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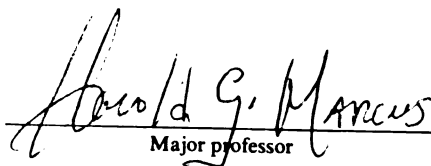
THE DISTRICT TOWN AND THE ARTICULATION OF
COLONIAL RULE: THE CASE OF
MWANZA, TANZANIA 1890-1945

presented by

Laird Revis Jones

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THE DISTRICT TOWN AND THE ARTICULATION OF COLONIAL RULE:
THE CASE OF MWANZA, TANZANIA 1890-1945
VOLUME I

By

Laird Revis Jones

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ABSTRACT

THE DISTRICT TOWN AND THE ARTICULATION OF COLONIAL RULE: THE CASE OF MWANZA, TANZANIA 1890-1945

By

Laird Revis Jones

In recent years historians have begun to re-examine the process of colonial urbanization. One approach has been to place the city and its inhabitants within the broader context of colonial economy and society, stressing the penetration of capital, the expansion of scale, and the emergence of institutions. Another has been to focus on the internal, urban dynamics of class formation and class struggle, as highlighted by contests over work discipline and residential space. Both methodologies, nevertheless, have been applied only to primate cities: political capitals, major ports or industrial centers.

This thesis, however, is a case study of the creation and controlled growth of a smaller district town of Mwanza, in northwestern Tanzania, from 1890 until 1945. There, without white settlers or industrial interests, the town's social, economic and political configuration had developed along different lines. The dominant force in Mwanza was merchant capital, and its fortunes quite literally revolved around rural retail trade and agricultural commodity buying. Class formation, and consequently class struggles, were

deeply shaped by the town's mercantile character; and in particular, its articulation with rural commodity production.

This study's findings have bearing not only the field of urban history, but also on the related issues of colonial policy, rural commerce, and class formation. It examines contradictions between official policies and local objectives, and the subsequent compromises which shaped the colonial legal and political framework. Moreover, it traces the rise and fall of urban based, rural trading networks. Finally, it outlines a pattern of class formation forged by the interaction of African workers and traders with merchant capital and the colonial state.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	ii
Part I: Creating the Colonial Town	
Chapter 1 Precolonial Settlement, 1850-1890	2
Chapter 2 German Station, 1890-1906	27
Chapter 3 Merchant Capital and the Growth of Mwanza Town, 1893-1916	53
Chapter 4 Creating the Colonial Town: exerting control over Labor and Space, 1906-15	76
Part II: Town and Hinterland	
Chapter 5 The Development of Commodity Buying, 1893-1916	100
Chapter 6 After the Great War: Mwanza Town and the Scramble for Mwanza Province, 1917-29	126
Chapter 7 Capitalism vs. Control: administrative intervention, 1927-40	156
Chapter 8 Urban Cattle Marketing, 1919-33	186
Part III: Struggle for a District Town	
Chapter 9 Reproducing the Town, 1920-45	222
Chapter 10 Urban Indirect Rule	247
Chapter 11 Urban Property, Credit and Accumulation, 1926-40	267
Chapter 12 Urban Politics and Struggles over Space, 1926-46	289
Conclusion	318

INTRODUCTION

This is a case study of the creation and controlled growth of a small urban center in colonial East Africa during the early twentieth century. While research about such places has often been neglected in favor of studies of primate cities, smaller district towns were an important intermediate link between rural society and the wider colonial world. As focal points of regional economic and political activity, such towns provide a manageable opportunity to explore the history of colonial commercial enterprise, institution-building, and changing African work and residential patterns.

The town of Mwanza offers an historical composite of all these functions and activities. A precolonial trading center on the shores of Lake Victoria, with the advent of colonial rule it became a major caravan terminus and later a railhead. Moreover, Mwanza was a German, and later a British, district administrative center housing traders, officials, police, courts and customs. It naturally became a commercial, educational, and mission center acting as a

magnet for a steady flow of African workers whose labors and living space within the town were increasingly regulated.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

Recent Africanist scholars have been of two minds regarding colonial urbanization. Fred Cooper (1983) argued that the modern African city was shaped by struggles among the colonial authorities, capital, and workers over work time and urban space.¹ In contrast, John Iliffe (1979) associated colonial urbanization with such broad historical themes as the enlargement of scale, the penetration of capital, and the creation of institutions.² This thesis will integrate the two approaches within a detailed study emphasizing both the internal dynamics of Mwanza's growth and the larger historical forces which influenced it.

Fred Cooper has held that the African city was shaped by the forces and contradictions inherent within the larger colonial society. He has suggested that the African urban environment was influenced not only by the actions of the colonial state, but also by the often competing interests of metropolitan capital, local entrepreneurs, and workers. In accord with Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale (1979, 1980), Cooper has argued that the colonial authorities were forced

1 Frederick, Cooper, ed., Struggle for the City (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1983)

2 John Iliffe, A Modern History of Tanganyika (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979)

to modify their urban agenda in order to satisfy the conflicting demands of capital and labor.³

Cooper's primary interest was the emergence of class consciousness among African urban workers. In the introduction to Struggle for the City (1983) Cooper sought to provide an analytical framework in which to explain labor unrest during the 1930's and 1940's. Linking urbanization to the expansion of the colonial economy, he firmly tied the colonial city to the countryside through the process of labor migration. Following the lead of West Africanist Claude Meillassoux (1975), Cooper argued that by limiting urban migration to workers only, and by attempting to regulate their activities upon arrival, government and employers were able to depress wages and transfer the costs of maintaining an urban workforce to the rural sector.⁴ This system retarded African initiatives in housing, trade and entertainment, and bred a discontent that became evident in the subsequent struggles between state, capital, and labor over work time and urban space.

