken, 'Experts and expertise in colonial Malawi', *African affairs* 81:322 (1982), 101-16; H. Tilley, 'African environments & environmental sciences: The African research survey, ecological paradigms & British colonial development, 1920-40', in: W. Beinart and J. McGregor (eds.), *Social history & African environments* (Oxford, Athens and Cape Town, 2003), 109-30.

[501] For an alternative perspective: T. Waters, 'The persistence of subsistence and the limits to development studies: The challenge of Tanzania', *Africa* 70:4 (2000), 614-52.

[502] R.H. Bates, 'Some conventional orthodoxies in the study of agrarian change', *World politics* 36:2 (1984), 240.

[503] See: A. Isaacman, 'Peasants and rural social protest in Africa', *African studies review* 33:2 (1990), 1-120; S.S. Berry, 'The food crisis and agrarian change in Africa: A review essay', *African studies review* 27:2 (1984), 59-112; T. Ranger, 'Growing from the roots: Reflections on peasant research in Central and Southern Africa', *Journal of Southern African studies* 5:1 (1978/79), 99-133; J. Tosh, 'The cash-crop revolution in tropical Africa: An agricultural reappraisal', *African affairs* 79:314 (1980), 79-94; F. Cooper, 'Africa and the world economy', *African studies review* 24:2/3 (1981), 1-86; G. Austin, 'Reciprocal comparison and African history: Tackling conceptual Eurocentrism in the study of Africa's economic past', *African studies review* 50:3 (2007), 1-28; A.G. Hopkins, 'The new economic history of Africa', *Journal of African history* 50:2 (2009), 155-77.

contained rural communities had increasingly become incorporated into the market economy and that this, more than any internal factor, constituted the root cause of changes in production.[504]

More recently, the premises of these older debates have been challenged. Environmental and local rural histories have looked at the internal dynamics of change in agriculture and productive activities.[505] Furthermore, local bases of knowledge have been valued in their own right.[506] Nevertheless, assumptions of 'development' recur and remain influential. Areas that do not engage in market production or are 'trapped in decline' are regarded as anomalies.[507] This chapter seeks to complicate narratives of 'market incorporation' and questions assumptions about the course of change in patterns of production, paying attention to internal factors of change. Several case studies will be presented, suggesting that market involvement in the area of Mwinilunga was fluctuating rather than intensifying.[508] Repertoires, values and rationales of production will be examined in order to understand the motives behind market involvement, or indeed, non-involvement.

Productive activities in Mwinilunga District are based on an internal foundation. Production builds upon a mixture of agro-ecological considerations, socio-cultural values, as well as economic and political objectives. This internal foundation has been subject to continuous adaptation and change in response to factors of marketing, climate and policy. Nevertheless, it is underpinned by a desire to create a reliable livelihood. Crucial to this view is a re-evaluation of the concept of 'subsistence', which should not be interpreted in merely negative terms as an absence of surplus.[509] Rather, the struggle to create a stable basis of subsistence, even in the face of adversity, could constitute the stepping stone for producers to participate in the market and engage the state on terms suitable to the local setting and environment. Producers were far from unresponsive to outside incentives (such as price fluctuations, state policies and markets). They would attempt to accommodate incentives in ways which might prove compatible with existing methods of production and livelihood. The desire to secure a stable basis of subsistence has generated a fundamental continuity in productive strategies and rationales towards market involvement. Instead of being mutually exclusive or conflicting, subsistence and market production fed into one another in multiple ways. Refuting the discursive transition from self-sufficiency to market incorporation, the fluctuating course of productive practices in Mwinilunga District will be portrayed.[510]

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[504] E. Kreike, 'De-globalisation and deforestation in colonial Africa: Closed markets, the cattle complex, and environmental change in North-Central Namibia, 1890-1990', *Journal of Southern African studies* 35:1 (2009), 81, 98.

[505] For environmental history, see: W. Beinart, 'African history and environmental history', *African affairs* 99:395 (2000), 269-302; J.C. McCann, 'Agriculture and African history', *Journal of African history* 32:3 (1991), 507-13. For local rural histories, see: H.L. Moore and M. Vaughan, *Cutting down trees: Gender, nutrition, and agricultural change in the Northern Province of Zambia, 1890-1990* (Portsmouth etc., 1994); T.T. Spear, *Mountain farmers: Moral economies of land and agricultural development in Arusha and Meru* (Oxford etc., 1997).

[506] P. Richards, *Indigenous agricultural revolution: Ecology and food production in West Africa* (London etc., 1985).

[507] S. Ponte, 'Trapped in decline?: Reassessing agrarian change and economic diversification on the Uluguru mountains, Tanzania', *The journal of modern African studies* 39:1 (2001), 81-100; S.D. Doyle, *Crisis and decline in Bunyoro: Population and environment in Western Uganda 1860-1955* (Oxford, Kampala and Athens, 2006).

[508] See: C.M. Chabatama, 'Peasant farming, the state, and food security in the North-Western Province of Zambia, 1902-1964' (PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1999).

[509] See: W. Allan, *The African husbandman* (Edinburgh etc., 1965); E.P. Thompson, 'The moral economy of the English crowd in the eighteenth century', *Past and present* 50 (1971), 76-136; J.C. Scott, *The moral economy of the peasant: Rebellion and subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven and London, 1976); G. Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and an uncaptured peasantry* (London etc., 1980).

[510] See: Spear, *Mountain farmers*; Doyle, *Crisis and decline*; J.C. McCann, *People of the plow: An agricultural history of Ethiopia, 1800-1900* (Madison, 1995); G. Carswell, *Cultivating success in Uganda: Kigezi farmers & colonial policies* (Oxford, Athens and Kampala, 2007).

The foundations of production in Mwinilunga District

Productive activities in Mwinilunga are intimately linked to the environment. Through years of cultivation, hunting and foraging – based on local knowledge rooted in past experience – ways have been sought to use the environment for productive purposes.[511] Over time methods of production have undergone continuous change, for instance as new crops have been added to the cultivating repertoire. The foundations of production have constantly been adapted to prevailing circumstances and requirements, responding to factors of environment, marketing, trade, politics and more.[512]

The natural environment is the foundation upon which productive activities have built. The environment of Mwinilunga District is varied, featuring extensive plains, dense forests, high hills, small streams and fast-flowing rivers. Even within a single plot of land micro-environments might differ. A vivid portrait is provided by a former colonial officer:

> Mwinilunga lay in the Tropics, some 11 degrees south (…) of the Equator, but it lay, too, on one of the highest parts of the Rhodesian plateau, some 1,500 metres above sea level at one of the great watersheds of the African continent (…) all rivers and streams ran southwards to join the mighty Zambezi which itself rose in our District (…) The woodlands were largely *brachistygia* woods, with generally low and flat-topped trees. The soils varied from ochre to deep red, not particularly fertile, suited mainly to the cultivation of the staple cassava (…) The trees were that peculiar mixture of evergreen and deciduous (…) one could have (…) the cultivated colours of bougainvillea, wisteria, flame tree, frangipani or canna lily around houses and gardens.[513]

The environment should not be taken as a static backdrop. Through habitation, cultivation and adaptation, the human population has sought to tailor environmental opportunities to changing needs and objectives. The environmental setting enables human action, but equally poses limits to it. Agricultural practices, hunting, foraging and fishing are particularly affected by and connected to environmental factors, as rainfall, temperature and soil characteristics influence the flora and fauna of an area. These factors have a bearing on which crops can be grown and which methods of production appear most suitable in the particular setting. On the other hand, human agency can shape and alter the environment for its own purposes. People mould the environment, for example by making use of fire, cutting down trees, fertilising the soil, hunting on game, etc.[514] The intimate connection between people and the environment has created a wealth of knowledge, which provides tools to cope with a challenging, yet potentially promising, surrounding. It is within the framework of environmental factors that people are 'capable of manipulating the natural world to their advantage.'[515]

The soils of the area (predominantly Kalahari contact soils) are generally acidic and of low productivity, but specific crops such as pineapples and cassava can thrive on them. Yet soil types vary across the area. Patches of fertile red clay soil, in addition to river floodplains or damboes, provide sites which are more suited to agricultural production, in particular of maize, rice and vegetables. The area contains rich forest vegetation with many types of trees, providing a prosperous setting for game and bees. Tree height and density of growth differ, and thick forest (*mavunda*), areas with low stunted trees (*ikuna*), extensive grass plains (*chana*) and riverside damboes exist side by side.[516] This diversity was noticed by colonial officials travelling through the area: 'We passed through seductive looking country for game – more varied – many more dambos – with more of a broken character – with anthills

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[511] See: J.C. McCann, *Green land, brown land, black land: An environmental history of Africa, 1800-1990* (Portsmouth and Oxford, 1999); J.A. Pritchett, *The Lunda-Ndembu: Style, change, and social transformation in South Central Africa* (Madison, 2001).

[512] See: Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees*; K.P. Vickery, *Black and white in Southern Zambia: The Tonga plateau economy and British imperialism, 1890-1939* (New York etc., 1986); Spear, *Mountain farmers*.

[513] W.D. Grant, *Zambia, then and now: Colonial rulers and their African successors* (London etc., 2008), 38-40.

[514] Beinart, 'African history and environmental history'.

[515] W. Beinart and P. Coates, *Historical connections: Environment and history, The taming of nature in the USA and South Africa* (London and New York, 1995), 4.

[516] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mrs Zabetha Nkemba, 8 May 2010, Nyakaseya; M.K. Fisher, *Lunda-Ndembu dictionary* (Rev. ed., Ikelenge, 1984).

in them (…) Again a country of changes (…) Then a forest of well-spread trees, with red trunks.'[517] Compensating for the poor soils, the area is well endowed with water resources, containing numerous streams and rivers. Meteorologically, seasonal fluctuations are significant. Temperatures average a moderate 29°C throughout the year, yet rise during the hot months of September and October before the rains set in. During the nights, especially in the cold months of June and July, temperatures drop, on occasion causing frosts which jeopardise the growth of crops. Rainfall is abundant with an average of 55 inches (1,397 mm) per year, yet it is confined to the rain season from October to April. This limits the potential growth period of crops, as during the dry season from May to September agricultural production is only feasible under irrigation in riverside gardens. Climatic considerations thus make that the main agricultural activities are carried out during the rains. The dry season is a time for hunting, travel to distant relatives, initiation ceremonies and festivities.[518]

This blend of physical, climatic and environmental features has shaped opportunities for hunting, honey collecting and the cultivation of crops such as millet or cassava. The environmental diversity of Mwinilunga has enabled the co-existence of various livelihood strategies. One individual can simultaneously cultivate maize in bush fields, catch fish in the rivers, collect mushrooms from the forest and plant beans along the streamside. The environment can provide individuals with many of the necessities of daily life. Within the vicinity food, thatching grass, and poles, or even clothing material, iron ore and other trade items can be obtained. Such an environmental setting of opportunity and constraint has encouraged a degree of fluidity, competition and struggle, which is expressed in the frequent shifting of village locations to access suitable hunting, fishing or cultivating grounds.[519]

The low population density of the area, coupled with the low productivity of the soils, has encouraged a slash-and-burn type of shifting cultivation,[520] described as:

> the felling or lopping each year of a large area of woodland, an area several times greater than that on which crops are actually grown. Felling (…) is done in the early dry season, from May to August (…) Over the area of woodland selected for new gardens the trees are cut with the axe at (…) [knee] height, all but the hardest and toughest trunks, which are left standing, and the branches are lopped from them and spread between the stumps to dry (…) the branches are collected and built into small stacks (…) The brushwood stacks are burned at the end of the dry season, when it is thought that the rains are about to break.[521]

Fields are burnt in this manner to enhance soil fertility whilst limiting the growth of weeds. After several years of cultivation, when soil fertility is largely depleted, the plot is left fallow to regenerate.[522] To spread the risk of crop failure and provide a varied diet, agricultural producers practice intercropping. This involves the growing of different crops, an array of staple and subsidiary crops, on a single plot of land. As staple crops grains (sorghum and millet), cassava and maize are mostly grown. Subsidiary crops range from pumpkins, sweet potatoes and yams, to leaf vegetables, tomatoes and cabbage. Moreover, foraging, hunting, fishing and animal husbandry add variety to the diet and complement the food supplies from agricultural production. Productive activities are generally executed individually, yet household and village co-operation (through work parties, communal hunts

[517] (BOD) MSS776, Theodore Williams Diaries, 23, 26 and 29 January 1913.

[518] This account is based on a wide reading of archival sources (NAZ) and observations from Mwinilunga District. See: Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*; O. Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating or migrating villagers? A study of movement from North West Zambia to Angola' (PhD thesis, University of Bath, 1999); Chabatama, 'Peasant farming'; D.S. Johnson (ed.), *Handbook to the North-Western Province 1980* (Lusaka, 1980); V.W. Turner, *Schism and continuity in an African society: A study of Ndembu village life* (Manchester etc., 1957); C.G. Trapnell and J.N. Clothier, *The soils, vegetation, and agricultural systems of Northwestern Rhodesia: Report of the ecological survey* (2nd edn., Lusaka, 1957).

[519] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, Chapter Two; Turner, *Schism and continuity,* Chapter One.

[520] (NAZ) The population density in Mwinilunga District was 2.9 people per square mile in 1943, but rose to 6 people per square mile in 1970.

[521] Allan, *African husbandman*, 66.

[522] See: Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees*.

or foraging expeditions) equally occur.[523] In this manner, through the diversification of livelihood strategies, the spread of risks and an adaptation of the human to the environmental setting, producers in Mwinilunga have attempted to secure their requirements and fulfil their objectives of a stable basis of subsistence. Although these strategies vary between individuals, areas and historical time periods, they constitute a basic repertoire from which people can tap, the internal foundation of production.

Production and debates on the 'moral economy'

The concept of the 'moral economy' has been coined in an attempt to counter narratives of expansive capitalism, which suggest linear transitions from subsistence to market production.[524] Although the concept has been heavily critiqued, it can provide an understanding of why non-capitalist forms of economic production, social relationships, norms and values have persisted, next to and in spite of market engagement.[525] Understanding the ideas behind the 'moral economy' might assist to place the case of Mwinilunga District in a more comprehensive framework than that offered by models of capitalist market integration.

For the case of Tanzania, in an environmental setting comparable to that of Mwinilunga, Hyden has described that 'producing the basic necessities is a cumbersome task.'[526] Moreover, 'meeting minimal human needs in a reliable manner forms the central criterion which knits together the peasants' choices of seeds, techniques, timing, rotation, etc.'[527] For rural South-East Asia, Scott refers to the 'subsistence ethic':

> Subsistence-oriented peasants typically prefer to avoid economic disaster rather than take risks to maximize their average income (…) Living close to the subsistence margin and subject to the vagaries of weather and the claims of outsiders, the peasant household has little scope for the profit maximization calculus (…) his behavior is risk-averse: he minimizes the subjective probability of the maximum loss (…) It is this "safety-first" principle which lies behind a great many of the technical, social, and moral arrangements of a precapitalist agrarian order.[528]

Rural producers aim to generate sufficient supplies for subsistence. Nevertheless, subsistence remains a precarious balance due to the constraints posed by the environment as well as by factors of production, such as labour and land.[529] Consequently, securing subsistence, rather than engaging in high-risk market production, might be a priority to rural producers. To understand market involvement, it is thus imperative to understand the subsistence basis of production.

During the colonial period and afterwards, rural producers in Mwinilunga District have all too often been presented as eking out a meagre existence from the land. Such views have portrayed agricultural producers, particularly during the pre-colonial period, as conservative and lacking in innovative potential. In colonial reports from the 1950s overtly negative valuations remained commonplace: '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.'[530] Colonial officials and agricultural experts assumed, however, that this state of agricultural production had started or would soon start to change under the influence of capitalism:

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[523] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*; Turner, *Schism and continuity*; Chabatama, 'Peasant farming'.

[524] Thompson, 'The moral economy of the English crowd'; Scott, *Moral economy*; Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa.*

[525] For a review, see: W.J. Booth, 'On the idea of the moral economy', *The American political science review* 88:3 (1994), 653-67. For a critique, see: S.L. Popkin, *The rational peasant: The political economy of rural society in Vietnam* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1979).

[526] Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa*, 13.

[527] Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa,* 14.

[528] Scott, *Moral economy,* VII, 4, 5.

[529] S.S. Berry, *No condition is permanent: The social dynamics of agrarian change in sub-Saharan Africa* (Madison, 1993); G. Austin, 'Resources, techniques and strategies south of the Sahara: Revising the factor endowments perspective on African economic development, 1500-2000', *Economic history review* 61:3 (2008), 587-624.

[530] (NAZ) SEC2/958, K. Duff-White, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, March 1950.

> profound changes came with the cash economy (…) the need of every man to possess money (…) was something altogether new and revolutionary (…) It had to be earned by wage labour where work was available, or by the sale of the surplus of subsistence food production where markets were offered, or by growing industrial cash crops where these were introduced by the new masters. These changes did not come easily and were at first resisted.[531]

The transformative encounter between African agricultural producers and pervasive external forces such as trade, markets and European presence has evoked extensive debate. Whether this encounter was to be seen in a positive light (giving rise to market production and development), or in a negative light (extracting surplus production through domination, causing environmental degradation and leading to underdevelopment), the premise was that external factors had caused change in local methods of production.[532] Countering such views, the case of Mwinilunga suggests that change was inherent to agricultural production and was not exclusively driven by external factors. Factors such as environmental variation, state policies or fluctuating terms of trade would be accommodated into crop repertoires and methods of production, into an internal foundation of values, norms, relationships and practices.[533]

According to Scott, peasants in South-East Asia negotiated change through a 'moral economy'. The moral economy is based on concepts such as the 'subsistence ethic', the 'safety-first' principle and notions of economic justice (marked by patterns of reciprocity, generosity and work-sharing within the village).[534] Hyden has translated such concepts to a Tanzanian setting, by referring to the 'economy of affection', which he defines as 'a network of support, communications and interaction among structurally defined groups connected by blood, kin, community or other affinities, for example, religion.'[535] The function of the economy of affection mainly relates to basic survival, social maintenance and development, being 'primarily concerned with the problems of reproduction rather than production.'[536] With certain modifications, such concepts can facilitate an understanding of production, market involvement and economic trajectories in the area of Mwinilunga.

Concepts associated with the moral economy can explain why rural producers made particular choices throughout history. Some of these choices seemed contrary to the economic logic of profit-maximisation and have consequently been valued negatively by external observers.[537] Despite its merits, models of the moral economy have adopted a very static stance towards economic change.[538] Hyden argues that there are 'certain normative and structural incompatibilities between the economy of affection and the requirements of a capitalist economy.'[539] Accordingly, 'the persistence and perseverance' of the economy of affection might be seen as 'the most significant factor inhibiting economic development.'[540] Rather than taking the concepts of the moral economy as archaic barriers

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[531] Allan, *African husbandman,* 336-7.

[532] On underdevelopment, see: R.H. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds.), *The roots of rural poverty in Central and Southern Africa* (London etc., 1977); G. Arrighi, 'Labour supplies in historical perspective: A study of the proletarianization of the African peasantry in Rhodesia', *Journal of development studies* 6:3 (1969/70), 197-234. On development, see: Bates, 'Some conventional orthodoxies'. RLI scholars on the one hand believed that labour migration and capitalist penetration would lead to rural decline, yet they did acknowledge tendencies towards rural 'development' due to capitalism and marketing.

[533] Chabatama, 'Peasant farming'; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*.

[534] Scott, *Moral economy.*

[535] Hyden, *No shortcuts to progress: African development management in perspective* (London etc., 1983), 8.

[536] Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa*, 18; T. Tsuruta, 'Between moral economy and economy of affection', in: I.N. Kimambo, G. Hyden, S. Maghimbi and K. Sugimura (eds.), *Contemporary perspectives on African moral economy* (Dar es Salaam, 2008), 37.

[537] Booth, 'On the idea of the moral economy', 654.

[538] Booth, 'On the idea of the moral economy', 658.