3 Bruce Berman and John Lonsdale, "Coping with the contradictions: The development of the Colonial State in Kenya, 1895-1914," Journal of African History, 20(1979):487-505; and "Crises of Accumulation, Coercion and the Colonial State: The Development of the Labor Control System in Kenya, 1919-1929," Canadian Journal of African Studies, 14,1(1986):55-81

4 Claude Meillassoux, Maidens, Meal and Money: Capitalism and the domestic community(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981)

Like Cooper, John Iliffe delved into colonial urban history in order to provide a context for his analysis of early Tanganyikan political and labor organization. However, within his History of Tanganyika (1979), Iliffe discussed the growth of cities and towns with respect to broader themes in East African history: the enlargement of scale, the penetration of capital, the creation of institutions, and the initiatives and responses of the indigenous population. He stressed the economic role played by colonial towns as an avenue of opportunity for individual entrepreneurs and as an arena for emergent African political and working class consciousness. Above all, Iliffe concluded that the basis of the colonial economy was agriculture, and that colonial towns could best be understood, therefore, as points in a network of processing, marketing, servicing, and management of the rural sector.

THE PROBLEM

While Cooper (1983) argued that struggles among capital, workers and the state shaped the African city, the penetration of capital and the process of articulation with rural production actually played a far greater role in determining the socio-economic, political and physical configuration of the district town. There certainly were class formations and class struggles within colonial Mwanza; yet, until the 1950's, the town was dominated by rural-

oriented merchant capital. The urban working class was small and slow in coalescing, since production remained anchored in the countryside.

In order to explain colonial urbanization at the district level, it is necessary to modify Cooper's model to include interaction with the rural economy. Therefore, this study will focus on the town as a point of articulation between rural production and colonial commerce. It will take into account struggles between capital, labor and the colonial state, but within the local context of rural-oriented commodity buying, urban accumulation and administration efforts to regulate this process. Afterward, it will then be possible to examine the impact of merchant capital and sort out the determinants and nature of colonial, urban class formation.

In this effort the most useful theoretical corrective to Cooper's model is Geoffrey Kay's Development and Underdevelopment (1975).⁵ Kay focused on the role of merchant capital in colonial and post-colonial economies, especially important in the case of Mwanza. He characterized merchant capital by its circulation, its extraction of surplus product through unequal exchange, its alliance with the ruling class, and its ambiguous impact on

⁵ Geoffrey Kay, Development and Underdevelopment: A Marxist Analysis (London: The MacMillan Press, Ltd., 1975), chapter 5

production. Moreover, Kay noted that the expansion of merchant capital within a non-capitalist society created contradictions. Hence, while merchants stimulated rural production, their struggles to control markets and reliance upon unequal exchange impeded the reorganization of production along capitalist lines. Where primitive accumulation did in fact occur, in urban property holding for example, the dislocation provoked regulation and reaction from the administration. Thus, for town and country, merchant capital was initially a dynamic force, but ultimately a dead end.

THE ARGUMENT

Mwanza town took shape when merchant capital dominated East Africa's economy. From its evolution into a precolonial trading center to its emergence as a colonial district town, Mwanza served as a node of articulation, or a point of linkage between capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production. Initially, this connection was in the sphere of exchange - urban merchants purchasing rural, agricultural commodities. Over time, however, capitalism "took root" within the precapitalist mode, selectively modifying rural production, inducing labor migration, and precipitating regulation.

The focus for merchants in rural/urban articulation, was profit, or more accurately, accumulation.⁶ This could be broadly defined as the transfer of value from one mode of production to another, achieved through the specific vehicles of unequal exchange, over-exploitive wages, and altered property relations. Central to this process was the concept of commodification - the attachment of capital value to labor, property, trade goods and produce. These services, places and items were transformed into commodities through transactions in which they became subject to wages, titles, prices and weights and measures.

Mwanza was the focal point from which the agents of capital, both the colonial administration and the commercial community, sought to project their interests into the agrarian and pastoralist hinterland. As will be discussed in Chapter One, beginning in the 1850's Mwanza was visited

6 Within traditional Marxian analysis, transfers between different modes of production have been termed "primitive accumulation." This historical process Marx contended, involved the gradual destruction of the subordinate mode, separating the producer from the means of production.

As Claude Meillassoux (1975) noted, however, the expansion of capital in the colonial economy did not lead to the destruction of rural, non-capitalist modes of production. Instead, the colonial state sought to insulate rural society, such that capital drew land, labor, and commodities from the countryside, all without transforming the organization of production.

In the Mwanza region, the principal vehicle of this transfer was merchant capital. In the countryside accumulation took the form of unequal exchange. In town, it took the form of more aggressive attempts to alienate workers from the means of production and efforts to create capitalist property relations.

by coastal traders, and intermittently served as a base for several until the 1890's. Then, with the completion of the Kenya Uganda railway, the town became a staging and bulking point for an influx of European and Asian commodity buyers. From the turn of the century, merchants traveled outward from Mwanza to build a profitable network of small trading settlements.

Paying in cash or bartering through rural agents, merchants expropriated the benefits of expanded or altered rural production. At first, as will be discussed in Chapter Five, Mwanza merchants tapped into existing markets in hides and ivory. After the turn of the century, however, their efforts shifted to markets in simsim, groundnuts, and rice. Finally, by the 1920's, their enterprises were geared to cotton, the new principal cash crop. Although merchant capital shifted from one commodity to another, unequal exchange always remained.

Rural trading was conducted within the framework of the "duka system." As will be shown in Chapters Five and Six, Mwanza merchants developed networks of urban warehouses, rural shops, seasonal buying stations, and peddlers' routes. The system was cemented together through supplier agreements and credit. The networks proved as volatile as the commodity markets they served, expanding rapidly during the twenties but contracting severely during the thirties.

The extension of trading networks and the parallel cash cropping, altered rural relations of production. There were new seasonal labor requirements, altered cropping patterns, and changed kinship obligations. This situation was further complicated by state demands for tax and wage labor, all of which forced maintenance costs for urban or state labor onto rural households and communities.

The problem of reproducing the urban workforce was in part resolved in the countryside. As Claude Meillassoux (1975) has postulated for West Africa, urban laborers often came from villages which bore the costs of their upbringing, yet lost their valuable labor in adulthood. Moreover, urban wages were so low that workers' families were dependent either on peri-urban or rural cultivation. Thus, the urban households were often trapped within two modes of production. In this uneven process of articulation, the capitalist mode extracted labor, while the rural mode both provided and often sustained the workers.

Mwanza town was thus tied to the countryside through both exchange and labor. From its inception, the town was dependent upon a limited stream of migrant laborers and skilled workers, from both near and far. At first they came as porters, soldiers, market gardeners, and construction workers; later as dockworkers, sailors, clerks, domestic

servants, and itinerant traders. Many came from the coast or towns in the interior, others from the town's rural hinterland. As will be outlined in Chapter Ten, however, most workers were employed by rural oriented, commercial firms. Thus, rather than moving to town and becoming alienated members of an urban proletariat, many Mwanza workers had jobs which made use of their knowledge of rural life.

In addition to the development of wage labor, titled property ownership also originated and radiated from the town. The development of capitalist property relations, from the earliest German occupation onwards, affected both ownership and access to land and formed an important means of accumulation. As will be shown in Chapter Eleven, property had, by the 1920's, become an important asset to merchants and rural traders, as they speculated in shops and housing. The colonial administration provided such legal proscriptions as titles, rights of occupancy, and registration. For many Africans, however, capitalist property relations constrained access to agricultural land near town, and skewed the availability of housing toward Asian and European interests.

The position of the local colonial administration towards merchant capital and African interests, over issues such as rural trade, wages and control of urban space, was

often contradictory. Guided essentially by the dual imperatives of revenue and order, officials initially facilitated the disruptive penetration of capital. Throughout the 1910's and 1920's successive German and British administrations took on the role of brokers, coercing, compensating, or appeasing African and merchant interests. They spurred rural production, mediated disputes between capital, and assisted in the recruitment and discipline of labor. By the early 1930's, however, colonial authorities, alarmed at the pace of change and faced with the revenue losses of the depression, reduced their mediating role in favor of more direct regulation both in the countryside and in town.

With respect to rural trade, highlighted in Chapters Seven through Nine, the administration attempted several routes to economic rationalization during the thirties. The first was state subsidized, European enterprise. Conversely, the second was the regulation and restriction of ventures by local merchant capitalists. Finally, the third was the reorganization and regulation of rural trade - a move which crippled an already declining duka system. Rural trade policy was devised in Dar es Salaam but administered colony wide.

Colonial urban policy, however, was more ambiguous and decentralized. In the case of Mwanza, local authorities

first relied on a combination of local custom and military discipline to maintain order. Later, in the twenties, Anglo-Indian legal precedent and the needs of the merchant community prevailed, as officials structured a capitalist town. Chapter Twelve posits, however, that two recurring problems plagued the administration, and forced a reformulated state role. First, there was the problem of property. On several occasions, rural competition between Asian and European merchants spilled over into struggles to segregate the town. The local authorities tried to placate the competitors by selectively invoking legislation and by sacrificing the property rights of African residents. The second problem was wages because various administrators feared the economic and political implications of a permanent urban proletariat. Consequently, they sought to build or support local class and ethnic based institutions which might contain or mediate urban struggles without directly involving workers.

In Mwanza town, all the ambiguities and contradictions of colonialism and the process of articulation were reflected in class formations. As will be outlined in the concluding chapter, the relative dominance of merchant capital, the slow development of working class consciousness, and the divisive and contradictory role of the administration impeded or affected class structures.

These complications led class formation in Mwanza to deviate from the pattern outlined by Cooper (1983, 1987).

There were essentially three classes: a merchant bourgeoisie, a shopkeeping and rural buyer petty bourgeoisie, and workers. Also, though their presence was numerically small, they were the representatives of the ruling class - the administrators and an African bureaucratic bourgeoisie. These class distinctions, however, were bound up in ethnic and religious ideologies which deemphasized class struggle. Moreover, they were crosscut by race, or the color bar. Colonial legislation, too made divisions between Arab and African traders, between African and Asian tradesmen, and between African and non-African property owners.

The merchant and petty bourgeoisie were affected by capitalist and ethnic ideologies. Historian Martha Honey (1982) concluded that Tanzanian Asian merchants, while motivated by the "politics of profit," also organized ethnic associations which played down class differences and emphasized religious and cultural ideologies.⁷ Ethnic association was not without economic benefit, however, as organizations often controlled access to trade, represented

⁷ Honey, Martha Spencer, "A History of Indian Merchant Capital and Class Formation in Tanganyika c.1840-1940," (Ph.D. diss., University of Dar es Salaam, 1982)

business political interests, and regulated community norms and thereby worker behavior. Likewise, European merchants banded together to preserve their legal privileges and to secure economic and political advantage from the administration.

The process of articulation with rural production also created opportunities for many individuals who defied class distinction. The marginal men - "alien natives" as the administration called many, and European, Asian and African cattle traders, labor recruiters, and transport riders - lived on the fringes of society, yet had roots in the town. Initially, they played an important role introducing rural African leaders to urban commerce. Over time, however, many were displaced by the "duka system" shopkeepers and sponsored commodity buyers.

The most serious complication in assessing class formation in Mwanza, however, was the slow development of working class consciousness. Many African workers were not entirely alienated from rural production, devoting some time to peri-urban cultivation or depending on rural relatives in order to survive in town. Moreover, in Mwanza and similar district towns, there were relatively few workers, and their numbers did not grow at an appreciable rate until the late 1940's. Low wages and the widespread use of convict and tax default labor limited urban opportunities and depressed

wages; and merchant capital did not promote high wage employment. Consequently, it was not until the 1940's that African worker organizations began to assert themselves in town politics, providing some tangible framework for an African working class consciousness.