[539] R. Lemarchand, 'African peasantries, reciprocity and the market: The economy of affection reconsidered', *Cahiers d'études africaines* 29:113 (1989), 57.

[540] T. Waters, 'A cultural analysis of the economy of affection and the uncaptured peasantry in Tanzania', *The journal of modern African studies* 30:1 (1992), 163.

impeding economic activity and market involvement, rural producers in Mwinilunga used their internal foundation of production, their moral economy, as a starting point to engage the market and the state.[541] Lemarchand has suggested that:

> one might also conceive of situations where the normative pressures of the traditional order act as major incentives for involvement in the capitalist economy (…) the rewards of the capitalist economy providing the guarantees, as it were, of continuing or increasing high social standing in traditional milieux.[542]

What Hyden sees as 'two contending modes of production', namely the pre-modern mode of production giving rise to the economy of affection versus the capitalist mode of production giving rise to the market economy, should not be interpreted in binary terms.[543] The moral economy could serve to encourage involvement in the market economy, making the two mutually conducive.

In Mwinilunga both officials and producers claim that the primary objective of production is 'food' or 'subsistence'.[544] The basic aim is to produce enough to feed a household in a dependable manner. Nevertheless, the notion of subsistence production becomes blurred once it is taken into account that production in the area has always been geared towards exchange, ritual and marketing, next to direct consumption.[545] Subsistence production has always been more encompassing than the requirements of bare necessity:

> While a minimum income has solid physiological dimensions, we must not overlook its social and cultural implications. In order to be a fully functioning member of village society, a household needs a certain level of resources to discharge its necessary ceremonial and social obligations as well as to feed itself adequately and continue to cultivate.[546]

Related to this, 'there is a long-term planning perspective within the peasant household, but it relates less to productive than to socially reproductive needs.'[547] Being about more than mere feeding, food production entails social, cultural, political and economic features.[548]

A more positive valuation of subsistence production could go a long way in explaining productive activities in Mwinilunga District in a less dichotomous – *either* subsistence-oriented *or* market-oriented – way. Subsistence might be viewed as the aim to create a stable and dependable basis of production, involving a striving for a level of surplus, as a buffer in years of adversity, in case of environmental disaster, to fulfil social obligations or for trade and sale.[549] This stable and abundant basis of production could serve as a starting point to expand levels of production and engage with markets. As Waters has argued, the moral and the market economy were not incompatible:

> the peasant can 'choose' to have one foot in the traditional moral-based economy and one in the market system (…) The fact that the market economy is of use and interest to peasants does not mean that they

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[541] Throughout this work I have chosen to adopt 'moral economy' rather than 'economy of affection', because I would like to emphasise the concepts which Scott calls the 'subsistence ethic', the 'safety-first principle' and concepts of economic justice, instead of underlining the socially embedded connotations which Hyden attaches to the 'economy of affection'.

[542] Lemarchand, 'African peasantries, reciprocity and the market', 60.

[543] Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa.*

[544] Individuals would state that they engaged in agriculture 'just for eating', '*twatemwanga yakudya hohu*'. Colonial and postcolonial reports are littered with complaints regarding the subsistence – rather than the market – orientation of production in Mwinilunga.

[545] A. von Oppen, *Terms of trade and terms of trust: The history and contexts of pre-colonial market production around the Upper Zambezi and Kasai* (Münster etc., 1994); J. Vansina, *How societies are born: Governance in West Central Africa before 1600* (Charlottesville etc., 2004).

[546] Scott, *Moral economy*, 9.

[547] Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa*, 14.

[548] F. De Boeck, ''When hunger goes around the land': Hunger and food among the Aluund of Zaire', *Man* 29:2 (1994), 257-82.

[549] K. Crehan, 'Mukunashi: An exploration of some effects of the penetration of capital in North-Western Zambia', *Journal of Southern African studies* 8:1 (1981/82), 82-93.

> have been 'captured'. They do place high values on the goods that markets make available (…) But that is not to say that manufactured items are necessarily 'required', let alone absolutely 'needed'.[550]

By adopting concepts derived from the moral economy, the involvement or non-involvement of producers in Mwinilunga District with the market economy might be understood in a different light.[551]

Because rural producers possess the factors of production (land and labour), Hyden asserts their relative independence. This is a major asset, making rural producers 'small but powerful', especially vis-à-vis the state and external actors, who struggle to effectively influence, control or 'capture' producers. Smallholder producers retain a degree of autonomy towards the market and the state, and they can opt out of involvement when conditions or policies prove unfavourable.[552] Why, to what extent and on which terms did people in Mwinilunga become involved with the market and the state on a day to day basis through their productive activities?[553]

The internal foundation of production in Mwinilunga – or the 'moral economy' defined in a broad sense, encompassing factors of environment, methods of production, modes of co-operation, trade, market involvement as well as norms and values – continually changed and adapted itself. Production was versatile and dynamic rather than static. Change could be triggered by numerous factors, including environmental fluctuations, state policies and marketing opportunities. The internal foundation of production was flexible, accommodating new crops, techniques and knowledge, yet change was not necessarily transformative.[554] Cohesion was provided by the primacy placed on generating a stable basis of subsistence. Such a stable basis of production could enable producers to participate in the market economy by producing surplus crops in a relatively risk-free manner. Because of the primacy placed on livelihood and food security, market production primarily involved items which proved compatible with existing patterns of production. Once the market slumped, producers would withdraw from market production and could fall back on a stable basis of subsistence, which was not jeopardised unnecessarily. This livelihood basis enabled producers to step into the market by producing surplus crops, yet equally provided a buffer against being completely 'captured' by the market. When it comes to market involvement, producers in Mwinilunga sought to safeguard their autonomy and security of subsistence. Individuals sought to negotiate market involvement on their own terms, dealing with factors such as price fluctuations, marketing opportunities and transport in ingenious manners.[555] How did the internal foundation of production work out in the day to day practices of producers in Mwinilunga District? This question will be explored through several case studies, which counterpoise narratives of increasing market involvement with the internal foundations of production in Mwinilunga.

From shifting cultivation to fixed farming: Policies and practice

Looking at the discourses which colonial and post-colonial officials adopted when devising agricultural policies and interventions can illustrate the rationale behind promoting cash crop production, marketing schemes or agricultural development. Agricultural policies, and the scientific knowledge at their basis, were attempts at social engineering as much as they were geared towards agricultural 'improvement'.[556] 'The developmentalist state' had ambitions 'to reorganize agricultural production

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[550] Waters, 'A cultural analysis of the economy of affection', 164, 171.

[551] For non-involvement, see: F. Cooper, 'What is the concept of globalization good for?: An African historian's perspective', *African affairs* 100:399 (2001), 189-213.

[552] Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa*; J.C. Scott*, Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed* (New Haven and London, 1998)*;* J.C. Scott, *The art of not being governed: An anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven and London, 2009)*.*

[553] K. Crehan, *The fractured community: Landscapes of power and gender in rural Zambia* (Berkeley etc., 1997)*.*

[554] Chabatama, 'Peasant farming'.

[555] This will be explained below. See: Spear, *Mountain farmers,* for parallels.

[556] W. Beinart, K. Brown and D. Gilfoyle, 'Experts and expertise in colonial Africa reconsidered: Science and the interpenetration of knowledge', *African affairs* 108:432 (2009), 418.

and to hasten African society into modernity.'[557] In Mwinilunga, agricultural policies predominantly revolved around settlement patterns, as stable villages instead of shifting homesteads were considered a prerequisite of successful farming.[558] Discourses regarding settlement patterns provide a useful way in to understand agricultural policies. Official discourse did not only influence policy lines and ideologies, but local agricultural practices and responses as well – though not in a straightforward manner. The reasons behind the failure of government attempts to fix settlement patterns can reveal the logic of agricultural production in the area of Mwinilunga.[559]

Government policies have wrestled with the issue of settlement patterns throughout the twentieth century, 'both to gain administrative leverage and to prevent deforestation and improve agricultural practices.'[560] Due to the level of mobility it propelled, the practice of shifting slash-and-burn cultivation was regarded as an administrative nuisance and was labelled 'wasteful' or 'destructive'.[561] Instead, government proposals advocated forms of fixed farming and settlement, aiming to 'improve' existing agricultural practices.[562] Proposals were cloaked in the benevolent rhetoric of high yields, scientific methods and agricultural 'development'. Post-colonial government schemes went even further, by plotting Intensive Development Zones which would tie farmers to the land through fertiliser, technology and agricultural loans.[563] The envisaged transition from shifting cultivation under primitive methods to fixed farming based on scientific principles, runs as a long-term thread through agricultural policies of the twentieth century.[564]

Throughout the nineteenth century settlement patterns in the area of Mwinilunga had been dispersed, yet villages had overwhelmingly concentrated along rivers and streams, close to patches of fertile soil or hunting grounds.[565] Villages tended to shift their location in intervals of two to twenty years, for example if the soils in an area had become depleted, in search for hunting or fishing grounds, due to deaths, quarrels or other problems. Upon moving, existing village sites and fields would be abandoned, left to gain fertility and regenerate. Movement could occur over short or long distances, depending on the motives for and objectives of the move. Due to low population density and low soil fertility in the area of Mwinilunga, these settlement patterns proved environmentally sound and productive.[566] With the establishment of colonial rule, however, 'impermanence' was heavily condemned, as it led to a lifestyle 'in the bush' which was mobile and difficult to control.[567] This explains the persistent frustrations with the 'nomadic inclinations' of the Lunda:

> with few exceptions all villages were bad, many of the huts appear to be temporary, hastily constructed buildings, while at nearly all villages many residents content themselves with grass makunkas [huts] thrown upon the clearing (…) I have now instructed all headmen that they will be destroyed at once,

[557] C. Bonneuil, 'Development as experiment: Science and state building in late colonial and postcolonial Africa, 1930-1970', *Osiris* 2:15 (2000), 267.

[558] G. Kay, 'Social aspects of village regrouping in Zambia' (University of Hull, 1967); Crehan and von Oppen, *Planners and history*.

[559] A. Bowman, 'Ecology to technocracy: Scientists, surveys and power in the agricultural development of late-colonial Zambia', *Journal of Southern African studies* 37:1 (2011), 135-53; Bonneuil, 'Development as experiment'.

[560] S.S. Berry, 'Hegemony on a shoestring: Indirect rule and access to agricultural land', *Africa* 62:3 (1992), 331; Berry, *No condition is permanent*, 49, 89-94.

[561] Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees*; A. Von Oppen, 'The village as territory: Enclosing locality in northwest Zambia, 1950s to 1990s', *Journal of African history* 47:1 (2006), 57-75.

[562] See: A. Von Oppen, 'Bounding villages: The enclosure of locality in Central Africa, 1890s to 1990s' (Habilitationsgeschrift, Humboldt University of Berlin, 2003).

[563] Crehan and Von Oppen, *Planners and history.*

[564] N. Cullather, 'Miracles of modernization: The green revolution and the apotheosis of technology', *Diplomatic history* 28:2 (2004), 229.

[565] See Chapter 1.

[566] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example, Mrs Alfonsina Chingangu, 15 October 2008, Ntambu; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*; Turner, *Schism and continuity*.

[567] Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees*.

> and replaced by huts properly constructed on an additional cleared space added to the present clearing (…) this country does not want people who are not prepared to build good huts, cultivate properly, and pay their tax.[568]

Fixed settlements would be beneficial to administrative aims of order and control. Not only would large stable villages facilitate the recording of census and the enforcement of legislation, but they would also aid the collection of taxes and encourage the production of crops for the market.[569] Officials stated that: '[People] should have settled homes (…) it is much better to have fair sized villages erect good huts and plant large gardens.'[570] Local patterns of agriculture and settlement were condemned as 'crude', no matter whether they were ecologically sound.[571] Colonial reports might record acute food shortages due to shifting cultivation of an 'irregular and sporadic nature',[572] which could only be remedied after 'the natives have been taught the value of crop rotation, and more scientific agricultural methods generally.'[573] As a result, scientific alternatives to local agricultural practices were presented as 'superior'.[574] The colonial administration condemned shifting cultivation and related agricultural practices out of considerations of order and control, rather than due to a well-conceived agricultural rationale.

Even if shifting cultivation was ill-understood and propaganda for fixed farming was based on government misconceptions regarding the environment and agricultural production, official policies persistently advocated settled forms of cultivation by 'progressive farmers'.[575] The following excerpt from the 1950s, the period of 'high modernism' and the apex of the technocratic developmental state,[576] reflects such views by stating the aims of agricultural policies:

> 1) to raise the level of nutrition 2) to provide a satisfactory income from the sale of suitable cash crops tailored to fit human, ecological conditions and market requirements 3) to stabilise and concentrate the population, with due regard to the protection of natural resources by the introduction of sound methods of agriculture 4) to regulate and wherever possible to rationalise and intensify traditional extensive methods of agriculture 5) to assist in protecting the vital headwater areas.[577]

Policy lines condemned existing agricultural practices and proposed an interventionist approach. Through the installation of various schemes, such as school gardens, demonstration plots, irrigation schemes, peasant farming schemes, the use of agricultural demonstrators and the issuing of improved livestock, poultry and cattle breeds, alternative or 'improved' methods of production were promoted.[578] Simultaneously, such schemes were supposed to tie farmers and households to the land, by encouraging investment in fertiliser, inputs and farming equipment. Attention was focused on crop rotation, the use of compost and manure, ploughing, anti-erosion measures and irrigation, among other things.[579]

The peasant farming scheme of the 1940s and 1950s was a particularly striking case of such trends. This scheme promoted permanent as opposed to shifting cultivation, advocated the integration of animal husbandry and agriculture (through the use of manure, draught power and fodder cultivation), suggested various cycles of rotation, propagated methods of soil conservation and

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[568] (NAZ) KSE6/6/2, C.S. Parsons, Mwinilunga Sub-District Tour Report, 16 May 1924.
[569] Bonneuil, 'Development as experiment', 268-74. Scott, *Seeing like a state,* on 'legibility'.
[570] (NAZ) KSE6/3/1, Mwinilunga Sub-District Report Indaba, 13 October 1916.
[571] Bonneuil, 'Development as experiment', 266-8, 276.
[572] (NAZ) KSE6/6/2, H.B. Waugh, Mwinilunga Sub-District Tour Report, 9 November 1929.
[573] (NAZ) KSE6/6/2, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Tour Report, 3 June 1928.
[574] 'Scientific' knowledge was also shaped by the situation encountered on the ground – local and scientific knowledge were co-constructed. See: Bowman, 'Ecology to technocracy'; Beinart, 'Experts and expertise'.
[575] Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees,* 114-6.
[576] Beinart, 'Experts and expertise', 430; Bonneuil, 'Development as experiment'.
[577] (NAZ) NWP1/2/83 Loc.4914, Department of Agriculture North Western Province Annual Report, 1958.
[578] This view is based on a broad reading of archival sources (NAZ) and (UNIPA); Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees,* provide parallels.
[579] (NAZ) SEC2/258, Vol. I, Industries and Trade – Agriculture, General Development and Improvement, November 1934.

irrigation, whilst encouraging the growth of cash crops for marketing purposes.[580] Fixed and concentrated settlements were promoted, 'in order to facilitate future development plans':

> These people should be encouraged to increase the size of their gardens and to produce more crops both for the benefit of themselves and of others. It can be seen that little progress can be made with stepping up the agricultural output of this area until such time as many of the settlements are re-grouped into more compact and economic units.[581]

Next to agricultural aims, the peasant farming scheme intended to affect the lifestyle and attitudes of participants, creating 'progressive farmers' who would market their crops, build 'improved' houses, wear 'decent' clothes, plant fruit trees, educate their children and live in nuclear households, disassociating themselves from the exactions of extended kin.[582]

After independence the humanist rhetoric took rural development even further, firmly basing it in Intensive Development Zones where fixed settlements would be the norm: 'The general feeling of the Settlement Schemes is that plans should be redesigned to settle people in big groups rather than scattered families to facilitate the provision of social amenities (…) like water, schools, clinics etc.'[583] Larger, concentrated and stable villages would facilitate the provisioning of extension services, farming requisites, marketing and social services through the state and parastatals.[584] But in spite of persistent policies, fixed farming did not appear to be catching on: 'the tendency over the last few years is for more smaller villages to be set up rather than larger ones.'[585] By looking at a number of case studies, it will become apparent why policy and practice diverged.

Although discursive attempts were made to instigate changes in patterns of production through official policies, these were not always accepted, let alone welcomed. Villages continued to shift their location and production continued to be geared towards subsistence, as well as market production. Discourses of agricultural 'improvement' or 'development' tended to overlook the environmental and labour conditions of the area, giving rise to a policy mismatch and popular resistance to proposed agricultural schemes. Official policies were not so much underlain by a benevolent desire to 'improve' local agriculture, but aimed at bureaucratic control. Yet producers were not passive in adopting recommendations. Government schemes designed to 'improve' agricultural practices and stabilise settlement patterns would only be adopted in so far as they could be rhymed with existing techniques, methods of production and attitudes. Rather than seeing the colonial and post-colonial states as hegemonic, it should be examined 'how the global discourses of modernity, epitomised by attempts to introduce explicitly 'modern' husbandry practices, were given very different receptions on the ground, and highlighting the spatial differences in how modernity was experienced.'[586] Although settlements increasingly shifted towards the roadside, this did not entail a unidirectional movement towards market production or stable methods of farming. Why were schemes to promote improved methods of farming resisted? The answer lies in the dissonance between government schemes, environmental conditions and local methods of production, leading back to the internal foundations of production in Mwinilunga District.

On subsistence and market production

Policies which proposed substituting shifting by fixed forms of cultivation carried assumptions about a transition from 'subsistence' to 'market' production. In the area of Mwinilunga, however, the

[580] (NAZ) SEC2/336, J.S. Moffat, Peasant Farm Blocks, Experimental Scheme, 1947-8. Von Oppen; Pritchett.
[581] (NAZ) SEC2/963, P.L.N. Hannaford, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, July 1955.
[582] (NAZ) NWP1/2/26 Loc.4901, R.N. Lines, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 6 March 1949; Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees,* 115.
[583] (UNIPA) UNIP8/1/107, Highlights of the Right Honourable Prime Minister's Tour of the North-Western Province from 9th to 19th July 1977.
[584] Kay, 'Social aspects of village regrouping'; Crehan and Von Oppen, *Planners and history*.
[585] (NAZ) MAG2/21/86, Brief on Rural Development, North-Western Province, July 1970.
[586] G. Carswell, 'Multiple historical geographies: Responses and resistance to colonial conservation schemes in East Africa', *Journal of historical geography* 32 (2006), 399.

repertoire of cultivated crops is highly diverse, making distinctions between subsistence and cash crops anything but clear-cut. Crops grown for 'subsistence' could be – and often were – marketed, whereas crops grown for the market might equally be consumed as food locally.[587] Producers in Mwinilunga have since long been familiar with the exchange, barter and trade of food. The food transactions between local producers and trading caravans during the nineteenth century might already be interpreted as incipient forms of market production.[588] Notwithstanding the dynamism of patterns of production and trade, European travellers, colonial officials and post-colonial agents persistently reasserted grievances about the 'subsistence level' of agricultural production in Mwinilunga District. Rural producers were blamed for general 'apathy', lack of initiative and an absence of 'market logic'. Yet subsistence production itself should be re-evaluated in a more positive manner, which provides a more fruitful approach towards agricultural production in Mwinilunga.

Especially during the opening decades of the twentieth century, when colonial rule was not yet firmly established, administrators would regularly lament the low levels of agricultural production throughout Mwinilunga District. Production was described as geared exclusively towards 'subsistence':

> Native agriculture is of the rudest, probably the most primitive to be found in NW [North Western] Rhodesia. Little indeed beyond manioc [cassava] is grown and but the minimum quantity of that is produced. Travellers find the greatest difficulty in procuring supplies even at exorbitant prices.[589]

Widespread hunger, or even starvation, would be reported on occasion. This was the case after the imposition of taxation in 1913, which caused population flight to Angola and Congo to avoid payment:

> 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.[590]

Although food shortages would generally be temporary, localised and overcome in the course of the next agricultural season, official complaints about meagre food supplies and subsistence production proved unremitting. As late as 1970 it was remarked that: 'Most of the people are still subsistence farmers, growing enough only for their consumption requirements, and only selling a little which enables them to purchase basic household utensils.'[591]

Officials negatively associated the concept of 'subsistence' with the production of the bare necessities for survival without reserving any 'surplus' for marketing.[592] The idea of 'normal surplus' might provide an alternative, more positive, evaluation of subsistence production:

> It would appear to be a reasonable – if not axiomatic – proposition that subsistence cultivators, dependent entirely or almost entirely on the produce of their gardens, tend to cultivate an area large enough to ensure their food supply in a season of poor yields. Otherwise the community would be exposed to frequent privation and grave risk of extermination or dispersal by famine, more especially in regions of uncertain and fluctuating rainfall. One would, therefore, expect the production of a "normal surplus" of food in the average year.[593]

Cultivators would aim to produce a surplus at all times in order to have sufficient supplies even in years of adversity. Indeed, after dramatic occurrences such as the imposition of taxation or locust attacks, individuals in Mwinilunga would still aim to secure sufficient supplies of food through a variety of

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[587] G. Carswell, 'Food crops as cash crops: The case of colonial Kigezi, Uganda', *Journal of agrarian change* 3:4 (2003), 521-51.

[588] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*.

[589] (NAZ) KSE6/1/1, G.A. MacGregor, Balunda District Annual Report, 1909.

[590] (BOD) Mss Afr. S779, Theodore Williams Correspondences, 16 February 1914.

[591] (NAZ) MRD1/8/27 Loc.4272, North-Western Province Development Committee, 20 March 1970.

[592] Crehan, 'Mukunashi'.

[593] Allan, *African husbandman*, 38, 44-5 argues that next to storage, exchange, sale or working 'beer parties', 'normal surplus' could be used for: 'the fulfilment of social obligations, to acquire prestige by the display of hospitality and generosity, and to honour important people, while in some societies it entered into barter trade and played a part in religious ritual.'

coping strategies. These included harvesting cassava gardens all at once instead of in bits and pieces, or working for friends and relatives in return for food.[594] This implied that in a 'normal year', when no adversity occurred, a surplus would remain. The subsistence basis could provide a surplus which might be bartered, traded or used for other purposes. In this sense, subsistence production could serve to step into the market.[595] Therefore, subsistence and market production should not be interpreted as mutually exclusive. By providing a stable source of livelihood, the production of subsistence crops could facilitate market engagement through the production of cash crops.

Subsistence and market production could feed into one another. Staple crops often had a dual character, functioning as food crops which could be marketed once the opportunity arose. Issues of labour proved particularly important. Cassava could provide a stable source of food, for instance, but the low labour demands of the crop could equally free up time and energy for the production of other crops, which might include cash crops destined for marketing.[596] Market production, moreover, was not a universal attraction. Hyden has argued that it migt be 'an ambiguous process, in which the risks of loss are as great as the prospects of gain.' Market production might involve 'losses in respect of other values and, above all, it is a matter of trading social autonomy for increased dependence on other social classes', market production might not be 'a temptation to people, but a sacrifice.'[597] By looking at staple crop production in the area of Mwinilunga, concepts of subsistence and market production will be further analysed. Staple crops could simultaneously function as food and cash crops. Issues of marketing, state policies, agro-ecological and labour concerns all influenced the adoption of crops as staples, though preferences could shift over time.

Meal: Markets, state policies and values

Although official policies throughout the twentieth century mainly encouraged the cultivation of cash crops, staple food production was equally a subject of debate. Why did the main staple crops in the area change over time? Was this due to official policy and considerations of marketing, due to historical and ecological considerations or due to the values of cultivators? Official discourse presumed a transition from hunting and foraging to more settled forms of agricultural production based on grain and root crops, presupposing a trend from gathering wild fruits to cultivating sorghum, or from hunting to herding small livestock.[598] Due to factors of marketing and state control, maize was promoted as the most 'modern' staple crop over the course of the twentieth century, whilst alternatives such as sorghum, millet and cassava were denounced as 'primitive'.[599] Such discourses and policies proposed a binary between 'subsistence' and 'market' production. Looking at why foraging persisted, or why maize was not universally adopted can illustrate market dynamics, state policies and the internal foundations of production in Mwinilunga District.

The two basic components of a meal in Mwinilunga consist of *nshima* (thick porridge, made by stirring flour into boiling water) and *mafu* (relish, a side dish of vegetables and/or meat, *mbiji*). Without these two components, a meal is not considered complete. A person may have snacked on yams or sweet potatoes, but can nevertheless claim not to have eaten all day if no *nshima* (the only real food)

[594] Chabatama, 'Peasant farming'; J.A. Pritchett, *Friends for life, friends for death: Cohorts and consciousness among the Lunda-Ndembu* (Charlottesville etc., 2007).
[595] Carswell, 'Food crops as cash crops'.
[596] Pritchett, *Friends for life*.
[597] Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa*, 4.
[598] K.M. de Luna, 'Collecting food, cultivating persons: Wild resource use in Central African political culture, c. 1000 B.C.E. to c. 1900 C.E.' (PhD thesis, Evanston IL, 2008).
[599] J. Pottier, *Migrants no more: Settlement and survival in Mambwe villages, Zambia* (Manchester, 1988); J.C. McCann, *Maize and grace: Africa's encounter with a new world crop, 1500-2000* (Cambridge etc., 2005).

has been served yet.[600] The types of flour used for *nshima* have changed over the years, yet shifts in preference and use have been gradual, partial and contested.[601] Today, different types of flour are used interchangeably and occasionally a composite *nshima* is created by mixing two types of flour whilst cooking. Maize and cassava meal can be combined for *nshima* and this is regarded as a true delicacy.[602] *Nshima* is intimately connected to issues of identity and group cohesion, being considered to be 'as old as the Lunda'.[603] Elders recall that, when agriculture was not yet well established or was jeopardised by natural or man-made causes, wild roots would be collected from the bush to pound into flour for *nshima*. In cases of severe food shortage this practice might still be reinvigorated, but otherwise wild roots have been replaced by cultivated grain and root crops as the main staple foods.[604] Sorghum (*masa*) and millet (*kachai*, finger millet, or *mahangu,* bulrush millet) were adopted in the course of the first millennium A.D., whereas from the seventeenth century onwards cassava and maize have increasingly been added to the cultivating repertoire.[605] A historical shift from wild roots, to sorghum and millet, to cassava and more recently maize can be discerned. Officials have presented these transitions as progressions, wild roots, sorghum and cassava allegedly being more 'primitive' than maize, which has been lauded as the hallmark of 'modernity'.[606] In spite of such views, transitions in staple crop cultivation and consumption have been ambiguous, gradual and contested, rather than straightforward. Each staple crop has specific advantages and disadvantages, in terms of yield, labour requirements and resilience to disease or drought. Over time people would express a preference for certain crops, but preferences could change and producers would overwhelmingly cultivate a variety of crops side by side in order to spread risks, to take advantage of the benefits of each crop and for dietary variation.[607] How was the production of staple foods organised and how did it change over time? Why would producers not adopt official recommendations or follow marketing opportunities, preferring to cultivate familiar crops which were poorly marketable? To answer these questions, factors of ecology, patterns of agricultural production, state policies and marketing need to be considered.

Throughout Mwinilunga District foraging has historically played an important role in food provision. Probes into past eating habits evoke responses recalling a time when 'people did not eat *nshima*', but 'subsisted on meat and honey'.[608] Although grain crops had undeniably been adopted on the South Central African plateau by the beginning of the first millennium A.D., grain cultivation did not necessarily downplay the role of hunting and gathering practices.[609] At the beginning of the twentieth century it was still remarked that: 'The Balunda as a whole seem to be quite contented for a great part of the year to eke out an existence on honey, wild fruits and the products of the bush.'[610]

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[600] This view has been informed by participant observation and numerous oral interviews. See: J.J. Hoover, 'The seduction of Ruwej: Reconstructing Ruund history (the nuclear Lunda: Zaïre, Angola, Zambia)' (PhD thesis, Yale University, 1978), 331-2; Pritchett, *Friends for life*, 82-3.

[601] J. Vansina, 'Histoire du manioc en Afrique centrale avant 1850', *Paideuma* 43 (1997), 255-79; A. von Oppen, '"Endogene agrarrevolution" im vorkolonialen Afrika?: Eine fallstudie', *Paideuma* 38 (1992), 269-96.

[602] Interview with Mr Justin Kambidima, 22 October 2010, Ntambu.

[603] Interview with Mr Wombeki, 11 & 24 May 2010, Nyakaseya; Interview with Mr Solomon Kanswata, 8 September 2008, Mwinilunga; Hoover, 'The seduction of Ruwej', 331-2.

[604] Interview with Mrs Kalota, Kanongesha, July-August 2010.

[605] Vansina, *How societies are born*; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*

[606] C.C. Fourshey, '"The remedy for hunger is bending the back": Maize and British agricultural policy in Southwestern Tanzania 1920-1960', *The international journal of African historical studies* 41:2 (2008), 223-61.

[607] See: J. Goody, *Cooking, cuisine and class: A study in comparative sociology* (Cambridge, New York and Melbourne, 1982); J.C. McCann, *Stirring the pot: A history of African cuisine* (Ohio, 2009).

[608] Interview with Chief Kanongesha's mother, 12 August 2010, Kanongesha.

[609] W.M.J. van Binsbergen, *Tears of rain: Ethnicity and history in Central Western Zambia* (London etc., 1992); R.J. Papstein, 'The upper Zambezi: A history of the Luvale people, 1000-1900' (PhD thesis, University of California, 1978).

[610] (NAZ) KSE6/2/1, A.W. Bonfield, Lunda Division Quarterly Report, 31 December 1916.

Up to now, foraging plays a role in complementing more settled agricultural practices. Mushrooms, wild fruits and caterpillars are widely acclaimed delicacies, whose seasonal appearance causes general excitement.[611] Nevertheless, restrictive forestry legislation and conservationist policies, coupled with the increasing permanence of settlement patterns, have caused foraging to become increasingly problematic over the course of the twentieth century.[612] Honey collectors have to travel long distances from their village homes into the bush, creatively circumventing conservation laws, to place their hives and collect honey. Nonetheless, the co-existence of agriculture and foraging testifies that there was no inevitable historical transition from foraging to settled agriculture. Agriculture and animal husbandry did not displace gathering and hunting, as the 'wild' and the 'domestic' could coincide.[613] Foraging activities fitted well into a mobile lifestyle pivoted around hunting, but could equally add variety to the diet of more settled agricultural communities. Within the environmental setting of Mwinilunga foraging enabled a degree of flexibility, retaining an appeal into the present.[614]

Notwithstanding the salience of foraging, traveller accounts from the nineteenth century would underline the importance of cultivated foodstuffs.[615] Initially the population of Mwinilunga relied on sorghum and millet as their staples. These crops, however, necessitated considerable labour inputs for land clearing, weeding and bird scaring.[616] Consequently, the acreage planted to sorghum and millet remained limited. For a sorghum or millet field of one acre eight to ten acres of land would have to be cleared of trees. Sorghum and millet require fertile virgin land to yield good crops, and due to the poor quality of soils in Mwinilunga ample burning material is required for fertilisation under slash-and-burn production.[617] Apart from being labour intensive, sorghum and millet can cause distinct hungry periods. Food shortages could occur before harvesting when old stocks would be depleted. Colonial officials might lament that: 'there is no doubt but that the natives, who do not cultivate much cassava and depend almost entirely on "kachai" (red millet), are now "hungry" and many are living on fruits and honey.'[618] Moreover, sorghum and millet yields fluctuate heavily from year to year. Because these grain crops are so taxing and unreliable they have largely been abandoned as staple food crops.[619] Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth century there has been a movement from the cultivation of sorghum and millet towards cassava and maize. This trend was recognised by colonial officials in 1935, who noted that cultivators 'are realising the advantages of manioc (…) the more energetic are planting manioc in addition to their old millet, kaffir corn [sorghum] and maize gardens; those less so sometimes abandon their grain crops altogether in favour of manioc.'[620] Still, there has not been a universal decline of sorghum and millet cultivation. After an initial slump, grain cultivation expanded significantly when profitable markets arose in the 1950s, incited by the demands of the beer halls on the Copperbelt.[621] Particularly for brewing purposes sorghum and millet remain popular, and

[611] As the first mushrooms were about to appear in October 2010, widespread excitement prevailed.
[612] A. Hansen and D.E. MacMillan (eds.), *Food in sub-Saharan Africa* (Boulder, 1986).
[613] See: T. Ingold, *The perception of the environment: Essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill* (London, 2000), Chapter Three, for the nature-culture debate.
[614] Turner, *Schism and continuity*; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*.
[615] For example: I. Schapera (ed.), *Livingstone's African journal 1853-56* (London, 1963).
[616] Interview with Mr Muhemba, 4 October 2008, Chibwika; Interview with Headman Kazovu and Kashiku, 12 September 2008, Kanongesha; (NAZ) KSE6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 1927.
[617] (NAZ) SEC2/954, C.M.N. White, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 13 July 1939; (NAZ) KSE6/6/2, H.B. Waugh, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 9 November 1929.
[618] (NAZ) KSE6/5/1, N.C. Bellis, Lunda District, Report for the Month of October 1910.
[619] See: Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* 215; J.C. Miller, *Way of death: Merchant capitalism and the Angolan slave trade 1730-1830* (Madison, 1988), 19-20.
[620] (NAZ) SEC2/133, N.S. Price, Annual Report Mwinilunga District, 31 December 1935.
[621] (NAZ) Mutende, No. 368, 30 January 1951.

at present *kachai* (finger millet) beer is still served during ceremonies as a true delicacy.[622] Sorghum and millet continue to be cultivated next to other crops, to add diversity and to spread risks. Different crops are thus not incompatible and would continue to exist side by side, as each crop possesses distinct benefits and can be cultivated for different purposes. Whereas some crops serve as hunger reserves, others are used predominantly for beer brewing or might be adopted as staple foods.

Cassava: Creating a land of plenty

As part of the 'Columbian exchange' cassava was introduced to the African continent in the sixteenth century.[623] From the Angolan coast, the crop gradually spread inland and by means of the long-distance trade cassava eventually reached the area of Mwinilunga.[624] According to traveller accounts, the crop was well-established in the area by the 1850s.[625] Especially as a foodstuff for the provisioning of trade caravans cassava proved popular and its cultivation therefore expanded rapidly in the course of the nineteenth century.[626] During the latter half of the nineteenth century passing trade caravans would make substantial demands of food on the producers of the Upper Zambezi area.[627] Caravans were big, slowly moving units, requiring food on a regular basis. These demands could not be met by regular 'subsistence' production, but evoked incipient yet deliberate 'market production'.[628] Some villages would make extensive cassava gardens specifically to feed passing trade caravans, as cultivators could obtain cloth, salt and guns in return for their food.[629] Significantly, Mwinilunga was located directly to the east of the 'hungry country', which was sombrely described by travellers:

> [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.[630]

After travelling through this 'hungry country' caravans would be all the more eager to obtain food once they had reached Mwinilunga, as they would need to restock after their supplies had been depleted. This geographically strategic position made Mwinilunga an important provisioning post for passing caravans. Because cassava was durable, could easily be transported and was familiar to traders, the crop was particularly sought after.[631] Mwinilunga might even have become 'the breadbasket of the caravan system'.[632] An estimated 14,000 tons of food was required annually by caravans passing through the Upper Zambezi area.[633] Nevertheless, demands were erratic. A large caravan requesting

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[622] Interview with Mrs Alfonsina Chingangu, 15 October 2008, Ntambu. In 2010 large amounts of *kachai* beer were being brewed in anticipation of the *Chisemwa Chalunda* ceremony in Chief Kanongesha's area, although *kachai* cultivation was by then very rare.

[623] For an overview of crop introductions to Africa from overseas areas, see: J.E. Mendes Ferrão, *The adventure of plants and the Portuguese discoveries,* (n.p., 1994); A.W. Crosby Jr., *The Columbian exchange: Biological and cultural consequences of 1492,* (Westport, 1972). 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.

[624] Von Oppen, 'Endogene agrarrevolution', 269-96; Vansina, 'Histoire du manioc', 255-79; W.O. Jones, *Manioc in Africa* (California, 1959).

[625] Schapera, *Livingstone's missionary correspondence,* 261-2.

[626] Miller, *Way of death*; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu.*

[627] See the traveller accounts of Livingstone, Cameron, Arnot and Gibbons; Chapter 1.

[628] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade,* 91-6; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, 220-8.

[629] J-L. Vellut, 'Notes sur le Lunda et la frontière Luso-Africaine (1700-1900)', *Études d'histoire africaine* 3 (1972), 78-93.

[630] W.S. Fisher and J. Hoyte, *Ndotolu: The life stories of Walter and Anna Fisher of Central Africa,* (Rev. ed., Ikelenge, 1992)*,* 79, 109.

[631] Miller, *Way of death*; Jones, *Manioc in Africa*.

[632] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* 30 – this is probably an overstatement.

[633] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade,* 96.

food might pass a village one day, but afterwards an entire year might pass before the next caravan would appear. Moreover, the major caravan routes bypassed the area of Mwinilunga either to the north or to the south. Although numerous caravans did frequent the area, Mwinilunga was more often a transit point than the main destination.[634] Even if villages did increasingly adopt cassava cultivation and engaged in trade of the crop to passing caravans, unpredictable demand made it difficult to expand food production exclusively for this purpose.[635] Cassava production exceeded 'subsistence', but it is doubtful whether marketing had become the driving force behind production.