THE SOURCES

The sources for this study are archival and secondary. Primary evidence has been gleaned from the Mwanza Province and District files at the Tanzania National Archives, and photographs from the National Museum of Tanzania. Archival material also comes from the Public Record Office at Kew, the collection of Rhodes House at Oxford and the Royal Commonwealth Society in London. Secondary material - newspaper articles, the memoirs of former officials, travelers' accounts, and business publications - has been gathered at the libraries of the University of Dar es Salaam, Northwestern University, and Michigan State University.

PART I: Creating the Colonial Town

1 Precolonial Settlement 1850-90

The precolonial southern lake region had a relatively high population density, a long tradition of permanent settlements, and extensive regional trade. During the nineteenth century, however, it did not develop large urban centers like those north of lake in Buganda; nor large trading centers like Tabora or Ujiji to the south. While ethnically the region was relatively homogeneous, politically it was fragmented. Moreover, within its economy, points of production and exchange were often diffused.

The Mwanza ntemiship was to this extent representative of the larger region. A relatively small political unit, it nevertheless developed a diverse agricultural base, and participated in extensive trade networks across the lake and into the savannahlands. Despite its dense population and diverse activities, however, the immediate Mwanza area had no urban, central place. While many activities were concentrated in the ntemi's village, there was no directly corresponding concentration of people.

1.1 Precolonial Usukuma

The physical geography of the southern lake region is remarkably varied. It lies on a gradient sloping from 1,400 m in the savannahland down to 1,100 m at lake level.¹ Moreover, the landscape is dotted with granite outcroppings and sharp hills. In the early nineteenth century, the islands and immediate lakeshore were heavily forested, and the woodland extended far up the gradient inland before the landscape turned to expansive brush and grasslands. Rainfall also varied along the ecological gradient: as high as 40-50 inches by the lakeshore, 30 inches across much of the savannah, and less than 20 inches on the arid plain to the far southeast.²

Precise estimates of the region's population in the nineteenth century are problematic. Early European travellers like Speke or Stanley saw only limited areas along the major caravan routes, and thus their estimates were quite subjective. Moreover, the subsequent rinderpest-related famine and sleeping sickness epidemics of the late nineteenth century caused considerable demographic decline and community migration.³ The first colonial accounting,

1 C. F. Holmes and R. A. Austen, "The Pre-Colonial Sukuma," Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale, 14,2(1972):377

2 John Ford, The Role of Trypanosomiases in African Ecology(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), 116

3 For a detailed analysis of the ecological crisis of the late nineteenth century, consult: Helge Kjekshus.

turn-of-the-century German hut and poll tax surveys, estimated the region's population at approximately 500,000.⁴ The precolonial population was concentrated on the islands, along the lakeshore and in better watered corridors in the savannah hinterland. Conversely, there were areas of forest in Uzinza, and tracts of poorly watered savannah to the south and east, which supported only sparse settlement.

The precolonial economy of the southern lake region was suited to the varying ecologies along the gradient from the lake up to the inland plains. Near the lake and on the islands, people engaged in fishing, and cultivated indigenous red rice, plantains, sorghum, millet, and vegetables. The disease environment did not permit the long term herding of cattle, though people kept large herds of sheep and goats. Beyond the forest, on the plains above the lake, communities practiced both agriculture and pastoralism. Savannah crops included sorghum, millet, simsim and groundnuts. Precolonial communities to the far south and southwest of the lake region also maintained extremely large cattle herds.⁵

Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History(London: Heinemann, 1977).

⁴ Paul Fuchs, Wirtschaftliche Eisenbahn-Erkundungen in mittleren und nördlichen Deutsch-Ostafrika(Berlin: Kolonial Wirtschaftliches Komitee, 1907), 155

⁵ Estimates of actual cattle herd size too are difficult, given the rinderpest epidemic and related ecological catastrophes of the late nineteenth century. Later German estimates for the broad Mwanza Province were

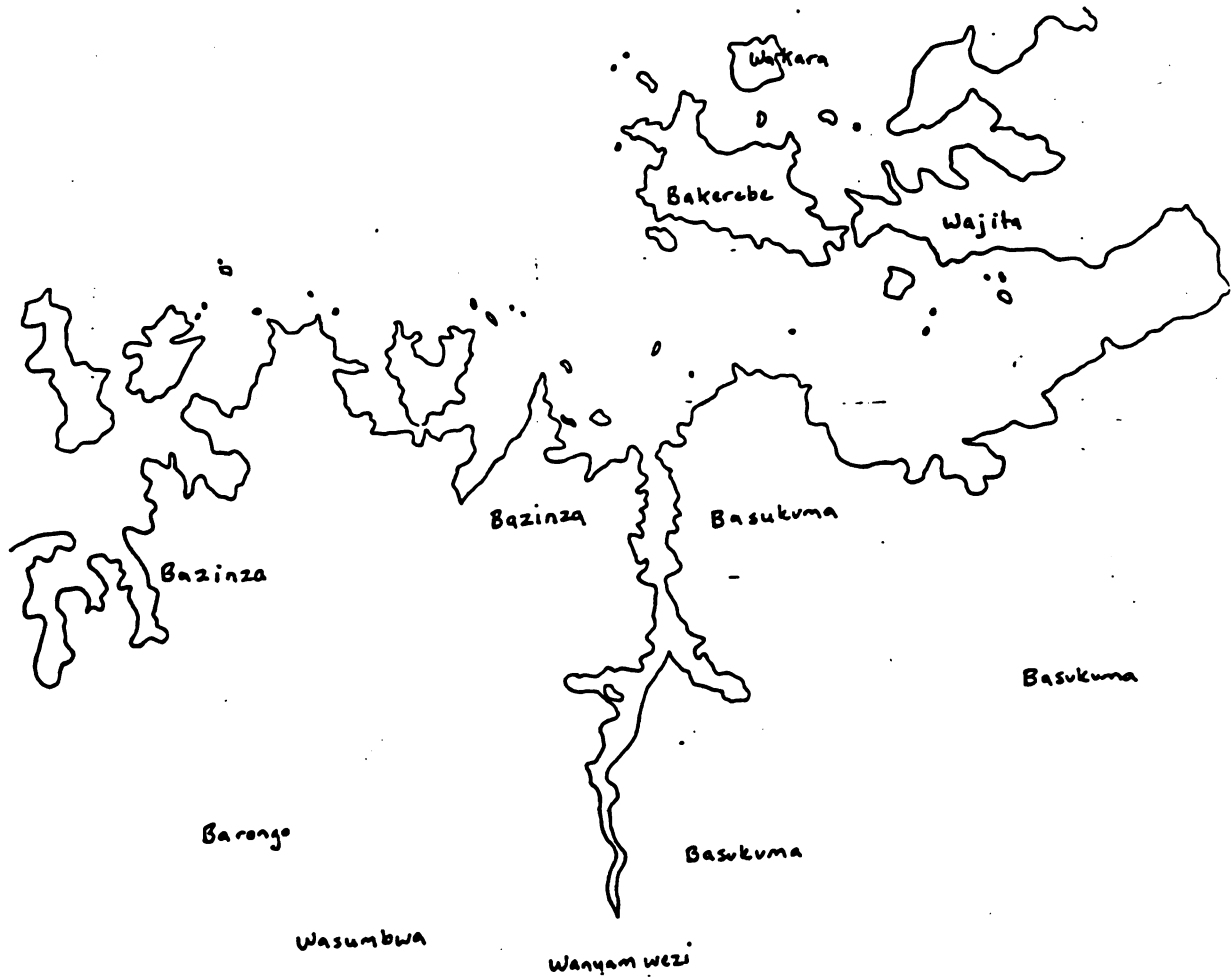
Ethnically, the region's population was relatively homogeneous. The communities to the south and southwest of Mwanza were largely Kisukuma speaking, and they shared similar social practices, religious beliefs, and political formations. Such communities were certainly not identical: some had overlapping matrilineal kinship patterns, all had varying occupational specializations; but they were enough alike to permit considerable exchange of people, ideas and goods. Around this Wasukuma heartland was an arc of varying ethnic groups along the lake. Bazinza to the west, Bakrebe and Bakara on the islands, and Wajita, Bakwaya and Zanaki on the eastern shore.