Apart from purposes of marketing, cassava was increasingly adopted as a subsidiary and even as a major staple food crop over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth century. Cassava possessed distinct advantages over sorghum and millet.[636] The crop is resistant to droughts, pests and diseases, is not labour intensive (apart from planting and processing), provides food all year round (eliminating pre-harvest hunger periods) and, most importantly, is relatively high yielding.[637] On the acidic Kalahari soils of Mwinilunga District cassava can outperform sorghum, millet and maize yields.[638] Cassava fields can be worked continuously for up to twenty years without fertilisation, whereas sorghum and millet fields need to be cleared annually and can only be worked for three to four years before the soil becomes depleted.[639] Cassava therefore diminished the labour requirements of land clearance, but on the other hand, a fundamental re-organisation of agricultural techniques was required to accommodate cassava cultivation. Whereas sorghum and millet are planted on ridges, cassava requires the construction of mounds. Moreover, the processing of cassava can be onerous, as the roots have to be dug up, soaked in water to remove their toxic content, dried and pounded into flour. The crop thus required labour inputs and the adoption of new techniques.[640] Because cassava only fully matures after two to four years, the crop equally required a degree of residential stability.[641] The unsettled conditions and frequent shifting propelled by slave raids might have discouraged extensive cassava cultivation. Nevertheless, cassava cultivation expanded rapidly once settlements stabilised under the *Pax Britannica*.[642] Because it could provide an ample and reliable source of food, cassava gradually supplanted other crops as a widespread staple over the course of the twentieth century, despite its potential drawbacks.[643]

Cassava became so popular that it was adopted as a marker of identity by Lunda cultivators, who proudly referred to themselves as 'cassava-eaters'.[644] Nonetheless, (post-)colonial officials remained sceptical towards cassava cultivation, even discouraging production and consumption of the

[634] See the map in E. Bustin, *Lunda under Belgian rule: The politics of ethnicity* (Cambridge etc., 1975), 19; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade,* Appendix on caravan routes.
[635] Papstein, 'Upper Zambezi'.
[636] Von Oppen, 'Endogene agrarrevolution'; Vansina, 'Histoire du manioc'.
[637] See: A. von Oppen, 'Cassava, "The lazy man's food"? Indigenous agricultural innovation and dietary change in Northwestern Zambia (ca. 1650-1970)', in: C. Lentz (ed.) *Changing food habits: Case studies from Africa, South America and Europe* (New York, 1999), 51, for the advantages and disadvantages of cassava cultivation.
[638] (NAZ) MAG1/20/4, Director of Agriculture Report, 17 May 1962: In 1962 the yields on Kalahari sands were estimated as follows: Maize – 3 bags per acre, Millet – 4 bags per acre, Cassava – 6.1 bags per acre.
[639] (NAZ) MAG1/10/1 Loc.76, C.E. Johnson, Agricultural Programme of Work, North Western Province, 29 June 1960; Interview with Mr John Kamuhuza, March 2010, Ikelenge.
[640] F.I. Nweke, D.S.C. Spencer and J.K. Lynam, *The cassava transformation: Africa's best-kept secret* (East Lansing, 2002); S. Haggblade and B. Zulu, 'The recent cassava surge in Zambia and Malawi', *Successes in African agriculture*, Conference held in Pretoria, 1-3 December 2003.
[641] Von Oppen, 'Cassava, the lazy man's food'.
[642] Papstein, 'Upper Zambezi'.
[643] I. Peša. ''Cassava is our chief: Negotiating identity, markets and the state through cassava in Mwinilunga, Zambia', in: J-B. Gewald, A. Leliveld and I. Peša (eds.), *Transforming innovations in Africa: Explorative studies on appropriation in African societies* (Leiden etc., 2012).
[644] Interview with Mr Solomon Kanswata, 18 October 2008, Mwinilunga; Hoover, 'The seduction of Ruwej'.

crop altogether.[645] The alleged nutritional deficiencies, especially the acidity and lack of protein of the tubers, would regularly be underlined. The Lunda were described as a 'weakly tribe' and 'physically inferior' due to their cassava-based diet.[646] Only once locust invasions or droughts had wrought ravages would the colonial administration temporarily resort to promoting the crop: 'The cultivation of cassava is encouraged in the native areas throughout the Territory as a famine reserve crop (…) the crop came into its own during this difficult drought year.'[647] The attitude towards cassava was ambiguous at best, as only two years later negative valuations prevailed once more: 'Methods of production of this crop are wasteful and it is preferable that it should be regarded as a subsistence rather than a cash crop.'[648] Indeed, officials regarded cassava more as a subsistence than as a cash crop. As a result, the crop was afforded only minimal marketing opportunities, scientific support or official encouragement. Whereas rice, beans and maize were propagated by the government through the distribution of improved seeds, technical support and favourable marketing conditions, cassava was largely neglected.[649] Peculiarly, this official discouragement did not foreclose the local popularity of cassava cultivation, which continued unabatedly and even heightened. After outlining the history of maize cultivation in Mwinilunga, the popularity of cassava will be reassessed.

Maize: Faltering towards modernity?

Over the course of the twentieth century, government officials promoted maize as a 'superior' alternative to cassava.[650] 'An image of maize as a model of modernity' was advanced,[651] and in particular the high-yielding hybrid varieties were acclaimed as 'magic' or a 'technological wonder' that would 'feed the nation' and bring about general prosperity.[652] Maize, like cassava, was introduced from the New World and disseminated through the long-distance trade.[653] Already during the colonial period, but especially after independence, maize was afforded prime official importance: 'As the staple food of the people of Zambia, maize is central in the Zambian agricultural economy.'[654] Various inputs, loans and subsidies were made available to support maize cultivators. In addition, highly favourable marketing conditions for the crop were arranged through government-controlled marketing boards, which provided secure and profitable outlets.[655] This approach differed markedly from the attitude towards cassava, which was granted minimal attention and could only be marketed through official channels in exceptional circumstances. Such differential marketing opportunities, coupled with government propaganda, might have discouraged cassava cultivation in favour of maize.[656] Nevertheless, maize cultivation did not succeed in displacing the popularity of cassava.

Maize cultivation was only hesitantly adopted in Mwinilunga. By the end of the 1950s it was still remarked that: 'People are not at present interested in eating maize themselves unless cassava is scarce, they claim indeed it makes them sick.'[657] Despite protracted propaganda it was noted in 1964 that: 'any surplus [of maize] marketed was merely a fortuitous surplus from subsistence cultivators

[645] Jones, *Manioc in Africa*; Nweke, *The cassava transformation*.
[646] (NAZ) KSE6/1/1, G.A. MacGregor, Annual Report for the Balunda District, 1909.
[647] (NAZ) Department of Agriculture, Annual report, 1951.
[648] (NAZ) Department of Agriculture, Annual report, 1953.
[649] See: A.P. Wood et al (ed.), *The dynamics of agricultural policy and reform in Zambia* (Ames, Iowa, 1990); McCann, *Maize and grace*.
[650] K. Crehan and A. von Oppen, 'Understandings of 'development': An arena of struggle: The story of a development project in Zambia', *Sociologia ruralis* 28:2 (1988), 120.
[651] Fourshey, 'The remedy for hunger is bending the back', 246.
[652] Pottier, *Migrants no more*, 20.
[653] McCann, *Maize and grace.*
[654] (NAZ) Review of the Operations of the Agricultural Marketing Committee, 30 June 1965.
[655] See: Wood, *The dynamics of agricultural policy*; McCann, *Maize and grace*.
[656] See: Fourshey, 'The remedy for hunger is bending the back', 223-61.
[657] (NAZ) SEC2/967, W.D. Grant, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, No. 5, 1959.

and did not constitute an appreciable amount.'[658] Although in the 1969-70 season 180 tons of maize was marketed from Mwinilunga District, this figure compared unfavourably to other parts of the country.[659] Maize does not grow well in the climate and soils of the area, the quality of the harvested crop is generally poor and there is a recurrent threat of failed harvests. In the 1950s maize marketed from Mwinilunga would invariably arrive on the Copperbelt severely affected by weevils. The quality of the crop would consequently be classified as inferior, which problematized marketing.[660]

Moreover, expensive inputs such as fertiliser, pesticides and improved seeds are imperative to obtain maize yields which can compete on the (inter)national market. Such inputs can make individuals dependent on the market and the state for provisioning, distribution, credit and crop sales.[661] Government-controlled marketing boards provided inputs on a loan basis throughout the twentieth century. Upon selling the maize harvest a producer would first have to think of repaying the debt:

> If a farmer sells two bags to Agriculture Rural Marketing Board (ARMB then the very farmer should be made to repay his loans out of what he has just got from those two bags (...) but how can a farmer live since all his living is taken away from him/her? Now we have a lot of groaning the farmers are murmuring perhaps in future they will stop doing farming because all the money they are getting from their produce is being taken away from them without leaving them some Ngwees to enable them buy clothing, soap, salt, and paying their friends who helped them to do the job [*sic*].[662]

Although maize might have been a commercially viable option, and was increasingly adopted as a cash crop in the course of the 1960s and 1970s, it left individuals vulnerable to the whims of the climate, state subsidies and marketing boards, creating a dependency on volatile external factors. Because of numerous drawbacks, maize rarely became the preferred crop for producers in Mwinilunga. Although official discourse propagated maize as a symbol of 'progress', and although numerous producers in the district did grow some maize for purposes of marketing or household consumption, individuals did not take to maize production en masse and continued to prefer cassava.[663]

The foundations of production: Staples, markets and the state

The driving forces behind crop preferences and producer deliberations are rooted in the internal foundation of production in Mwinilunga. Whereas maize cultivation created a degree of vulnerability to climatic and market fluctuations, as well as dependence on the state for inputs and subsidies, cassava could enable a degree of flexibility, autonomy and security.[664] Cassava can provide a dependable source of food and can generate abundant harvests without requiring expensive inputs. As a result, producers today proudly proclaim that: 'With cassava, we never go hungry!'[665] Cassava enables an 'exit option', meaning that producers can more easily opt out of, or even evade, involvement with the market and the state.[666] That small rural producers control their own means of production and livelihood can prove a source of strength:

> Much of the power of the small peasants in Africa stems from their control of the means of subsistence. The production of the basic necessities is still controlled by peasants who are difficult to get at, not only

[658] (NAZ) Annual Report, Ministry of Agriculture, 1964.
[659] (NAZ) LGH5/5/12, Marketing of Produce North-Western Province, 23 July 1970.
[660] (NAZ) NWP1/2/37 Loc.4903, D. Clough, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 1950.
[661] Crehan and Von Oppen, 'Understandings of development', 129.
[662] (UNIPA) UNIP5/3/1/48, J. Chikotola to Administrative Secretary, 1 October 1973.
[663] Fourshey, 'The remedy for hunger is bending the back'; Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees.*
[664] See: Peša, 'Cassava is our chief'; Scott, *The art of not being governed*, 73-4, argues that root crops are relatively more 'illegible' to the state and consequently more difficult to appropriate, control and tax than grain crops. Cassava cultivators would be considerably better placed to assert autonomy vis-à-vis the state than millet and sorghum cultivators, since these annual crops are much easier to identify, tax and control than cassava which grows underground and matures slowly.
[665] Interview with Justin Kambidima, 22 October 2010, Ntambu.
[666] See also: Scott, *The art of not being governed.*

> because of their numbers but also because they are capable of securing their own subsistence and reproduction without the assistance of other social classes.[667]

Because producers can rely on a stable source of livelihood, they are less vulnerable to state sanctions and, as a result, they can afford to be more independent in their interactions with officials. In Mwinilunga the relative independence of producers did occasionally result in administrative defiance. This caused exasperation among colonial officials:

> Little or no food is at present being brought to the Boma for sale (…) [This] is the more annoying when it is remembered how large are the gardens and plentiful the supply of cassava (…) the present position is altogether attributable to the perverseness of a people endowed with so peculiar and erratic a temperament.[668]

Officials even claimed that: 'There may be a determination not to come under our rule (…) to escape from obligations which they fear will be demanded from them.'[669] Although the independence of producers could be seen as a source of strength, according to Hyden it could also block 'development': 'the principal structural constraint to development are the barriers raised against state action by the peasant mode of production.'[670] Examples from Mwinilunga, however, suggest otherwise. Subsistence production did not necessarily pose a barrier to 'development', the production of 'cash crops' or 'market integration'.[671] To the contrary, the strong and stable basis of subsistence which cassava production provided could be a source of strength and autonomy to producers. This subsistence basis enabled producers to negotiate with the state and markets on favourable terms, terms suitable to local requirements. The subsistence basis of staple crop production, of cassava in particular, did not preclude market involvement, but rather provided a stepping stone to expand production – of both subsistence and cash crops – whilst maintaining livelihood security.[672]

The production of an array of subsistence crops served as a basis which facilitated the production of cash crops. Subsistence crops provide food and can free up labour for other productive tasks, within or outside agriculture. Arguably, the production of food crops for sale is less disruptive of established agricultural practices than the production of non-food cash crops, such as cotton or tobacco.[673] Because labour is a scarce resource, its use has to be planned carefully: 'if (...) the staple food crop could be marketed, then the tricky problem of how to distribute labour at times of peak demand was greatly eased.'[674] During periods of peak demand, such as planting or harvesting, the marketing of staple food crops alleviated the problem of labour allocation. If surplus staple food crops could be marketed, output could be expanded by intensifying existing cultivation methods and investing additional labour into one crop, instead of dividing attention between numerous crops or applying unfamiliar cultivation methods to cash crops such as maize, rice or groundnuts.[675] In Mwinilunga food crops (such as beans, pineapples, rice, but also cassava) have mainly been marketed, blurring the line between subsistence and cash crop production. Subsistence production could function as the basis for market production, as existing methods and levels of production could be expanded to step into the market. Another advantage of marketing 'subsistence' food crops is that staple food crops provide a source of livelihood security, being held back as a famine reserve in case

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[667] Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa,* 29.
[668] (NAZ) KSE6/5/1, J.M. Pound, Monthly Report Balunda District, June 1909.
[669] (NAZ) BSA2 A2/1/4 Loc.3981, Acting Administrator North-West Rhodesia to G.A. MacGregor, 20 December 1910.
[670] Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa*, 31.
[671] Carswell, 'Food crops as cash crops'.
[672] Peša, 'Cassava is our chief'; See: Spear, *Mountain farmers,* who argues that the high and dependable yields of bananas enabled individuals to diversify into cash crop production of coffee.
[673] J. Tosh, 'The cash-crop revolution in tropical Africa: An agricultural reappraisal', *African affairs* 79:314 (1980), 79-94; Austin, 'Resources, techniques and strategies'.
[674] Tosh, 'The cash-crop revolution', 89-91.
[675] Von Oppen, 'Endogene agrarrevolution', 277.

harvests prove disappointing, or being consumed in case markets slump.[676] Because staple crops provide a stable basis of subsistence, the cultivation and sale of food crops alleviates the impact of market fluctuations and facilitates market involvement. In case the staple food crop could be marketed, existing 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 household consumption. In the following year the cultivated acreage would be decreased again. In this context, cassava proved to be particularly convenient, as the crop can remain stored in the ground for several years until marketing opportunities arise and prices become favourable.[677] This enabled producers to react to marketing fluctuations rapidly, as they might expand or reduce the size of their fields in reaction to the demand which exists for their crops.[678] In more than one way, therefore, subsistence and market production could feed into one another. As the case of cassava in Mwinilunga further illustrates, small-scale producers were by no means averse to market incentives.

Far from being a 'subsistence' crop, cassava simultaneously functioned as a food and as a cash crop. During the 1950s as much as 600 tons of cassava flour was marketed in Mwinilunga District.[679] These high sales figures coincided with labour migration ratios of up to 50%, suggesting that cassava production could not have been too taxing on scarce labour resources.[680] The relatively low labour demands of cassava enabled an expansion of production, either of additional cassava or of other cash crops. Cassava could free up labour, for instance for labour migration or for the cultivation of pineapples, which became a major cash crop in Mwinilunga in the 1960s and 1970s.[681] Market involvement posed less of a risk if producers could fall back on a stable source of livelihood, in the form of cassava. If the marketing of pineapples proved problematic, producers could rely on cassava gardens for consumption.[682] As a result, exclusive specialisation in pineapple production was rare, as producers preferred to spread their risks by maintaining large cassava gardens. This was the 'safety-first' principle, geared towards risk minimisation rather than profit maximisation:

> The distinctive economic behavior of the subsistence-oriented peasant family results from the fact that, unlike a capitalist enterprise, it is a unit of consumption as well as a unit of production. The family begins with a more or less irreducible subsistence consumer demand, based on its size, which it must meet in order to continue as a unit. Meeting those minimal human needs in a reliable and stable way is the central criterion which knits together choices of seed, technique, timing, rotation, and so forth. The cost of failure for those near the subsistence margin is such that safety and reliability take precedence over long-run profit.[683]

Securing a sufficient and dependable source of food and livelihood underlay the basic choices of crops, cultivation techniques and marketing for producers in Mwinilunga District.

Cassava enabled such a dependable source of food. The specific agro-ecological characteristics of cassava provided great advantages over other crops, which officials hesitantly recognised: 'The principle crop in this area is cassava which grows exceptionally well and in great abundance (…) In areas where cassava is the main crop famine seems to be almost unknown.'[684] Cassava yields are higher, more dependable and less affected by the vagaries of the climate, whilst the crop necessitates less

[676] Tosh, 'The cash-crop revolution', 89.
[677] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mrs Grace Mulusa, 10 December 2008, Kanyama.
[678] Correspondence with Mr Raymond Ngambi, Kanyama, December 2008.
[679] (NAZ) NWP1/2/68 Loc.4911, North-Western Province Annual Report for Agriculture, 1955.
[680] (NAZ) NWP1/2/102 Loc.4919, E.L. Button, North Western Province Annual Report, 1960.
[681] I. Peša, 'Buying pineapples, selling cloth: Traders and trading stores in Mwinilunga District, 1940-1970', in: R. Ross, M. Hinfelaar and I. Peša (eds.), *The objects of life in Central Africa: The history of consumption and social change, 1840-1980* (Leiden etc., 2013).
[682] It is all the more significant that pineapple farmers invested their profits into work parties, attracting labour in order to cultivate larger cassava gardens. See interview with Mr Saipilinga Kahongo, 22 March 2010, Ikelenge.
[683] Scott, *Moral economy,* 13.
[684] (NAZ) SEC2/955, C.M.N. White, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 10 February 1940 and H.B. Waugh, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 14 December 1940.

labour inputs when compared to alternatives. In an area where land is abundant, yet labour is scarce, cassava is a particularly suitable crop. Relatively low labour inputs could yield high returns, enabling producers to diversify into other crops and step into the market.[685] The foundation provided by cassava did not prevent, but rather enabled market involvement, by facilitating the investment of time and energy into market production. This explains the persistence of cassava cultivation in the face of favourable marketing opportunities and official propaganda for maize, and equally sheds light on the ability of labour intensive and volatile crops such as pineapples or rice to flourish. Market involvement could be a feasible and relatively low-risk endeavour, as producers in Mwinilunga could build on a dependable source of food in the form of cassava. The taking of risks was justified, as long as food provision could be secured.[686] Even if cassava was denounced as a mere subsistence crop by officials, the crop enabled a degree of enterprise, largely cancelling out the shocks of market and price fluctuations and the vagaries of the environment. Therefore, cassava has become and remained the favoured food in the area throughout the twentieth century.

Shifts in preference for staple crops did not lead from 'subsistence' to 'market' production or from food crops to cash crops.[687] Foraging strategies, sorghum, millet, cassava and maize cultivation exist side by side in Mwinilunga today. These provide agricultural producers with a wide palette of choices, generating a reliable supply of food, enabling diversity and facilitating risk-aversion. Values attached to food crops have shifted over the years, in connection to the environment, markets and state policies.[688] Although maize has been promoted through marketing and official policies, it has not become the dominant staple food in Mwinilunga. The resilience of cassava cultivation evidences that crop choices are underlain by considerations of safety and are aimed at securing dependable food supplies. Principles of safety were not necessarily conservative, though, and did not clash with market involvement. The stable basis of cassava production enabled producers to incorporate change by adopting cash crops – either familiar or new – for marketing purposes, whilst retaining a reliable source of food. Although cassava was originally a foreign introduction to the area, today the crop is described as part of the 'tradition' of the Lunda, which illustrates the ability of producers in Mwinilunga to incorporate change, in the form of an external innovation, within long-established practices, modes of thought and historical consciousness.[689] Apparently the crop fitted local strategies, goals and outlooks so well that it was incorporated into existing patterns of production and society almost seamlessly. At the same time, cassava enabled producers in Mwinilunga to unleash an inherent potential for agricultural production and so the area could become a land of plenty.[690] What colonial officials and post-colonial development experts presented as historical transitions, from subsistence to cash crops, from foraging to sorghum and cassava to hybrid maize, or from subsistence to market integration, appear far more complicated. Denunciations of 'subsistence' or 'primitive' patterns of production in Mwinilunga District will be further problematized by looking at examples of hunting and herding.

Meat: Hunting, herding and distribution

At each meal the staple *nshima* is accompanied by *mafu*, relish. The two are indissolubly linked. In the area of Mwinilunga a variety of vegetable crops is grown, most commonly intercropped with millet, cassava or maize plantings. Notwithstanding the variety of vegetables, meat is the most valued form of relish.[691] Meat has historically been obtained through hunting and herding. In a manner similar to that of staple crops, various discourses have been attached to patterns of meat acquisition and consumption. Officials assumed that nomadic hunting would give way to settled forms of animal

[685] Jones, *Manioc in Africa*; Von Oppen, 'Cassava, lazy man's food'.
[686] Spear, *Mountain farmers*; Berry, *No condition is permanent*.
[687] Carswell, 'Food crops as cash crops'.
[688] Fourshey, 'The remedy for hunger is bending the back'.
[689] Peša, 'Cassava is our chief'.
[690] Today individuals might remark that '*makamba mwanta wetu*', cassava is our chief.
[691] Turner, *Schism and continuity*; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*; Hoover, 'The seduction of Ruwej'.

husbandry, which would be based on scientific knowledge and would be geared towards marketing rather than self-sufficiency.[692] Nevertheless, hunting has remained of paramount importance throughout the twentieth century. Even if hunting has been curtailed by legislation and the scarcity of game, its ideological importance in shaping notions of masculinity and group identity remains unparalleled.