There was, however, considerable movement in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Most of the communities in the region frequently absorbed newcomers.⁶ In particular, in Sukumaland, immigrant Warongo ironworkers were sought for their skills.⁷ Epidemic disease and ecological catastrophe at the end of the century were also

approximately 1.1 million head. Die Deutschen Schutzgebiete in Afrika und der Südsee, 1912/1913 (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1914), Tabellen B II 3. p.91

⁶ The theme of absorbing newcomers is particularly stressed in C. F. Holmes and R. A. Austen, "The Pre-Colonial Sukuma."

⁷ *ibid*, p.387



Distribution of Ethnic
Groups in the Precolonial
Southern Lake Region

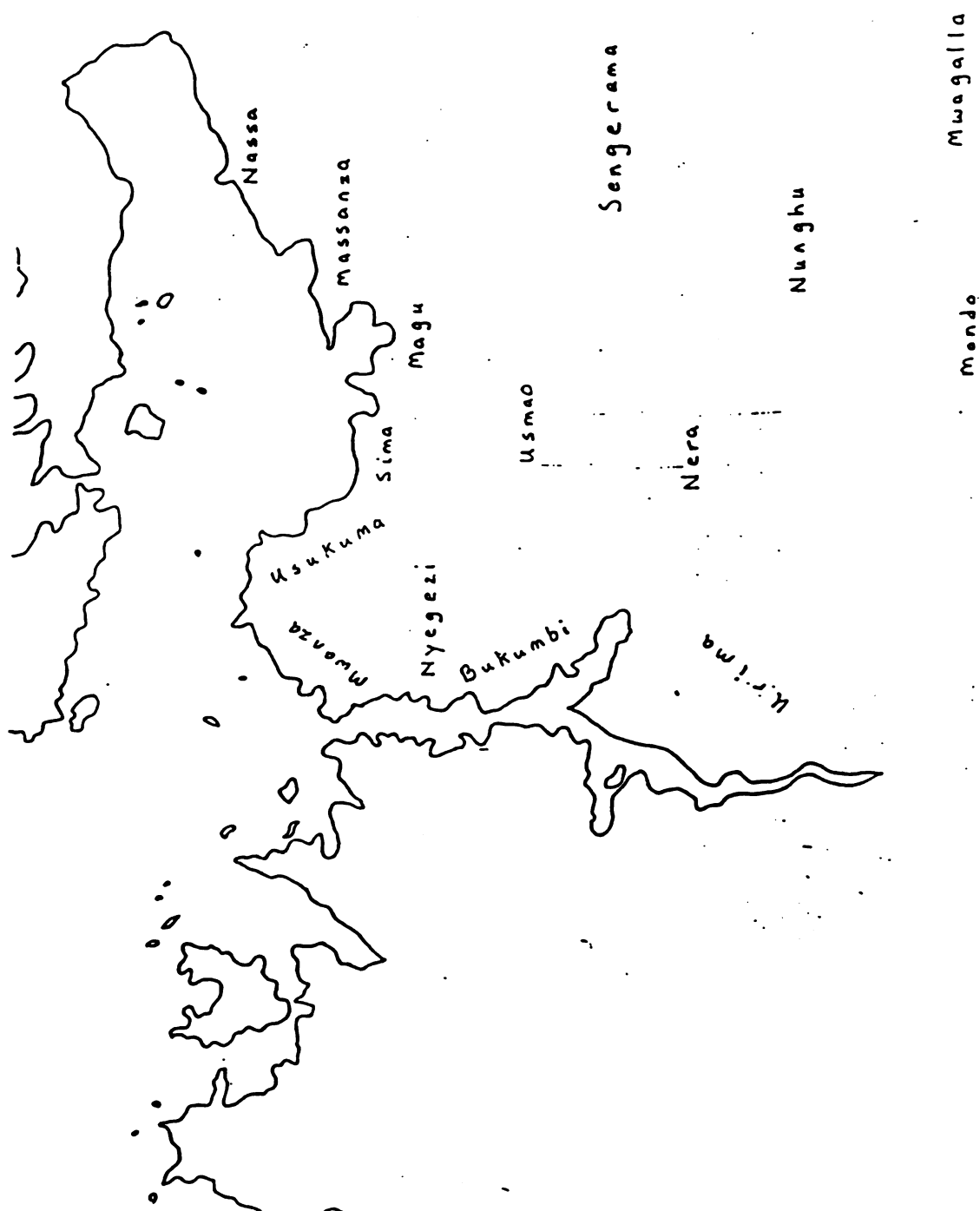
source: Mwanza District Book I: no page

an impetus to movement, as communities sought safer havens from expanding tsetse fly belts, or reoccupied once stricken areas. Later, in the twentieth century, there was a steady western migration from Sukumaland into the Uzinza region.

Despite such cultural adaptiveness and solidarity, politically the communities of the southern lake region were nevertheless fragmented into a multitude of small, often rival polities. In nineteenth century Sukumaland the largest unit of political organization was the ntemiship, a network of villages led by a central figure, the ntemi, who was supported by village headmen, banangwa, and advised by elders, banangoma.