Hunting: Meat, merit and masculinity

Hunting has figured prominently throughout the history of the Lunda polity, both in a practical manner as a source of nourishment and ideologically in origin stories, historical narratives or as a source of pride and power to men.[693] *Chibinda Ilunga*, the Luba potentate who married the Lunda Chieftainess *Lueji* and thereby propelled the migration of Lunda emissaries to the Upper Zambezi area, is remembered as an illustrious hunter.[694] Ever since, hunting has remained central to Lunda identity, particularly male identity. A diversity of techniques, such as snaring, trapping, the use of bows, arrows, spears and firearms, can be adopted in the hunt. Despite the co-existence of various techniques, over time hunting with guns has developed as the most prestigious and ritualised form of hunting among Lunda males, the praise name of a gun hunter being *chiyanga*. The Lunda were not slow to obtain firearms,[695] and during the opening years of colonial rule it was even remarked that: 'the inhabitants of the Kasempa and Lunda Districts have beyond question far more guns than they ought to.'[696]

Hunting has commonly been placed in a framework of linear change, which suggests a historical transition from hunting and gathering to more settled forms of agriculture and animal husbandry.[697] Hunting has been interpreted as 'a survival mechanism, a subsistence fall-back in times of great stress', or even more negatively as 'an inferior form of economic activity.'[698] Throughout the twentieth century official discourse denounced 'nomadic' hunting in favour of more easily controllable and settled forms of animal husbandry, which would enable the marketing of meat. Nevertheless, the case of Mwinilunga demonstrates that hunting was by no means a mere historical phase. In spite of restrictive legislation and the decimation of game populations, hunting has retained its significance and continues to be practiced, side by side with more settled forms of agriculture and animal

[692] J.C. Kaufmann, 'The sediment of nomadism', *History in Africa* 36 (2009), 235-64; J. Ferguson, *The anti-politics machine: "Development", depoliticization, and bureaucratic power in Lesotho* (Cambridge etc., 1990).

[693] V.W. Turner, 'Themes in the symbolism of Ndembu hunting ritual', in: *The forest of symbols: Aspects of Ndembu ritual* (Ithaca etc., 1970), 38, claims ancient origins for the two hunting cults in the area: '*Wubinda* [a cult for hunters using any technique for killing animals and birds – firearms, bows and arrows, spears, snares, traps, pitfalls, nets, the use of bird-lime, etc.] is the older cult and is said to have come with the forebears of the Ndembu when they migrated from the kingdom of Mwantiyanvwa, the great Lunda chief in Katanga, more than two centuries ago. *Wuyang'a* [a cult for skilled hunters using guns] is believed to have been introduced, along with the first muzzle-loading guns, by Ovimbundu traders who came regularly from Kasanji and Bihe in Western Angola to purchase slaves and beeswax in the mid-nineteenth century. But it shares many features of its symbolism with *Wubinda* on which it must have been speedily grafted.'

[694] T.Q. Reefe, 'Traditions of genesis and the Luba diaspora', *History in Africa* 4 (1977), 183-206; R.E. Schecter, 'A propos the drunken king: Cosmology and history', in: J.C. Miller (ed.), *The African past speaks: Essays on oral tradition and history* (Dawson etc., 1980), 108-25; L. de Heusch, 'What shall we do with the drunken king?', *Africa* 45:4 (1975), 363-72.

[695] See: G. Macola, 'Reassessing the significance of firearms in Central Africa: The case of North-Western Zambia to the 1920s', *Journal of African history* 51:3 (2010), 301-21.

[696] Macola, 'Reassessing the significance of firearms', 318-20; (NAZ) LGH5/1/3 Loc.3604, Lunda-Ndembo Native Authority meeting, 13 April 1961, 'The District Commissioner pointed out that there were 1610 muzzle loading guns in the district and 153 short guns or one gun to approximately 6 resident males, a very high average number.'

[697] C. Gabel, 'Terminal food-collectors and agricultural initiative in East and Southern Africa', *The international journal of African historical studies* 7:1 (1974), 56-68.

[698] J.M. MacKenzie, *The empire of nature: Hunting, conservation and British imperialism* (Manchester etc., 1988), 55; Allan, *African husbandman,* XI.

husbandry.[699] Hunting has remained a prominent feature of self-identification for the (male) community and its importance is reflected in numerous rituals and ceremonies. If purely assessing the meat supplies provided by hunters, it appears as though the status of hunting is unduly exalted above its contribution to livelihood.[700] How can this discrepancy, the persistent importance of hunting in Mwinilunga, be explained?

The paramount importance of the hunter as a social category within the village is captured by the Lunda saying: 'Whoever kills a hunter has killed the whole village.'[701] Underscoring the prominence of hunting, colonial administrators referred to Lunda men as 'inveterate hunters', decimating game with muzzle-loading guns of Portuguese provenance.[702] Turner eloquently depicted the role of hunting in Mwinilunga in the 1950s:

> It may almost be said that the Ndembu social system is pivoted on the importance of hunting. This importance does not derive from the objective contribution to the food supply made by the chase. Hunting owes its high valuation, on the one hand, to an association consistently made among many Central and Western Bantu between hunting and high social status, and on the other, to an identification made among these peoples of hunting with masculinity.[703]

Although hunting indeed held ideological importance, it equally had a material underpinning. The popularity and high regard of hunting might be attributed to 'its high productivity in terms of the relative effort involved', as 'success rates were fairly high and yields good, though the time devoted to hunting, in comparison to other economic activities, was relatively low.'[704] Whereas agricultural production required involvement throughout the year, hunting was more flexible, as a hunter could go into the bush with any frequency and for any length of time. Even so, hunting was tied to seasonal fluctuations and success depended on the skill of the hunter as well as on the availability of game. Skilful hunters would enjoy high success rates. According to recollections, hunters would return from the bush with up to five animals per trip.[705] Hunting, however, was a sporadic pastime, rather than a fulltime or regular occupation. Because hunting trips were irregular, perhaps occurring once a month, meat supplies would remain scarce, yet highly coveted.[706] Overall, the flexibility of hunting, its high returns for the amount of invested labour as well as the association of hunting with social status and masculinity, endorsed the persistent popularity of this productive activity in the area of Mwinilunga.

Whereas game had once been plentiful, game populations drastically declined over the course of the twentieth century, inciting the promulgation of official regulations to restrict hunting.[707] Although this precluded game meat as a daily item of diet, the value attached to hunting did not diminish. Through hunting individuals could attain status, or even fame, within the village and beyond. One of the few means for young men to climb the meritocratic ladder was by becoming a distinguished hunter. This has been argued for the analogous case of Eastern Zambia: 'Hunting by professionals is more than a subsistence technique. It is a chosen route to manhood involving commitments and goals. It is a social strategy by which hunters compete with other males for positions of leadership among their matrikin.'[708] In the area of Mwinilunga the high esteem of the hunter even enabled some to challenge the position of the village headman. Nonetheless, Turner saw the personality of hunter and headman as diametrically opposed:

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[699] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Goldwel Mushindi, 3 May 2010, Nyakaseya.
[700] Turner, *Schism and continuity*, 20.
[701] Interview with Harrison Zimba, 10 October 2008, Ntambu.
[702] (NAZ) KSE6/5/1, J.M. Pound, Balunda District Monthly Report, July 1909.
[703] Turner, *Schism and continuity,* 25.
[704] MacKenzie, *The empire of nature,* 73.
[705] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Windson Mbimbi, 14 August 2010, Kanongesha.
[706] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, Chapter Two.
[707] This view is based on a wide reading of archival sources, (NAZ).
[708] S.A. Marks, *Large mammals and a brave people: Subsistence hunters in Zambia* (New Brunswick etc., 2005), 126.

> Successful gun-hunters are regarded as sorcerers, who acquire their power in hunting from killing people by means of their familiars. That is why great hunters seldom become successful headmen, in the opinion of Ndembu. Their nomadic inclination, their tendency to favour primary rather than classificatory kin in their own villages, and their association with sorcery, disqualify them from performing a role which requires tact, generosity to classificatory kin and strangers, and constant participation in the group life, for its successful functioning.[709]

Turner depicted the hunter as an individual with nomadic inclinations, who uses witchcraft to increase his power and kills, whilst disregarding communal obligations towards kin. Whereas a hunter leaned towards self-centred individualism, a village headman was supposed to keep the needs and desires of the community in mind.

The antagonism between the individual and the collective in hunting should not be overstated, though. Hunters might indeed be wandering, somewhat nomadic individuals. Nevertheless, even if hunting could be a path towards masculinity and power, it was not a purely individual pursuit.[710] A hunter would only rarely go into the bush alone. Commonly, he would be accompanied at least by a junior apprentice, but hunting in larger groups equally occurred. On occasion, communal hunts involving the entire village would be organised.[711] Hunting thus transcended the individual sphere and could have far-reaching consequences, encompassing the village community. Game meat was the main source of protein in the area, as tsetse fly ruled out the possibility of keeping livestock in large parts of the district. Because game meat was not available universally or throughout the year, it was considered a special treat, to be indulged in only occasionally.[712] Consequently, its distribution became a bone of contention which brought the tensions between the individual and the collective to the forefront. Women, children and men who could not hunt would depend on the meat supplies brought home by the hunter.[713] The negative connotations of the term c*hibodi*, a man who is not a hunter and is therefore considered an unsuccessful person, clearly illustrate this relationship of dependency and subordination.[714] Even if access to meat was unequal, as distribution was linked to hierarchies of power, gender and age, meat would generally be shared within a group of kin. The tension between an individual hunter and the community of kin is aptly captured in the proverb '*Mwisanga nayanga nkawami, ilanga kudya twadyanga amavulu'* – I [the hunter] go into the forest alone, but we eat with many people.[715] The distribution of meat after the hunt was an intricate affair, potentially giving rise to fierce disputes. Selected parts of the kill would be reserved for specific individuals. The hunter would retain the intestines and the head for himself, the chest would go to the headman or chief, the saddle would be distributed among the wives of the hunter, and so on. If a hunter failed to distribute meat fairly, according to the expectations of his kin, grumbling and even accusations of witchcraft would follow.[716] By providing the village with meat, the most valued form of food, a hunter could become a local hero.[717] But this fame would only be upheld for so long as the hunter proved successful in his pursuits and generous with the provision and distribution of meat. Individual status inevitably entailed relationships with, obligations towards and responsibility for a wider community of kin. Although hunting might have been practiced as an individual pursuit, it had collective ramifications, influencing the livelihood of the village and the broader area.

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[709] Turner, *Schism and continuity,* 32, 202.

[710] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*; Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'.

[711] W.S. Fisher, 'Burning the bush for game, *African studies* 7:1 (1948), 36-8.

[712] Turner and Turner, 'Money economy among the Mwinilunga Ndembu', 21.

[713] Turner, 'Themes in the symbolism of Ndembu hunting ritual'; Turner, *Schism and continuity*.

[714] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Jonathan Chiyezhi, 2010, Mwinilunga; *Lunda-Ndembu dictionary.*

[715] Interview with Mr Mischek Alfons Maseka, 11 May 2010, Nyakaseya.

[716] See Chapter 5.

[717] F. De Boeck, 'Borderland breccia: The mutant hero in the historical imagination of a Central-African diamond frontier', *Journal of colonialism and colonial history* 1:2 (2000); Turner, *Schism and continuity*; Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*.

In spite of the continued ideological significance of this productive activity, opportunities for hunting were increasingly curtailed by the diminution of game and consequent protective legislation. Prior to the 1930s game could still be found in abundance throughout Mwinilunga, especially in the south of the district, on the river plains and in the stunted bush. Large herds of various species of game were reported at the beginning of the twentieth century:

> Two small troops of zebra and about a score of buffalo, as well as the elegant little oribi which rose from time to time from the long grass and bounded lightly away, gave evidence that this open grass veldt was a favourite resort of game.[718]

In the northern part of the district, however, game had started to become more scattered and smaller species would mainly be encountered.[719] By the 1950s, this poor game situation spread throughout the district. Officials reported a 'ruthless destruction of game (…) [and] meat hunger', claiming that there was hardly any game left in the district.[720] A complex interplay of factors underlay the diminution of game. Diseases such as rinderpest and sleeping sickness, access to firearms, the disruption of game habitat, local hunting practices and the presence of European hunters all brought down numbers of game.[721] Colonial officials blamed the Lunda for all trouble, claiming that ever since they had obtained access to muzzle-loading guns they had killed game indiscriminately.[722] The presence of European hunters, hunters from Barotseland and poachers from neighbouring areas, who answered the mounting demand for ivory, hides and skins, equally played a role in diminishing game populations.[723] Local hunters purported to be selective when choosing their prey, enabling the game population to procreate by hunting only the older specimens of a herd.[724] Human presence, creating an environment with stunted trees and ample undergrowth, might even have encouraged game proliferation.[725] Nevertheless, human presence was most often viewed as problematic and harmful to game.

Throughout the twentieth century various orders and decrees were put in place to restrict the freedom of the hunter, in an attempt to arrest the disappearance of game. A licence became obligatory to hunt larger species of game or to own a gun, the trapping of game was restricted and the sale of game meat was progressively curtailed. Furthermore, Game Reserves and Controlled Hunting Areas were demarcated in an attempt to limit the indiscriminate shooting of game.[726] These measures were not merely benevolent government attempts to protect game. Hunting legislation was closely linked to the control of human movement and settlement. Hunting was associated with 'nomadism', with wandering individuals who could easily evade administrative control. These nomadic traits and the notorious autonomy of hunters, in turn, underpinned administrative critiques on hunting. The discursive connection between hunting and nomadism, asserted by officials in the twentieth century, had to do more with issues of control than with the productive activity of hunting itself.[727] Hunting was not more rudimentary than settled animal husbandry, and neither was it necessarily geared towards subsistence or averse to market logic. Similar to the preference for fixed farming over shifting cultivation, officials preferred settled forms of animal husbandry over hunting due to issues of human

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[718] A.H. St Gibbons, *Africa from south to north through Marotseland Vol. 2* (London and New York, 1904), 61.

[719] In 1906 a mission station was established in the northwestern part of the district. The mission station attracted a concentration of population, which might have driven away game more rapidly, Fisher and Hoyte, *Ndotolu.*

[720] (NAZ) SEC2/135, R.C. Dening, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 1952.

[721] MacKenzie, *Empire of nature*; Marks, *Large mammals*.

[722] (NAZ) KSE6/5/1, J.M. Pound, Balunda District Monthly Report, July 1909.

[723] (NAZ) NWP1/2/101 Loc.4919, E.L. Button, North Western Province Annual Report, 1961; (NAZ) SEC2/959, R.C. Dening, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 1951; (NAZ) KSE6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 1926.

[724] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Harrison Zimba, 10 October 2008, Ntambu.

[725] Marks, *Large mammals*.

[726] (NAZ) KSE6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 1926; (NAZ) NWP1/2/105 Loc.4920, H.T. Bayldon, North Western Province Annual Report, 1963.

[727] Kaufmann, 'Sediment of nomadism'; Scott, *Seeing like a state*.

and administrative control. Officials presented animal husbandry as superior to hunting, even if hunting retained ideological, popular and practical importance throughout the twentieth century.[728]

Due to the autonomy enjoyed by hunters and the importance of hunting for livelihood, it is not surprising that legislation to restrict hunting met considerable local resistance. Measures of control were fervently debated during meetings between colonial officials and chiefs, reflecting the importance of hunting as an activity.[729] Nevertheless, legislation was never fully enforced and there remained many ways in which to circumvent decrees. Chiefs, on whom the understaffed government relied to enforce game legislation, were more than willing to turn a blind eye to the 'illegal poaching' of their subjects as long as they received a portion of the kill themselves. In addition, cross-border movement and trade enabled hunting in neighbouring Angola, where legislation was more lenient.[730] Ingenious methods were devised to bypass restrictive laws:

> With regard to the licencing of muzzle loading guns, many owners are acquiring numerous licences from different offices and courts: this enables them to buy extra ammunition permits, normally granting 2 lbs. of gunpowder per half year per licence, and then resell the gunpowder at a handsome profit in the Congo. The traffic is not inconsiderable and must be checked. Insufficient control is exercised in the issue of arms licences by local authority clerks.[731]

Illustrating the inventiveness of hunters, in the 1970s an 'increasing level of poaching in Zambia' was noted, 'even by more responsible people'.[732] The autonomy of hunters frustrated attempts at administrative control. Far from decreasing, hunting appeared to be on the increase. Instead of being a 'subsistence' activity, hunting was responsive to market incentives:

> The exorbitant prices paid for meat in the Congo have encouraged illegal methods of hunting in this area and there is a considerable traffic in dried game meat across the border. Long series of trap lines abound on the plains and snares of great variety and ingenuity were found in the bush.[733]

Nevertheless, hunting did become more difficult and prone to risks due to legislation and measures of control. Hunting had always involved major risks, though. Gardens would regularly be disturbed by wild animals, as wild pigs might uproot cassava and elephants could jeopardise standing crops, but even people might be attacked by game.[734] Because of the risks of dealing with wild animals, supernatural powers were assigned to successful hunters, further underscoring their ideological importance. Elephant hunters could use the charm *mujiminu* to become invisible, enabling them to more easily approach their targets.[735] Over the course of the twentieth century, as access to game became problematic, the prestige and power of successful hunters heightened. Due to widespread meat hunger (*dikwilu*) the value of meat was elevated. Financial resources might facilitate hunting or access to meat, as money enabled the purchase of gun or game licences and could secure access to scarce supplies of meat. Yet personal skills and charisma were at least as important in hunting success.[736] Rather than being replaced by settled forms of animal husbandry, the importance of hunting persisted throughout the twentieth century as individuals, among them notable chiefs, could obtain power as successful hunters.

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[728] See: J. Ferguson, 'The bovine mystique: Power, property and livestock in rural Lesotho', *Man* 20:4 (1985), 647-74.

[729] (NAZ) KSE6/3/2, Mwinilunga Sub-District Report Indaba, 30 August 1927.

[730] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Amon Sawila, 7 September 2010, Kanongesha; Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'.

[731] (NAZ) LGH5/2/8 Loc.3613, Mwinilunga, 30 December 1964.

[732] (NAZ) LGH5/1/10 Loc.3608, February 1970.

[733] (NAZ) SEC2/968, J.T. Michie, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 1960.

[734] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Kasonda, 1 October 2010, Ntambu, and a wide reading of archival sources (NAZ).

[735] Turner, 'Themes in the symbolism of Ndembu hunting ritual'; Fisher, 'Burning the bush'.

[736] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Paul Maseka, 18 May 2010, Nyakaseya; *Lunda-Ndembu dictionary*.

Hunting had initially gained popularity and prominence because it enabled a degree of mobility, flexibility and personal success. Hunting could provide meat in a manner compatible with the shifting patterns of settlement prevalent in the area of Mwinilunga.[737] Hunting could facilitate the defiance of administrative control and subvert expectations of settled residence. The quest for good hunting grounds was a common reason for villages to shift their location, so that mobility and hunting reinforced each other.[738] As a productive activity, hunting could provide a stable source of livelihood. Without meat supplies, quarrels in a village would be inevitable. Hunting was more than a means of subsistence, as it was loaded with symbolic meaning, providing individuals access to wealth, power and fame within the village and beyond.[739] Meat from the hunt could be marketed once opportunities arose, although legislation restricted commercialisation and markets had to be sought across the border in Angola and Congo. During the twentieth century hunting was challenged by legislation, game decimation and sedentarisation.[740] Official policies opposed hunting because the activity was difficult to control. Alternatively, government discourse proposed settled forms of animal husbandry as 'superior' alternative to hunting.[741] That hunting retained its popularity in spite of this, is evidence of the resilience of conceptual frameworks, the foundations of production. The ideological framework of hunting affected how animal husbandry was viewed and adopted in the area of Mwinilunga.

Herding: A source of meat, a source of money

Even if herding livestock was presented as a 'superior' and more 'market-oriented' alternative to hunting in official discourse and policies,[742] it failed to gain widespread popularity in the area of Mwinilunga. Colonial officials voiced complaints that: 'as a tribe the Lunda are not cattle minded',[743] and furthermore 'what stock did exist was of poor grade, due in the main to the people's absolute lack of stock-keeping knowledge and tradition.'[744] The possibility of keeping livestock was restricted by the presence of tsetse fly in the area, especially south of the 12th parallel. Still, most villages would possess a small number of livestock, occasionally as much as one hundred head. Throughout the colonial period, and especially after independence, numbers of livestock increased.[745] Censuses were erratic and of doubtful reliability: 'figures for small stock in the villages are very inaccurate, on account of the commonly held belief that stock, once recorded, become in a sense the property of Government and are liable to be requisitioned',[746] but nevertheless reflected a rise in numbers. Livestock figures ranged from 960 sheep, 1,523 goats and 4 pigs in 1928; to 3,562 sheep, 3,168 goats, 72 pigs and 503 cattle in 1961; mounting to 4,000 head of cattle in 1973.[747]

Although local producers did not take to animal husbandry as enthusiastically as government officials had anticipated, a number of expatriate farmers did maintain sizeable herds and appeared to

[737] Turner, *Schism and continuity*.
[738] Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'.
[739] Turner, *Schism and continuity;* Turner, 'Themes in the symbolism of Ndembu hunting ritual'.
[740] Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'.
[741] Kaufmann, 'Sediment of nomadism'.
[742] See: Ferguson, *The anti-politics machine.*
[743] (NAZ) LGH5/2/1, Mwinilunga District Development Plan, 10 September 1956.
[744] (NAZ) NWP1/2/78 Loc.4913, F.R.G. Phillips, North Western Province Annual Report, 1956.
[745] This view is based on a wide reading of archival sources (NAZ); Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, Chapter Two.
[746] (NAZ) NWP1/2/40, R.C. Dening, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 1952.
[747] These figures exclude livestock owned by the European population of the area. (NAZ) KSE6/1/6, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 1928; (NAZ) NWP1/2/101 Loc.4919, North Western Province Annual Report, 1961; (NAZ) Tenth Anniversary Yearbook of the Ministry of Rural Development, December 1975. For the post-colonial period figures are mostly aggregates on a provincial level. These depict a rapid increase: (NAZ) Quarterly Agricultural Statistical Bulletin, September 1975; Annual census of livestock in the traditional sector North Western Province: 1964 10,945 cattle, 2,296 pigs, 7,995 sheep and goats; 1970 23,508 cattle, 4,547 pigs, 13,956 sheep and goats; 1974 30,362 cattle, 7,587 pigs, 21,975 sheep and goats.

have success with cattle ranching.[748] Even in their case, however, the viability of livestock enterprises remained doubtful, both out of environmental considerations and due to the remoteness of Mwinilunga from major markets:[749]

> [Mwinilunga's] great distance from the Copperbelt will, for a long time to come, deter farming people from seeking land within it (…) the drawbacks (…) are the sour veldt, parasites and fly (…) Great damboes, which to look at seem wonderful grazing yet to walk on prove watery death traps to cattle venturing on them, or else the green grass proves so hard and sharp that you cut your fingers if you pull it. Fluke and other internal worms, and ticks galore, flourish and strange cattle must struggle to survive until acclimatised.[750]

Contrary to local individuals, European farmers were able to operate even in the face of adversity. This was due to the large scale of their ranches, good managerial and organisational skills, but mostly because of profits from side activities such as trade or agriculture.[751] Whilst animal husbandry did provide opportunities for market involvement, it proved problematic from the outset.

In spite of drawbacks, government officials saw potential in local livestock keeping and assigned it prime importance, especially after 1945. Livestock was designated as 'one of the most encouraging avenues of development', whereas a bright 'future for cattle' was claimed.[752] Government promoted livestock ownership by distributing cattle or poultry to chiefs and other 'promising individuals'.[753] Schemes would operate on a loan or repayment basis, an example being the National Beef Scheme initiated in 1967. Officials believed that stock ownership would facilitate 'improved' agricultural methods, by providing manure and enabling ox-drawn ploughing, and would diversify the local diet, through provision of milk, butter, eggs and meat.[754] Livestock was ideologically linked to the 'progressive farmer':

> Where possible it is obvious that cattle should be part and parcel of mixed farming schemes in order to increase the productivity of the soil, and in any project for the distribution of cattle priority should be given to persons who are engaged in growing cash crops.[755]

A crucial motive behind the promotion of livestock was that it would 'tend to stabilise the movement of the owners.'[756] Sedenterisation would be effected as a result of capital investment in stock and land, but also because livestock manure would enhance soil fertility and enable the protracted cultivation of a single plot of land. Animal husbandry would thus encourage fixed as opposed to shifting settlement patterns, by tying producers to the land.[757] In a stark opposition to 'nomadic', 'wasteful' or 'primitive' methods of hunting, official discourse linked animal husbandry to settled farming, market production and administrative control.

What precluded the local popularity and ownership of livestock, despite official propaganda? Could this be blamed on a lack of market logic or a 'primitive' outlook of producers, as some officials

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[748] Interview with Mr Paul Fisher, 27 September 2008, Hillwood Farm; A. Sardanis, *Africa, another side of the coin: Northern Rhodesia's final years and Zambia's nationhood* (London, 2003).

[749] These included W.F. Fisher of Hillwood farm, Robinson of Caenby farm and Paterson of Matonchi farm. Fisher, at the height of his career had a herd of 1,500 cattle: (NAZ) LGH5/2/1, Provincial Four Year Development Plan, 1956; (NAZ) NWP1/2/26 Loc.4901, Veterinary Department to Provincial Commissioner, Ndola, 12 September 1949.

[750] (NAZ) NWP1/2/26 Loc.4901, Veterinary Department to Provincial Commissioner, Ndola, 12 September 1949; (NAZ) SEC5/136, Murray, Mwinilunga Crown Land Block, 23 December 1958.

[751] Interview with Mr Paul Fisher, 27 September 2008, Hillwood Farm; Interview with Mr Andrew Sardanis, 14 December 2009, Lusaka.

[752] (NAZ) LGH5/2/1, Provincial Four Year Development Plan, 1956; (NAZ) NWP1/2/78 Loc.4913, E.L. Button, North Western Province Annual Report, 1959.

[753] (NAZ) SEC2/185, Kaonde-Lunda Province District Commissioners' Conference, 1956.

[754] This view is based on a wide reading of archival sources (NAZ); Crehan and Von Oppen, *Planners and history*; Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees.*

[755] (NAZ) LGH5/5/8, Mwinilunga District Development Plan, 10 September 1956.

[756] (NAZ) SEC2/962, P.L.N. Hannaford, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 28 June 1954.

[757] Scott, *Seeing like a state*; Ferguson, *The anti-politics machine.*

purported, or were there other reasons? For one, although there was 'a desire on the part of local people to own cattle', stock was in short supply.[758] But furthermore, not all stock was equally popular:

> [Sheep, goats and pigs] do not seem to be greatly prised, they are not herded but are left to the mercy of accident and wild animals, and in a Province where there is a chronic meat shortage surprisingly little attention is paid to them (…) Poultry on the other hand are highly esteemed and in great demand everywhere, and there is an insatiable demand for improved cockerels (…) This is partly because the results are quickly visible and partly because the market for poultry on the Copperbelt, in the Congo and locally is an extremely good one.[759]

Preferences for livestock could be shaped by ecological, agricultural, economic, cultural or ritual factors.[760] As the high demand for poultry suggests, producers were responsive to marketing opportunities, when these proved favourable. Marketing considerations, however, were not the only factor behind animal husbandry. Sheep and goats were not popular because they could protrude into unfenced gardens and evoke quarrels with neighbours, causing strain within the village.[761] Chickens, on the other hand, were valued because of their ritual significance. They could be offered to honoured visitors, they would figure in witchcraft ordeals (the 'fowl test') and they were part of ceremonies.[762] The rationale behind animal husbandry and the choice of livestock were informed by multiple considerations.

Amongst these considerations economic factors proved of paramount importance. Far from being unresponsive to market logic, one District Commissioner remarked how 'the natives regard small stock as a ten shilling note on four legs rather than as a source of meat or milk supply.'[763] In the 1950s a buoyant livestock trade developed with neighbouring areas of Congo, and 'many people in the District depended on selling chickens, sheep and goats in the Congo for money with which to pay tax and buy clothes.'[764] Although administrative propaganda tried to encourage marketing within Zambia, for example on the Copperbelt, producers could obtain higher prices by moving across the borders. Even if these nearby international markets might be considered illegal, and officials denounced the trade as smuggling, the trade evidences the inventiveness and commercial orientation of producers in Mwinilunga.[765] Instead of bringing about sedentarisation and bureaucratic control, livestock producers would defy administrative control and maximise profit through mobility in an attempt to obtain a good price for their meat.

The commercial rearing of livestock contrasted sharply with the domestic uses of stock: 'In the villages stock are rarely, if ever slaughtered to provide meat, except on important festive occasions such as funerals, weddings, maturity ceremonies, etc.'[766] Livestock would be reserved for consumption on special occasions, rather than being slaughtered for meat on a regular basis. Scarcity of supplies contributed to the special ideological status of stock, precluding overt commercial exploitation.[767] Livestock numbers were further kept down because stock was frequently subject to disease and because it could cause quarrels with neighbours, especially if animals strayed into fields unannounced.

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[758] (NAZ) MAG2/5/91 Loc.144, Minister of Agriculture, North Western Province Tour, 6 January 1968.

[759] (NAZ) NWP1/2/78 Loc.4913, F.R.G. Phillips, North Western Province Annual Report, 1956.

[760] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Group interview Kampemba, 30 March 2010, Mwinilunga; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, Chapter Two.

[761] This view is based on a wide reading of archival sources (NAZ); Turner, *Schism and continuity*.

[762] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mrs Mandamu Sapotu, 10 March 2010, Ikelenge; Turner, *Schism and continuity*; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*.

[763] (NAZ) SEC2/151, Provincial Commissioner Western Province Annual Report, 1937.

[764] (NAZ) LGH5/1/3 Loc.3604, Lunda-Ndembo Native Authority Meeting, 5 November 1960; (NAZ) SEC2/965, P.L.N. Hannaford, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, December 1955.

[765] Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'; See Chapter 3A; J. MacGaffey, *The real economy of Zaire: The contribution of smuggling and other unofficial activities to national wealth* (London etc., 1991).

[766] (NAZ) MAG2/9/11 Loc.171, Department of Agriculture Nutrition Trends, 4 August 1959.

[767] This has been referred to as the 'cattle complex' or the 'bovine mystique' throughout Southern and Eastern Africa. Ferguson, 'The bovine mystique'.

Still, once commercial opportunities arose a select number of individuals did capitalise on the trade and sale of livestock. To satisfy the demand for meat in the district, inventive solutions were sought. Mr Kahangu, for example, started transporting cattle form Zambezi District to the Boma in Mwinilunga after independence. This trade enabled him to open the first butchery in the district in 1968, which answered the increasing demand for meat among administrative employees and residents of the fledgling town.[768] In spite of the willingness of producers to respond to market incentives, livestock retained more of a domestic, limited, use within Mwinilunga District. Because markets were confined and competition at existing markets was high, the commercial rearing of stock failed to take off.

Ideological frameworks, marketing and administrative control: The co-existence of hunting and herding

Another reason for the relative lack of enthusiasm towards livestock was the persistently high valuation of game meat and hunting. Rather than a 'cattle complex' or 'bovine mystique' so well described for other areas, in Mwinilunga a distinct 'hunting ethos' prevailed.[769] This ideological framework, based on environmentally and economically sound principles which had developed and adapted over time, shaped responses to bureaucratic interventions and commercial opportunities. In spite of the active propagation of animal husbandry and commercial agriculture, hunting retained paramount importance.[770] Hunting made a real contribution to livelihood security and was by no means economically irrational, yet the attachment to hunting was driven by factors which went beyond economic rationale. Hunting formed one of the pillars of the internal foundation of production in Mwinilunga District.

Colonial officials identified hunting as 'the traditional occupation' of the Lunda and claimed that 'the poverty of their gardens showed where their real interests lay'.[771] Officers lamented that the popularity of hunting prevented a more active interest in agriculture and animal husbandry. This strong attachment to hunting needs to be explained. Even though the ownership of livestock had become feasible once the spread of tsetse fly had been arrested and pushed back, breeding stock remained in desperately short supply throughout the twentieth century. On top of this, disease regulations and the high price of stock limited the purchase of cattle.[772] Due to relative scarcity, consequently, livestock continued to be regarded as an inferior alternative to game by the population. Officials remarked that livestock was only considered attractive in case game was difficult to access:

> The Chiefs in this District depend on game meat (…) There is virtually no game in the area and there are very few guns to take advantage of the few remaining animals. As a result, large numbers of sheep, goats and chickens are kept for local consumption.[773]

The ideological framework of hunting remains pertinent. When consuming a meal it might be remarked that chicken (*kasumbi*) or goat (*mpembi*) is nice, yet it cannot pass for real meat (*mbiji*). Even if it has become a rare delight, game continues to be regarded as the only 'real' meat.[774] Through the ideological framework of hunting individuals could obtain meat in a manner which facilitated flexibility, mobility and autonomy. Hunting could easily be rhymed with a shifting pattern of settlement, administrative defiance and illicit marketing across the international boundaries where prices were high.[775] Hunting enabled defiance of administrative control and subverted expectations of fixed settlement. Animal husbandry, on the other hand, was associated with sedentarisation, bureaucratic

[768] Interview with Mr Martin Kahangu, 30 September 2010, Ntambu.
[769] Turner, *Schism and continuity*; Ferguson, 'The bovine mystique'; A. Kuper, *Wives for cattle: Bridewealth and marriage in Southern Africa* (London, 1982).
[770] Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'; Pritchett, *Friends for life*.
[771] (NAZ) SEC2/966, R.J. Short, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 1958.
[772] (NAZ) NWP1/2/26 Loc.4901, R.N. Lines, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, January 1949.
[773] (NAZ) LGH5/2/8 Loc.3613, A.M. Mubita, District Secretary Mwinilunga, 30 August 1967; (NAZ) SEC2/968, J.T. Michie, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, March 1960.
[774] This view is based on numerous oral interviews. See: Mr Jonathan Chiyezhi, November 2010, Mwinilunga.
[775] Turner, *Schism and continuity*; Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'.

control and commercial marketing. Herding failed to gain widespread popularity because markets were lacking, far away or unprofitable.[776] There was an aversion to the fixed settlements which herding propagated. Even with the adoption of animal manure, the soil would easily become depleted. Shifting cultivation continued to be an environmentally sound solution, which enabled high yields whilst population density remained low.[777] Herding, however, could defy sedentarisation, as the examples of marketing small livestock in Congo and Angola attest.[778] Even if official discourse prescribed otherwise, producers remained mobile individuals.[779] Still, hunting fitted more easily within the preferred lifestyle of the area, enabling flexibility and autonomy. Hunting adapted over time, rather than being a remnant from the past, averse to market logic.[780] It was a flexible means of livelihood procurement which answered to marketing opportunities. Furthermore, hunting held ideological benefits over animal husbandry. Whereas hunting provided individuals a means to obtain power and respect, livestock failed to fulfil this role. Factors of ideology, marketing and state control all explain the persistent importance of hunting, even as game populations have decreased.

The attitude of chiefs towards hunting and herding can further illustrate these issues. Chiefs are regarded as the owners of the land and consequently they are considered to be the ultimate guardians of the game which roams the land.[781] A successful hunter is always expected to provide part of his kill, usually the chest, to the chief.[782] Government officials noticed an overwhelming focus on hunting, instead of herding, among chiefs: 'the Chiefs in this District depend on game meat, as they have no wealth of cattle.'[783] A bureaucratic attempt was made to correct this situation and effect a change in attitude:

> Efforts are being made by the Veterinary Department to interest more progressive Africans in the art of cattle management (…) at Mwinilunga the Ndembo Tribal Herd has been formed which is composed of high grade cattle purchased from a local rancher (…) part of this herd was distributed to four local Chiefs [20 head of cattle to each chief].[784]

Nevertheless, in the eyes of the chiefs and the population livestock rearing never attained the same degree of prestige as hunting. Livestock could be kept as a subsidiary source of meat or a potential commercial asset, but game was consistently valued more than livestock. Hunting could cause individual prestige and fame, whereas the ecological conditions prevailing in Mwinilunga District did not enable the build-up of extensive herds of livestock. Hunters could become 'Big Men', whilst herders had to invest labour and capital into animal husbandry without having prospects or guarantees of obtaining good results.[785] The lack of enthusiasm for livestock herding, which government officials interpreted as the absence of commercial initiative or business sense, might equally be explained otherwise. Hunting enabled high returns for relatively low labour inputs, making it a popular basis of livelihood even once game became scarce. On the other hand, livestock herding was labour intensive, required the availability of good grazing lands and could potentially cause quarrels with neighbours. Furthermore, animal husbandry was not necessarily economically lucrative. Individuals were not ignorant to market logic.[786] Once commercial opportunities opened up in Congo, producers eagerly stepped in, engaging in livestock trade and sale for high profits. Game meat, however, could equally

[776] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*.
[777] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* Chapter Two.
[778] Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'.
[779] Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'.
[780] Kaufmann, 'Sediment of nomadism'.
[781] Turner, *Schism and continuity*; Mulumbi Datuuma II, 'Customs of the Lunda Ndembu, Volume I: The Kanongesha chieftainship succession in Zambia' (Unpublished manuscript, 2010).
[782] (NAZ) NWP1/2/12 Loc.4899, H.B. Waugh, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, October 1940.
[783] (NAZ) LGH5/2/8 Loc.3613, A.M. Mubita, District Secretary Mwinilunga, 30 August 1967.
[784] (NAZ) SEC2/155, Annual Report Western Province 1948.
[785] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Paul Fisher, 27 September 2008, Hillwood Farm.
[786] See parallels in Ferguson, *The anti-politics machine*.

be commercially viable and dried game meat continues to be sold in Angola or on the Zambian Copperbelt.[787] The preference for hunting over herding was thus based on a host of economic, political, ideological and environmental considerations, grounded in the specific but shifting conditions prevailing in Mwinilunga District.

Even as official discourse prescribed a historical transition from subsistence hunting techniques to commercial herding practices, this proved far from straightforward.[788] Throughout the twentieth century an ideological framework of game meat valuation predominated, which was left unchallenged by official propaganda for commercial livestock rearing. Turner aptly described this 'hunting ethos' in combination with cassava cultivation as the foundation of production in Mwinilunga in the 1950s.[789] And even after the 1950s, the foundations of production continued to pivot around hunting and cassava cultivation. Such attitudes, which in turn influenced productive practices, should not be seen as unchanging relics of the past, but rather as features constantly adapting to a complex environmental, economic, social and political setting. Cassava and hunting were both geared towards output maximisation, requiring relatively low labour inputs, yet providing a stable source of livelihood. Productive activities constantly adapted to existing opportunities, even if this did not directly lead to commercialisation or market integration as officials might have envisaged. Far from being irrational, producers sought to maximise output from labour returns in a reliable manner without jeopardising subsistence security.[790] Two examples of market participation, beeswax and pineapple production, will now be considered in order to illustrate the conditions of and reactions to marketing opportunities in the area of Mwinilunga.

Beeswax

Mwinilunga has been described as an area where 'beekeepers find their land of milk and honey.'[791] Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century beeswax and honey production has been consistently high. Although subject to fluctuations, the district could produce more 'than the remainder of the Territory combined.'[792] Beeswax in particular proved a lucrative commodity, firmly embedded in networks of trade, as its local use-value was practically non-existent. The case of beeswax can reveal the dynamics of market production over time, simultaneously highlighting the limitations posed by transport, price fluctuations and marketing opportunities.[793] Contrary to depictions of a static pre-colonial period, the case of beeswax illustrates that production was highly dynamic and market-oriented long before the establishment of colonial rule.[794] This case demonstrates that market production did not clash with the production of food crops for 'subsistence', as the two might go hand in hand and could even stimulate one another.