⁸ Most accounts contend that the leadership role of the ntemi evolved from a religious office into a political one; batemi were believed to be vested with magical, often rain-making powers.⁹ By the nineteenth century, however, leadership increasingly revolved around kinship and redistributive largesse. Consequently, batemi strove to secure new villages and followers, fueling internal conflicts between batemi and banangoma, as well as between rival ntemiships.

8 C. F. Holmes. "A History of the Bakwimba of Usukuma, Tanzania from earliest times to 1945," Phd Dissertation, Boston University, 1969. p.vi

9 Holmes and Austen, "The Pre-Colonial Sukuma," Pp.384-5



Principal Ntemiships in
Nineteenth Century
Northern Usukuma

source: 1926 District Map, C0691/83:574

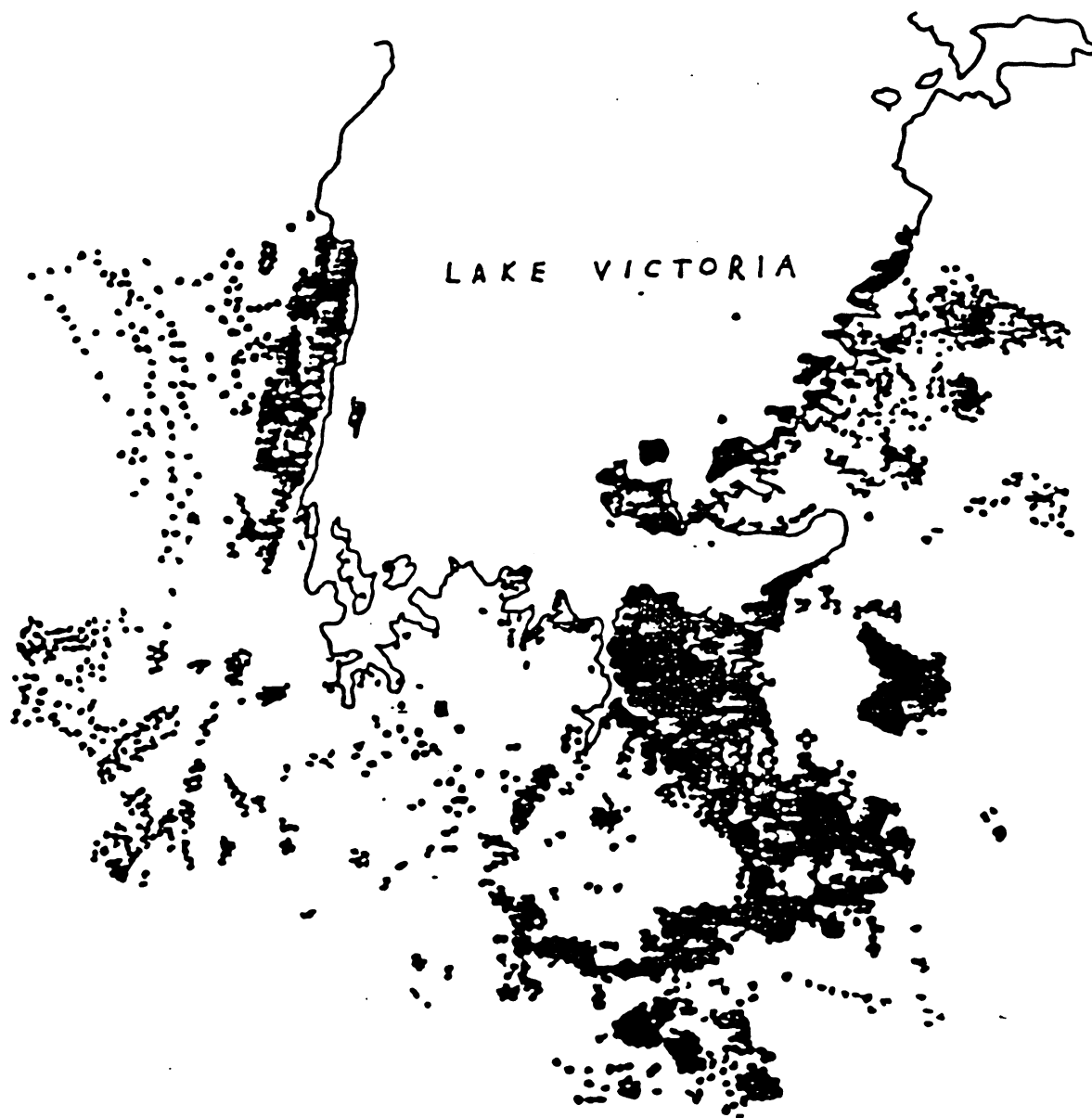
The size of ntemiships, both in population and land, was smaller near the lake, but quite large in the pastoral hinterland. Clearly, the redistributive medium of cattle enabled much larger networks of political alliance and centralization. Small, lakeshore ntemiships such as Mwanza, had perhaps less than 20,000 inhabitants and few cattle; whereas immediately to the south, ntemiships like Nera or Usmao had in the range of 40 to 60 thousand people and might have supported more than 100,000 cattle.¹⁰