Apiculture has been a long-established activity within Mwinilunga District. The environmental setting is particularly suitable to honey production and producer agency has stimulated a vibrant trade in beeswax.[795] Aspects of beeswax production and trade are captured in an excerpt from the 1930s:

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[787] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Mamfwela Moris, 28 July 2010, Kanongesha; Pritchett, *Friends for life*.

[788] Kaufmann, 'Sediment of nomadism'; D. Turkon, 'Modernity, tradition and the demystification of cattle in Lesotho', *African studies* 62:2 (2003), 147-69.

[789] Turner, *Schism and continuity,* 32.

[790] Turkon, 'Modernity, tradition and the demystification', 152.

[791] (NAZ) ML1/16/6 Loc.4575, Times of Zambia, 17 April 1967.

[792] (NAZ) SEC2/258 Vol.2, Provincial Commissioner Ndola to Chief Secretary Lusaka, 17 September 1935.

[793] See: M.W. Tuck, 'Woodland commodities, global trade, and local struggles: the beeswax trade in British Tanzania', *Journal of Eastern African studies* 3:2 (2009), 259-74; J-L. Vellut, 'Diversification de l'économie de cueillette: miel et cire dans les sociétés de la forêt Claire d'Afrique centrale (c. 1750-1950)', *African economic history* 7 (1979), 93-112.

[794] See: R. Reid, 'Past and presentism: The 'precolonial' and the foreshortening of African history', *Journal of African history* 52:2 (2011), 135-55, especially 142-4.

[795] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*.

> Beeswax has long been traded by the (…) Lunda, formerly to Angola, and now to traders in Balovale and Mwinilunga. In Mwinilunga the successive flowering of species of Isoberlinia, Marquesia and Brachystegia from early winter to early rains, provides a sequence of supplies in normal years. Bark hives are employed, and methods of preparation of the wax appear usually to be adequate. It is purchased by the trader in 2 ½ or 3 lb. balls at 2 ½ to 3 d. per lb., and finds a ready market either in London or Johannesburg. The current price c.i.f. London is 83 s. to 90 s. per cwt.[796]

A variety of techniques could be applied to gather honey and produce beeswax. In order to collect wild honey trees could be cut down, or alternatively bark hives, mostly cylindrical in form, could be constructed. Due to the unique flowering of trees in Mwinilunga the area attracts numerous bees and enjoys a copious honey flow. In the north of the district the honey season is confined to the months between October and January, whilst in the south of the district a second honey season occurs during May and June. Locally, honey is either processed into a sweet beer (*kasolu*) or used as a dietary supplement, to accompany the consumption of cassava roots or meat.[797] Although beeswax is not used locally, it does enjoy an international market. It can be used for making candles, seals, or for producing lipstick in the cosmetics industry, among other things.[798]

Consequently, from the eighteenth century onwards beeswax became an export product shipped from the Angolan coast.[799] Initially, beeswax supplemented exports of ivory and slaves, in return for which scarce consumer goods could be obtained.[800] In the 1850s this trade was vividly described:

> The native traders generally carry salt and a few pieces of cloth, a few beads, and cartouches with iron balls (…) The great article of search is beeswax, and from their eagerness to obtain it I suspect it fetches a high price in the market.[801]

The salience of this trade was underlined by travellers at the end of the nineteenth century: 'The Malunda cultivate honey more than any other tribe I have met. In addition to wild honey, they procure a very plentiful supply from bark hives, which they attach to the branches of trees.'[802] The beeswax trade ran well into the colonial period and beyond. Beeswax would be shipped from Angolan ports, Benguela in particular, and this trade perpetuated the strong links between Mwinilunga and Angola.[803]

Local traders presented economic incentives, such as profit margins and price differentials, as motivating factors to engage in the beeswax trade. Pricing could even prompt traders to circumvent prohibitive colonial legislation: 'We decided to take the risk as the traders in Angola give us a lot of money for any beeswax we take to them.'[804] Expatriate traders, most notably Ffolliott Fisher, started buying beeswax from Mwinilunga in 1926. The end product, transported by the Benguela railway to Angola, was destined for export to either Johannesburg or London, where it fetched prices of up to £170 per landed ton.[805] Local traders were able to effectively compete with expatriates, although colonial legislation denounced the local trade as illicit smuggling. In a manner which demonstrated knowledge of markets, local traders took advantage of price differentials across the international boundaries and cut transport costs by relying on established networks of trade:

> A considerable quantity of wax is taken across the border either by Mwinilunga natives desiring higher prices at Angola or Congo or by natives from Angola or Congo who have journeyed here to buy the wax with English currency in the hope of reselling at a profit across the Border (…) high transport charges

[796] (NAZ) Trapnell and Clothier, Report of the Ecological Survey for 1934.
[797] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Bigwan Masondi, 13 October 2010, Ntambu.
[798] Tuck, 'Woodland commodities'.
[799] Vellut, 'Diversification de l'économie de cueilette', 106.
[800] Miller, *Way of death;* Von Oppen*, Terms of trade.*
[801] Schapera, *Livingstone's African journal*, 121.
[802] Gibbons, *Africa from south to north*, 44-5.
[803] Bakewell, 'Refugees repatriating'.
[804] (NAZ) KSE3/2/2/7, Rex vs. Chisele, 24 July 1928.
[805] (NAZ) SEC2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 31 December 1935.

> and export duties make it impossible for traders in this Territory to pay as much for the commodity as the Portuguese traders [in Angola] can offer.[806]

Favourable marketing opportunities enticed individuals to step up beeswax production. In the 1930s it was estimated that the average producer owned 20 hives, whereas some possessed up to 100 hives.[807] With prices fluctuating up to a high of 6d. per lb., beeswax production reached levels of 30-40 tons per annum.[808] Honey collecting became so popular that it was described in terms of a 'seasonal exodus', even drawing 'the people away from their gardens!'[809] Far from lacking commercial initiative, producers in Mwinilunga proved receptive towards market production under favourable conditions.

Rather than obstructing agricultural production, it was exactly the compatibility between apiculture and agricultural production that caused beeswax to become such a popular commodity. Being a forest product, beeswax production is spatially segregated from the main agricultural fields. The placing of hives occurs during the dry season, a period of relative agricultural inactivity. The collection of honey from the hives coincides with the planting period of crops, when labour demands are at a peak. Nevertheless, honey collection, which can be completed within several days of concerted effort, does not seem to seriously impair agricultural production. Instead, producers regard apiculture as a lucrative, low-risk side activity, which can complement agricultural production without conflicting with it.[810] The sale of beeswax provided distinct benefits and in the 1930s it was reported that: 'whole villages sometimes find their tax money by sale of beeswax alone.'[811] Access to scarce commodities, such as clothing, pots and even bicycles, could be provided by means of the beeswax trade.[812] As a result, producers preferred beeswax over other produce: 'Rubber is not coming in anywhere as well as expected, and this is partly due to the good beeswax harvest, money being easier to get for wax and the work for collecting not so hard.'[813] The popularity of apiculture was virtually unsurpassed, as it was an activity which required low labour inputs but could provide high monetary returns. Factors such as profitability, marketability and labour input enticed beeswax production and trade.[814]

Due to its 'great potentials', apiculture was afforded prime importance by various government development schemes. During the 1930s schemes mainly focused on instruction and demonstration, promoting methods of wax making in saucers instead of balls and encouraging the construction of hives, instead of honey hunting.[815] In the 1960s emphasis was placed on marketing, through the formation of honey and beekeeping co-operative societies. Bureaucratic proposals could be highly elaborate and ambitious:

> There should be a possibility of having one Honey marketing co-operative based initially at Mwinilunga under which a number of producer groups would be formed. Each group would consist of 10 to 20 members who would produce about two to three tons of honey per year and the mother co-operative would provide a honey press, strainers and suitable containers for the honey crop to each group.[816]

Discursively, official schemes sought to 'improve' and 'develop' existing apicultural practices. Producers only adopted suggestions, however, if these did not involve extra labour or capital inputs. Methods of producing wax in saucers instead of balls caught on following official propaganda, because: 'saucers can be made with little extra trouble and require no apparatus that cannot be found in most

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[806] (NAZ) SEC2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 31 December 1937; (NAZ) SEC2/41, Ormeby-Gore Report, 21 May 1937.
[807] (NAZ) Allan to Director of Agriculture, 11 February 1938.
[808] (NAZ) NWP1/2/101 Loc.4919, H.T. Bayldon, North Western Province Annual Report, 1961.
[809] (NAZ) SEC2/963, P.L.N. Hannaford, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, September 1955.
[810] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Maladi, 16 May 2010, Nyakaseya.
[811] (NAZ) SEC2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 31 December 1935.
[812] (NAZ) SEC2/41, Note on Resources of Mwinilunga District, February 1937.
[813] (NAZ) SEC2/193, Kaonde-Lunda Newsletter, First Quarter 1943.
[814] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, Chapter Two.
[815] (NAZ) SEC2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 31 December 1937.
[816] (NAZ) Ministry of Agriculture, Monthly Economic Bulletin, June 1966.

Native households.'[817] Furthermore: 'It is axiomatic that the success of any scheme to improve the quality of a product depends on securing to the producer a premium for his extra trouble [in the form of good prices].'[818] The success of a scheme was premised not on scientifically defined principles advocated by government officials, but rather on labour and capital inputs and returns. Producers considered whether the requisite extra labour and capital inputs would pay off, but also took into account whether market involvement would not jeopardise foundations of production and livelihood security.[819]

The main problems facing beeswax production and trade lay in the spheres of marketing and transport. Market instability and price fluctuations, in particular, could deter producers. Existing obstacles were aptly summarised in the 1960s:

> Lack of buying stations for wax: Beekeepers have to carry their crops 50 miles to the market and some have to carry over 100 miles and even with the good value/weight ratio this long cartage is discouraging. Irregular prices and buying: There have been violent price fluctuations, and stores often stop buying. Fraud by store capitaos: Producers usually know when they are being cheated, but cannot read, so can do little about it except cease production.[820]

Market instability and long transport hauls could indeed discourage producers and cause sales fluctuations.[821] Throughout the colonial period prices for beeswax fluctuated between 1/6d. and 6d. per lb. and concomitantly production figures ranged from 10 to 40 tons per annum. Price incentives could encourage producers. When Fisher raised the buying price in 1937 to 4d. per lb. in the villages and 5 ½ d. per lb. at his store, officials 'met many boys taking wax for sale at his store and also two native hawkers with carriers laden with wax.'[822] Nevertheless, even in times of slump ways to sell supplies and overcome transport or marketing difficulties were creatively sought and found: 'with wax valued 2/- a producer can easily carry £5 worth on a cycle.'[823] Producers seemed 'glad to earn their living by collecting beeswax',[824] and government officials equally noted that: 'if it only helped a hundred elderly men, who are physically unfit to travel a long distance to find work, to get a few shillings each year – then something would have been accomplished.'[825] By adopting flexible strategies of production, trade and marketing, beeswax producers sought to stabilise their means of livelihood, even in the face of adversity.

The case of beeswax production in Mwinilunga provides an example of long-term, yet fluctuating, market involvement. It does not fit the transition from 'subsistence' to 'market' production.[826] Beeswax production was long-established in the area of Mwinilunga and was geared towards marketing from the outset, yet over time the activity continuously adapted to changing incentives and circumstances. Beeswax production exemplified modern market involvement. Even so, the activity built on internal foundations of production, based on the agricultural basis of livelihood procurement and premised on values such as security, whilst aiming to maximise profit from limited labour supplies. Individuals were eager to engage in beeswax production because this was a relatively risk-free and flexible form of market participation, compatible with other sources of livelihood procurement.[827] Rather than conflicting with the production of food crops, beeswax production contributed to overall welfare, by generating money to buy consumer goods or pay taxes. In case a slump in the beeswax market occurred, and alternative sales outlets equally failed, producers could

[817] (NAZ) Department of Agriculture, Annual Report, 1937.
[818] (NAZ) Department of Agriculture, Annual Report, 1937.
[819] See: Carswell, 'Food crops as cash crops'.
[820] (NAZ) ML1/16/6 Loc.4575, Honey and Wax Marketing Policy, 13 May 1966.
[821] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, Chapter Two.
[822] (NAZ) NWP1/2/2 Loc.4897, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 3 February 1937.
[823] (NAZ) ML1/16/6 Loc.4575, Beekeeping Industry Coordinating Committee, 30 April 1966.
[824] (NAZ) KSE6/1/4, K.S. Kinross, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 1925.
[825] (NAZ) KSE6/1/4, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 1922.
[826] Vellut, 'Diversification de l'économie de cueilette'; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*
[827] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr John Kamuhuza, March 2010, Ikelenge.

refrain from selling and consume the excess honey locally. Apiculture produced not only cash crops which might prove unmarketable and ultimately useless, but contributed to food security as well. Yet when marketing did prove profitable, producers could step up beeswax production fairly easily and rapidly, resulting in a high degree of flexibility.[828] Producers were sensitive to factors such as price incentives, market fluctuations and transport. Nevertheless, producers remained flexible in their marketing strategies, rather than being dependent on the market. Although beeswax could be lucrative, it never became central to the livelihood of producers. The priority of producers remained agricultural production and the stable subsistence foundation which this provided enabled men to engage in beeswax production and trade as a subsidiary activity, which could complement but would not jeopardise food security. Subsistence and market production did not clash, but could stimulate one another. When price fluctuations, unstable markets or transport problems made beeswax an unattractive proposition, there was always an 'exit option', in the form of the agricultural foundations of production which provided a stable basis of subsistence.[829] This is what made producers flexible, as they could easily engage or disengage from the market. Producers retained a degree of agency, without becoming completely dependent on the market.[830] This autonomy and flexibility eased the effects of market fluctuations and economic slumps on producers and beeswax thus remained a decidedly attractive commodity. The rationale behind market engagement in the area of Mwinilunga will be further illustrated through the case of pineapple production.

Pineapples

Pineapples are so intimately associated with Mwinilunga District that the area is referred to as 'pineapple country' in the remainder of Zambia.[831] Contrary to the pre-colonial roots of the beeswax trade, pineapples only developed as a major cash crop in the course of the 1960s and 1970s.[832] The introduction of this fruit to the area dates much further back, though. Pineapples are of American origin and have spread through the long-distance trade from the Angolan coast into the interior.[833] By the 1850s the crop was established in Mwinilunga, although the exact provenance remained a mystery to travellers, such as Livingstone: 'pineapples are reported as existing in the woods in the Lunda country, and are not eaten by the people. Who introduced them?'[834] Locally, the introduction of the pineapple is attributed to either missionary activity or acts of entrepreneurship from Congo (rather than Angola) early in the twentieth century.[835] In the course of the twentieth century, the cultivation of pineapples spread throughout Mwinilunga District. As a result of colonial and missionary propaganda, as well as local initiative, approximately 30% of all villages cultivated the crop by the 1940s.[836] Nevertheless, pineapples did not become a staple in the diet and producers initially did not afford pineapples much importance, or even attention. Officials lamented this indifference:

> Unfortunately, vegetables, fruit and coffee are not thought of as serious cultivation but to be tried as a side-line, or in the case of fruit, to be planted around the village and trust to Providence. Providence does not co-operate well with pineapples I found when trying to buy some.[837]

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, pineapples served mainly to diversify the marketing and dietary repertoires of producers in Mwinilunga. They were grown as a subsidiary crop, but were not assigned agricultural priority.

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[828] Pritchett, *Friends for life.*

[829] Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa*; Scott, *Moral economy.*

[830] Hyden might argue that producers are 'uncaptured' by the market, *Beyond Ujamaa*.

[831] In Lusaka and on the Copperbelt, Mwinilunga was immediately associated with pineapples.

[832] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, 60-1.

[833] Mendes Ferrão, *The adventure of plants*.

[834] Schapera, *Livingstone's African journal*, 228.

[835] Interview with Headman Larson Samahina, 17 March 2010, Ikelenge; Interview with Mr Paul Fisher, 22 September 2008, Hillwood Farm.

[836] (BOD) Richard Cranmer Dening, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 1947.

[837] (NAZ) SEC2/967, C.J. Fryer, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 27 May 1959.

Once it became evident that pineapples held commercial potential, producers eagerly seized the opportunity to market the crop. At first, commercial pineapple production was confined to the village of Samahina, inhabited by a group of Ovimbundu immigrants from Angola who had settled in Chief Ikelenge's area.[838] Officials described that pineapple production was: 'confined to comparatively few people who came from Angola where they had been trained in the art of fruit husbandry and have been practicing it fairly successfully for a number of years.'[839] More important than pre-existing knowledge of cultivation, however, was the ready market for pineapples provided by the European population of the nearby mission station. Because the demand for pineapples proved persistently high, propaganda by missionaries and officials aimed at stimulating production in Samahina by providing funds, technical and marketing assistance, which gave the Ovimbundu a major advantage over other producers. Once it became apparent that pineapple production and marketing could be lucrative, others started planting pineapples throughout the district in the 1950s and 1960s.[840] Initially, the pineapple trade was confined to the local market, but occasional surpluses would be sold in Solwezi, at Kansanshi. Officials heralded bright prospects from the outset: 'there is no doubt that with a little organisation and initiative the production of this fruit could be worked up into a valuable cash crop.'[841] Marketing of this 'luxury fruit', which had a good value/weight ratio and could withstand high transport costs, gradually stepped up, as traders started: 'buying up the pineapples to fill up back load capacity to the Copperbelt.'[842] The ready market for the crop among the urban population of the Copperbelt spurred production. Environmentally, due to the acidity of the soils Mwinilunga proved more suited to pineapple cultivation than any other area in the country.[843]

It was only after independence, however, that the production and sale of pineapples really took off. Whereas in 1965 43 tons of pineapples had been marketed, by the 1969-70 agricultural season this figure had risen to 480 tons, sold at a price of 3 ngwee per lb.[844] The potential for production enticed the UNIP government to erect a pineapple canning factory in 1969, under the direction of the parastatal G.M. Rucom Industries. Calculations pointed out that at prevailing rates of production the plant could only be kept running for 29.2 hours per annum, which meant that the factory would be unprofitable from the outset.[845] Even if large amounts of pineapples were purchased and processed, the viability of the factory further deteriorated in the course of the 1970s:

> The actual growing conditions, the quality of fruit for canning, the high cost of transport, road conditions and high production costs of the cannery alone, have an extremely negative influence on the profitability of the cannery. According to the calculations of Rucom, the loss per case in 1971-72 was K9.45 (…) By increasing production, the average production cost per case may slightly go down, but the total loss will be higher.[846]

Temporary closures of the factory first occurred in 1974, and as a result 'farmers preferred to sell their pineapples to the Copperbelt where they received high prices rather than at the factory.'[847] The final closure of the canning factory resulted in the disappearance of a major market for pineapples. Although some traders did continue transporting small amounts of pineapples to urban markets, the bright prospects for the future of pineapple production had been dashed. Whereas some producers maintained small fields of pineapples, most were discouraged and simply abandoned the crop.[848]

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[838] Interview with Headman Larson Samahina, 17 March 2010, Ikelenge.
[839] (NAZ) NWP1/2/101 Loc.4919, H.T. Bayldon, North-Western Province Annual Report, 1961.
[840] Interview with Mr Aaron Chikewa, 27 April 2010, Nyakaseya.
[841] (NAZ) SEC2/963, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 26 April 1955.
[842] Sardanis, *Africa.*
[843] Johnson, *Handbook to the North-Western Province*.
[844] (NAZ) LGH5/2/2 Loc. 3611, Marketing of Produce North-Western Province, 23 July 1970; (NAZ) MAG2/17/86 Loc. 199, Pineapples, July 1970.
[845] (NAZ) MAG2/5/91 Loc.144, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 14 May 1969.
[846] (NAZ) MAG2/17/86 Loc.199, Pineapples, 24 July 1972.
[847] (NAZ) Rural Development Seminar: Programme for the Nation, 19 September 1974.
[848] This view is based on numerous oral interviews.