1.2 Population density and settlement pattern

Reconstructing the population geography of precolonial Sukumaland is by no means an easy nor precise matter. Early colonial census and mapping data is of questionable value given the extent of ecological change and human migration in the later nineteenth century. Whether by the lakeshore or on the savannah, whether agriculturalist or pastoralist, the people of Sukumaland tended to live in nucleated villages. In the northern region around Mwanza, touring German officials and hut tax counters estimated the typical village to be on the order of 100 households.¹¹ Much later British

10 These figures are derived from later colonial censuses: the 1929 and 1931 Maswa District cattle censuses (Mwanza Provincial Book), and the 1926 Mwanza District map (Co 691/83/524), and are only intended to suggest the range of possible precolonial human or livestock populations.

11 Theodor Gunzert, "Das westliche Usukuma zwischen Muansa-Golf und Ssimiju-Fluss," DKB, 1(1.1.110):20



Southern Lake Region Population
Density, 1931 Census

source: Atlas of Tanganyika Territory (Dar es Salaam, 1942)

village surveys for the former Mwanza ntemiship found 51 villages, with an average population of about 550 persons, or approximately 100 households.¹² Further to the south, in the cattle-keeping areas, rather than dispersed settlements or semi-nomadic encampments, people lived in even denser concentrations of villages and hamlets.¹³

Village patterns were fairly uniform. Basukuma huts were typically constructed with a five foot high, cylindrical log and clay base, a six foot high, conical grass roof, all about six feet in diameter.¹⁴ Generally circular clusters of huts were surrounded by a log stockade or thick hedge to keep livestock in or out. The ntemi's village included a large, central compound for the potentate and his wives, with granneries, storage huts, and space for ceremonies and councils.¹⁵

12 This data was gathered during the 1930/1 population census (Mwanza Provincial Book, Census Table E, p.24). Admittedly, much had changed since the late nineteenth century, though the Mwanza area suffered much less from the intervening ecological and demographic catastrophes than elsewhere in Usukuma. Moreover, many village names recurred from the precolonial period; and their populations were relatively uniform, reflecting a precolonial, man-cattle-grenzwildnisse pattern. While totals ranged between a low of 188 and a high of 1,317, 30 villages had between 400 and 699 residents, while fully 41 of 51 had between 300 and 799 people.

13 Paul Kollmann, The Victoria Nyanza (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1899), 140

14 *ibid*, p.142

15 *ibid*, p.144



FIG. 190.—AN USSUKUMA HUT.

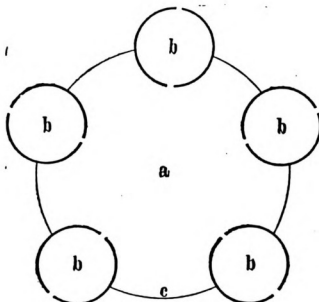


FIG. 196.—FARM IN EAST USSUKUMA.
a, yard; b, huts; c, thorn hedge.

Sketches by Paul Kollmann from: The Victoria Nyanza (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1899), p.142 and 145

This pattern of intensive human settlement and extensive livestock grazing enabled the inhabitants of the region to carve out large, deforested zones. In fact, many of the ntēmiships were ecologically or geographically discernable units, areas of intense activity - clusters of villages, hamlets and grassland, bounded by woodland or savannah brush.¹⁶ The net effect of such human activity was to render the ecology more habitable for man and livestock by removing habitat for competing wildlife and also reducing the breeding areas and range of tsetse infestation.

Despite such settlement patterns and conservation practices, however, the entire lake basin suffered a series of ecological and demographic catastrophes between 1880 and 1920. Epidemic disease increased in direct relation to increased long-distance trade contacts after mid-century.¹⁷ During the 1890's there were several severe cattle rinderpest epidemics, drastically reducing herd size, and consequently diminishing human nutrition and removing famine

16 This settlement pattern has been outlined by John Ford in The Role of Trypanosomiases in African Ecology, chapter 11. In particular, on page 190 he argued for the precolonial correspondence between political and ecological boundaries. As explained by Ford, the boundary region, termed *grenzwildnisse* by early German officials and later geographers, was either thorny brush or further south, miombo forest - ideal habitat for the tsetse fly.

17 The relationship between long-distance trade and disease has been analyzed by Gerald Hartwig in his dissertation and book, The Art of Survival in East Africa: the Kerebe and long-distance trade, 1800-1895 (New York: Africana Pub. Co., 1976).



FIG. 195 (1).—SULTAN'S HUT.

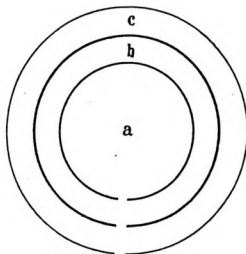
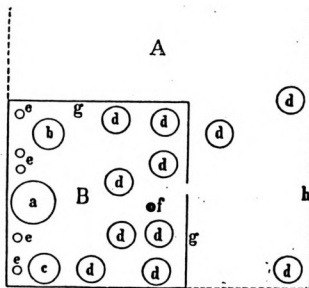
FIG. 195 (2).—SULTAN'S HUT.
a, inside of hut; *b*, space for cattle; *c*, *barasa*.

FIG. 194.—PLAN OF SULTAN KARONGO'S RESIDENCE.

A, large courtyard; *a*, huts for guards; *g*, euphorbia hedge; *h*, palisades; *B*, Sultan's courtyard; *a*, Sultan's hut (Fig. 195 (1)); *b*, women's hut; *c*, hut for the Sultan's mother; *e*, granaries; *f*, tree, forming watch-tower.