The remarkably rapid increase of pineapple production in the 1960s cannot be attributed to price incentives and favourable marketing opportunities alone, although these factors did play an irrefutable role. Pineapples generated large amounts of money, as in February 1968 the sale of 66,443 lbs. of pineapples raised K1, 328.66.[849] Pineapples were referred to as 'yellow gold' and cash incentives enticed individuals to expand production. Pineapple profits were not only ploughed back into agricultural production, but equally stimulated the purchase of consumer goods. The period when the canning factory was still in operation is remembered as a time when people 'started building good houses and wearing nice clothes.'[850] One woman who cultivated a large pineapple field together with her husband proudly recalled that she 'had cloth of which other women were jealous' and 'could eat lots of meat every day while others were just eating vegetables.'[851] Production and consumption were intricately linked, as the prospect of buying consumer goods with the profits from pineapple sales stimulated agricultural production.

Next to and perhaps more than price incentives, labour requirements and environmental factors informed the popularity of pineapple production. Pineapples are mainly harvested between mid-October and the end of February, and to a lesser extent between mid-April and mid-July. Even if the planting, weeding and harvesting of pineapple plants takes place during the rain season, when labour requirements for other crops are highest, pineapples still proved compatible with other crops and existing methods of agricultural production in the area.[852] This is due to the relatively low labour demands of pineapples, as: 'little attention is paid to the pineapple plots during the rains when more labour is needed in the cassava and maize gardens.'[853] The labour requirements for land clearing are minimal with pineapple cultivation, as one field can be tilled for up to seven consecutive years. Moreover, the most labour intensive tasks of planting and weeding are commonly completed through the collective effort of work parties. In this case, the owner of a pineapple field asks kin, friends or other interested individuals to assist with a predefined task. Assistance is remunerated with gifts in cash or kind (beer, meat and fish in particular). When work parties are resorted to labour demands fall less heavily on a single individual, tasks can be completed rapidly and goods or cash are distributed among the group. Work parties thus enable the maintenance of larger fields than an individual could tend alone.[854] Furthermore, because pineapples are cultivated in separate fields, usually at some distance from the main agricultural fields, their production does not conflict with that of other crops.[855] It is this compatibility with other crops that lends pineapples their distinct appeal. Pineapples are a lucrative side-line, which might be desirable but is not essential in terms of livelihood. Complementing – instead of jeopardising – food production, pineapples have become a popular crop.

Notwithstanding the attractions, pineapple production faced a number of problems which were difficult to overcome. Although the crop can grow throughout Mwinilunga District, the soils in the north-west are most suited to pineapple cultivation. Production is therefore concentrated in the areas of Chiefs Ikelenge and Nyakaseya, which are 70 to 100 kilometres removed from Mwinilunga Boma.[856] Because of the decision to establish the canning factory in the administrative centre of the district, so that it might attract produce from all over the district, transport difficulties proved a serious obstacle. Particularly during the rain season complications would spring up. Trucks could get stuck in the muddy roads for days at a time and such delays would cause loads of pineapples to rot. Because pineapples are a highly fragile and perishable crop, any complications would result in heavy losses for

[849] (NAZ) MAG2/5/91 Loc.144, Minister of Agriculture Tour North-Western Province, March 1968.
[850] Interview with Mr Saipilinga Kahongo, 22 March 2010, Ikelenge.
[851] Interview with Mrs Nanci Kamafumbu, 19 April 2010, Ikelenge.
[852] Interview with Mr John Kamuhuza, March 2010, Ikelenge.
[853] (NAZ) MAG2/17/86 Loc.199, Pineapples, 24 July 1972.
[854] P. Geschiere 'Working groups or wage labour? Cash-crops, reciprocity and money among the Maka of Southeastern Cameroon', *Development and change* 26:3 (1995), 503-23; See Chapter 5.
[855] This view is based on numerous oral interviews.
[856] Interview with the Agricultural Officer Mr Ambrose Musanda, 1 October 2008, Mwinilunga.

producers and the cannery.[857] Pineapples are not only perishable once harvested, but they also require delicate handling during transport so as not to bruise the fruit. Packaging and transport remained problematic throughout the period of the cannery's operation, whereas marketing difficulties and price fluctuations further contributed to the demise of pineapple production over the course of the 1970s and 1980s.[858]

In spite of difficulties, pineapple cultivation proved popular among producers. A survey conducted in 1969 counted 251 pineapple producers in Mwinilunga District, who cultivated a total of 288 acres, with individual field sizes ranging from 0.11 to 8.25 acres. The average yield per acre was 1.5 tons, and although this figure does not come close to the optimum yield of 18 tons per acre under irrigation and close supervision, yields and profits nevertheless proved satisfactory to the cultivator. If cultivated on fertile red soils, irrigated and properly managed, a pineapple field could yield between K26.30 and K700 per acre.[859] Pineapple cultivation thus varied in intensity among producers. Whereas some cultivated pineapples as a mere side activity, others took to pineapple cultivation as a business enterprise, maintaining large fields, engaging pieceworkers and making arrangements for transport and marketing. A handful of producers purchased motor vehicles with the profits from pineapple sales, and these vehicles enabled them to independently transport harvests to the canning factory or to urban markets. This, in turn, allowed producers to realise high profits and invest in the expansion of their enterprises.[860]

Within a general environment of constraint throughout Mwinilunga District, pineapple cultivation provided an opportunity. Throughout the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, pineapple production proved profitable, yet problems of transport and marketing predominated and led to the demise of the canning factory.[861] Although after the closure of the factory some producers continued to market pineapples at urban markets, this trade at best provided a volatile and limited market outlet for the crop. Pineapple cultivation did cause a degree of material wealth in the area, yet it did not amount to the emergence of a distinct class of rural entrepreneurs. Pineapple cultivation often involved communal effort in the form of work parties, as well as the concerted organisation of transport and marketing. The earnings of successful pineapple producers would circulate through the wider community, whereas individuals would be socially penalised if pursuing profit too blatantly. Individuals who failed to consider the wellbeing of kin and friends risked being ostracised or would become the target of witchcraft accusations.[862] Pineapple cultivation was attractive to producers because it did not require a reorganisation of existing agricultural practices. It could be practiced as a supplementary activity without jeopardising food security. This compatibility meant that pineapple production built on the existing foundations of production in Mwinilunga.[863] Nevertheless, pineapple production faced existing constraints of transport and marketing, highlighting the marginal position of Mwinilunga District within Zambia as a whole.

The rationale of market production

Why did producers choose to engage in the marketing of crops, agricultural commodities or meat? And why did some producers actively refrain from market participation? These questions have to do with agricultural repertoires, values and rationales of production. The cases of beeswax and pineapple production have outlined some of the opportunities of market production in the area of Mwinilunga,

[857] This view is based on numerous oral interviews in Mwinilunga, especially Mr and Mrs Ntanga, 4 March and 27 October 2010.
[858] Pritchett, *Friends for life*.
[859] (NAZ) MAG2/17/86 Loc.199, Pineapples, 24 July 1972.
[860] Interview with Mr Saipilinga Kahongo, 22 March 2010, Ikelenge.
[861] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* Chapter Two.
[862] The man who claims to have introduced the first pineapple to Mwinilunga District has been attacked by an *ilomba*, which explains his short stature. Interview with Mr Aaron Chikewa, 27 April 2010, Nyakaseya.
[863] Interview with Mr John Kamuhuza, March 2010, Ikelenge.

but have equally pointed towards obstacles. Transport, marketing and price fluctuations posed major and persistent difficulties, which to a certain extent could be overcome by producing high-value, low-weight commodities in large quantities.[864] Producers expressed a preference for crops and commodities that could be produced and marketed, whilst only minimally upsetting food security and existing methods of agricultural production. Food security could be provided by relying on the foundations of production, based on cassava and hunting. Cash crops which proved compatible with these foundations of production were more likely to catch on than those that conflicted with established practices.[865] Examining the boom period of agricultural production and marketing in the 1950s can illustrate the rationale behind market production.

The late 1940s and 1950s might well be viewed as the heyday of marketing of agricultural produce in Mwinilunga District. High demand from the Congolese and Northern Rhodesian Copperbelts, coupled with internal demand from missions and government, drove up prices and levels of agricultural production.[866] As late as 1949 the District Commissioner had 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.'[867] Distance, and ensuing transport difficulties, seemed to preclude the marketing of all but high-value low-weight cash crops. Nevertheless, the high levels of demand during the 1950s made even the marketing of crops such as beans, maize and cassava possible, at least temporarily. Various types of produce were marketed during the 1940s and 1950s, both high-value labour-intensive cash crops, such as rice and groundnuts, and staple food crops, such as cassava.[868] Subsistence and cash crop production were closely interwoven. Without the basis provided by cassava production, market participation would not have been possible to the same extent.

By the late 1940s the District Commissioner stated that: 'the most remarkable feature of the agriculture of the district is the tremendous surplus of cassava meal, which becomes greater year by year.'[869] The overall market production of crops was based on and pivoted around cassava. Although cassava was denounced by officials as a subsistence crop, it was marketed in large quantities of up to 600 tons per year.[870] Furthermore, cassava production enabled the market production of other crops by freeing up labour and providing a stable basis of livelihood. Cassava did not necessitate expensive inputs, such as fertiliser or pesticides. The major requirement of the crop was labour input. Although the vent-for-surplus model – which posits that land and labour in rural Africa had remained underutilised prior to capitalist penetration and market production – does not hold, there were possibilities to deploy labour more efficiently.[871] Cassava production was one such methods, evidenced by the fact that large surpluses of cassava could be marketed whilst 50% of males were absent due to labour migration.[872] Because cassava production provided a stable basis of food, the crop could function as a foundation for market production. Producers aspiring to step into the market could opt to deploy labour to cassava production and market the surplus, or they could invest their time and energy in other (cash) crops. Cultivators could either expand existing cassava holdings, or keep their cassava fields as a stable source of food and deploy labour to cash crops, such as rice or groundnuts. A survey conducted in the 1940s pointed out that all residents of Mwinilunga District maintained a cassava field, and thus possessed a stable source of food.[873] By relying on cassava, producers could

[864] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu.*
[865] Carswell, 'Food crops as cash crops'.
[866] Chabatama, 'Peasant farming'; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, Chapter One.
[867] (NAZ) SEC2/957, A. Stockwell-Jones, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, January 1949.
[868] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* Chapter Two.
[869] (NAZ) SEC2/156, R.C. Dening, Mwinilunga District Annual Report on African Affairs, 1949.
[870] Peša, 'Cassava is our chief'.
[871] Tosh, 'The cash-crop revolution'; Austin, 'Resources, techniques and strategies'.
[872] Peša, 'Cassava is our chief'.
[873] (NAZ) SEC2/149, A. Stockwell Jones, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 1942.

avoid jeopardising food security. Moreover, when engaging in the market cassava was a favourable crop because its labour demands were low relative to other crops, and because labour saving techniques (such as infrequent weeding, harvesting in bits and pieces instead of all at once and cultivating on the same plot of land for multiple years) could be adopted.[874] Further, cassava could minimise the effects of market fluctuations. If markets collapsed, producers could step out of the market by scaling down the size of their fields, increasing them once more if circumstances proved profitable again. Cassava could be left in the ground for several years before harvesting, providing a store of food as well as an invisible resource for marketing.[875]

Through cassava the risks of market production were minimised. Demanding crops, such as groundnuts or rice, never gained widespread popularity in the district, because they required large investments of labour and the adoption of new techniques. Even if such crops could generate high profits, their adoption would only be hesitant. Groundnuts, for instance, were promoted by the colonial government due to their high calorie and protein content, and because they could be marketed as cash crops in the emerging mining centres.[876] For groundnuts to prosper, they need to be planted in separate fields, preferably of freshly burnt virgin forest or fertile red clay soils. Fields, furthermore, would have to be shifted every year, because the groundnut crop depletes soil nutrients rapidly. This proved a strain on limited labour resources. Despite official propaganda for groundnut cultivation – by means of seed distribution, agricultural demonstration and price incentives offered by traders – groundnut cultivation did not develop on a large scale within Mwinilunga District.[877] Rather than attributing this to a lack of producer initiative or market sense, labour concerns played a more decisive role. Groundnut cultivation required a cumbersome reorganisation of labour patterns for the clearing of fields, whereas the prices offered did not seem to legitimate these additional labour inputs.[878] Towards the end of the 1950s groundnut production slumped completely. The trader Sardanis acknowledged that: 'at the proposed price and the prevailing yields farmers could no longer make a living out of groundnuts.'[879] Labour, price, marketing and environmental factors all played a role in producer preferences towards crops. Even if groundnuts never gained widespread popularity, their production was enabled due to the stable basis of food provided by cassava. Cash crop production, of groundnuts or pineapples for example, posed less of a risk if producers could fall back on cassava as a source of food and as a laboursaving crop.[880] Labour was a major determinant of market production. This resource could be negotiated within the household, some members devoting time to cash crops whilst others produced a reliable source of food. A household wishing to engage in market production could make a conscious decision to engage labour in the production of cash crops, or in waged employment, so long as a subsistence basis in the form of cassava was secured.[881] Food crops thus enabled and premised market engagement. Subsistence production was not averse to market logic, but to the contrary, enabled producers to deploy time and energy in market production. Cassava therefore constituted the internal foundation of production in Mwinilunga District.

By the end of the 1950s, once demand slumped again, it became evident that transport costs, marketing difficulties and levels of production indeed precluded the sale of low-value high-weight crops from Mwinilunga to distant urban centres.[882] After a period of intense market involvement and sale of cash crops, producers in Mwinilunga focused on cassava once again. Even if cassava could no

[874] Von Oppen, 'Cassava, the lazy man's food'.
[875] Pritchett, *Friends for life.*
[876] Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees;* See J.S. Hogendoorn and K.M. Scott, 'The East African groundnut scheme: Lessons of a large-scale agricultural failure', *African economic history* 10 (1981), 81-115.
[877] This view is based on a wide reading of archival sources (NAZ) and on numerous oral interviews.
[878] See: Tosh, 'The cash-crop revolution'.
[879] Sardanis, *Africa*, 139.
[880] Carswell, 'Food crops as cash crops'.
[881] Berry, *No condition is permanent;* Austin, 'Resources, techniques and strategies'.
[882] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*.

longer be marketed, it could provide a stable source of food in abundant quantities, making the area a land of plenty and affording producers a degree of autonomy. Cassava and hunting thus developed as the internal foundations of production in Mwinilunga District, adapting to changing circumstances and retaining their importance over time. These methods of livelihood production gained such prominence because they enabled flexibility, autonomy and mobility, whilst ensuring a stable source of food. Rather than being averse to change, cassava and hunting adjusted over time.[883] The internal foundations of production 'are not residues from a traditional past but products of a contemporary social process.'[884] Cassava and hunting enabled a flexible engagement with government and markets, but equally permitted a degree of autonomy and non-involvement. Productive practices 'are adjusted, rather than maladjusted, to modernity.'[885] What officials discursively labelled agricultural 'conservatism' might equally represent an adaptation or even be an expression of change.[886] The internal foundation of production in Mwinilunga has an ideological, as well as a material and practical basis, changing over time and adapting to factors such as marketing, government policies and producer preference. Market involvement was premised on the internal foundation of production. Rather than a linear transition from subsistence production to market incorporation, 'subsistence' and 'market' production could and did feed into each other.

Conclusion

Productive activities in Mwinilunga District cannot be understood in terms of increasing involvement with the market, as many colonial and post-colonial observers discursively proposed. Market production oscillated, rather than being a linear process. Producers involved in marketing cassava or beans in the 1950s, or producing pineapples during the heyday of the cannery, might have disengaged from market production several years later. Neither was market involvement a new phenomenon introduced by colonialism or capitalism. Already during the pre-colonial period producers engaged in extensive trade of beeswax and cassava with long-distance caravans. To the contrary, the introduction of colonial rule coincided with the demise of the caravan trade. The marketing of agricultural produce decreased initially, only to pick up again in the 1940s and 1950s. The situation which early colonial officials denounced as 'primitive' was a misguided snapshot, rather than an expression of inertia. Depending on factors such as pricing, markets, environmental considerations and labour, market involvement fluctuated throughout the twentieth century. Producers were not merely induced to market their crops by official propaganda or price incentives, but relied on an internal foundation of production, which reflected norms, values and attitudes, next to economic logic and environmental concerns.

Market involvement in Mwinilunga was premised on an internal foundation of production. This internal foundation proved flexible and adapted over time, though not necessarily in the linear course proposed by officials or agricultural experts. Preferences for staple crops shifted from sorghum and millet to cassava, whereas maize failed to gain widespread popularity. Hunting retained practical and ideological importance, despite decreasing game herds, prohibitive legislation and propaganda for animal husbandry. Although productive practices might discursively be denounced as 'primitive' or 'traditional', they are 'rooted in real economic interests.'[887] Cassava cultivation facilitated and enabled market production and therefore retained popularity into the present. The internal foundations of production are 'not a 'traditional' relic, gradually melting away in the face of the modern cash economy', they are a 'contemporary institution, finding its points of support in diverse places and drawing on a range of power relations which transcends dichotomies such as 'traditional/modern' and

[883] Kaufmann, 'The sediment of nomadism', 235.
[884] Ferguson, 'The bovine mystique', 647.
[885] Kaufmann, 'The sediment of nomadism', 261.
[886] Turkon, 'Modernity, tradition and the demystification', 152.
[887] Ferguson, 'The bovine mystique', 667.

'pre-capitalist/capitalist'.'[888] As one perceptive colonial officer remarked in the 1930s: 'Agricultural practice is, of course, largely determined by tradition, but tradition itself reflects past environment, and when a tribe has been long settled in its country its tradition complies with its requirements.'[889] Methods of production in Mwinilunga are based on an internal foundation, which favours values such as food security, but is not averse to change. If the internal foundation of production persists, it is actively made to persist: 'continuity as much as change must be created and fought for.'[890] Cassava cultivation and hunting continually adapted. Far from being a barrier to 'market integration' or 'development', the internal foundations of production enabled change.

The local rationale behind patterns of production has been explored. The internal foundation of production in Mwinilunga District enabled flexibility, autonomy and mobility whilst ensuring a stable source of food. Securing adequate means of 'subsistence' indeed appeared to be one of the main goals of agricultural production. But rather than seeing subsistence production as 'traditional' or as a barrier to 'development', relying on a strong basis of subsistence could serve to step into the market. The internal foundation of production did not prevent, but enabled market production. This chapter has attempted to demonstrate that discourses about production did not match agricultural practices in Mwinilunga. Analytical concepts should therefore be reassessed. Discursive binaries of subsistence and market production do not hold good, as subsistence and market production could prove compatible. Producers sought to partake in the market on terms favourable to and compatible with existing patterns of production, social relationships and ideological frameworks. Rather than focusing on linear change and market involvement, concepts such as the internal foundation of production and a positive evaluation of subsistence might advance an understanding of producer choices and agency. Crop repertoires, agricultural implements and patterns of production have undergone continual change and these changes have been adapted to suit existing practices and ideological frameworks. Change has been incorporated into an internal foundation of production in Mwinilunga District. Next to discursive attempts to fix settlements and promote sedentarisation, production and mobility could feed into one another in multiple ways.[891] These will be explored in more detail in the following chapter.

[888] Ferguson, 'The bovine mystique', 669.
[889] (NAZ) MAG2/9/3 Loc.170, Ecological Methods in the Study of Native Agriculture in Northern Rhodesia, 27 July 1935.
[890] Ferguson, 'The bovine mystique', 668.
[891] Kay, 'Social aspects of village regrouping', 80-3.

2.1: A field of cassava (note the round mounds)
Source: Iva Peša, 2010

2.2: A hunter with his hunting attributes
Source: (NAZ) SEC2/964, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, Accompanying Photographs