Sketches of the Ntemi's Enclosure at Nassa, by Paul Kollmann in: The Victoria Nyanza (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1899), 145

trading options. Moreover, reductions in the human and cattle populations led in many areas to the collapse of this intensive settlement pattern, permitting the expansion of the grenzwildnisse and, not long after, to widespread outbreaks of cattle and human sleeping sickness.¹⁸

1.3 Regional trade

Precolonial trade revolved around exchanges between communities from different ecological niches. Lakeshore communities traded for cattle, inland communities often for grain, and all needed salt, iron and indigenous cloth. Trade also provided a means to political stability or expansion, and batemi and wanangoma attempted to organize and control trade in order to reward their followers, and add to the number of dependent villages under their direction.

Lakeshore and inland communities often made exchanges which exploited their ecological advantages. For example, the Bakrebe of Ukerewe Island traded rice and grains to the mainland for livestock. These transactions were not regular, but rather occurred most frequently at times of drought or famine. The islands enjoyed steady rainfall, and thus were less susceptible to bad harvests. Conversely, cattle rich settlements in the more arid and unpredictable

¹⁸ Ford, The Role of Trypanosomiasis, p.235

savannah thin their herds during times of crisis, trading animals for food.¹⁹

Communities were also driven to trade because none were entirely self-sufficient.²⁰ All needed salt and iron. Initially, salt came into the region through Bakrebe trading ventures to the northern lake region.²¹ Later, Wasukuma communities traded it from Lake Eyasi to the east.²² Iron came principally from Uzinza, where it was smelted and fashioned into implements and weapons by Warongo blacksmiths. Most groups traded salt, food or handicrafts for iron, although Bakrebe men sometimes ventured to Uzinza as laborers, collecting ore in return for finished tools.²³

There was also more politically coordinated trade in long-distance, luxury goods. Communities with access to the lake used their canoe fleets to trade to the west and north

19 Gerald Hartwig, "The Bakerebe," Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale, 14,2(1972):366; and C. F. Holmes and R. A. Austen, "The Pre-Colonial Sukuma," Cahiers d'Histoire Mondiale, 14,2(1972):388

20 The lack of local self-sufficiency as an impetus to regional trade was emphasized by Gerald Hartwig in his dissertation: *A Cultural History of the Kerebe of Tanzania to 1895*, Indiana University, 1970; and articles: "The Bakerebe," and "The Victoria Nyanza as a Trade Route in the Nineteenth Century," JAH, 11,4(1979):535-552.

21 Gerald Hartwig, "The Bakerebe," p.366

22 Holmes and Austen, "The Pre-Colonial Sukuma," p.387

23 Hartwig, "A Cultural History of the Kerebe," p.185

for coffee from Kiziba and barkcloth from Uganda.²⁴ Inland, Wasukuma batemi traded cattle, dried fish, salt and iron hoes southward to Unyamwezi, for tobacco, beads and copper wire.²⁵ By the early nineteenth century, however, the premier long-distance trade item was ivory. The Mukama of Bukerebe was the first to capitalize on increased demand for ivory to the south. His men sought lake basin commodity exchanges to acquire ivory, and then traded it south through Wasukuma intermediaries for beads and cotton cloth.²⁶ Later, Wasukuma batemi organized their own, independent ivory caravans.²⁷

Perhaps the most highly organized, politically directed traders in the lake region were the Baganda. From mid-century onward, under the leadership of the Kabaka Mutesa, they established trading ties and depots throughout the southern lake, in particular on Ukerewe and at Mwanza.²⁸ His representatives, often coastmen, handled Baganda ivory and slaves and routed them southward. Later, Mutesa's aims shifted toward more overt political hegemony. Several times

24 *ibid*, p.191

25 Holmes and Austen, "The Pre-Colonial Sukuma," p.388

26 Gerald Hartwig, "The Bakerebe," p.363-5

27 Holmes and Austen, "The Pre-Colonial Sukuma," p.389

28 For an account of Baganda activities in the southern lake see Gerald Hartwig, "The Victoria Nyanza as a Trade Route in the Nineteenth Century," pp.542-9

in the 1870's and 1880's, he despatched large canoe flotillas to participate in local struggles between rival ntemiships, at one point invading Uzinza.²⁹

None of the indigenous southern lake trading networks or polities achieved, or perhaps even strove for, the scale of commercial operation or degree of centralization exerted by the Baganda. The production of export commodities in Sukumaland was rural and diffused, and only ivory could be monopolized. Ntemiships were relatively small, and thus their ability to marshall resources was limited. Furthermore, they aimed to redistribute trade goods to accumulate more extensive political power, not necessarily to use its proceeds to build a large capital or support a retinue of retainers. Thus, while a number of exchange functions might be focused on the ntemi's village, the scope and scale of trade were insufficient to support a large, urban settlement.

1.4 Arrival of coastal traders

From the mid-nineteenth century onward, the southern lake region was slowly drawn into more direct trade with the coast: slowly, because the communities of the region produced little that was demanded or could be profitably

²⁹ C. F. Holmes, "Zanzibari Influence at the Southern End of Lake Victoria: The Lake Route," African Historical Studies, 4,3(1971):494

transported some 800 miles to Bagamoyo or Zanzibar. Ivory was in relatively limited supply; and the political and military organization of the region was sufficient to discourage any large scale efforts at slave raiding.

Essentially, the Mwanza region was included in coastal trade networks by virtue of its geography. Ukerewe Island, the Mwanza ntemi's village, and the ports of Kageyi and Magu became collection points for ivory from the eastern lakeshore, and later, transshipment points for ivory and slaves arriving by canoe and dhow from Buganda, across the lake. The Kabaka's trading representatives, and Swahili and Arab merchants from the coast set up depots there, by agreement with the local batemi or the Mukama of Bukerebe.³⁰

Sukumaland's chief contribution to long distance trade was labor, specifically porters. Participation by young men from the lakeshore was limited, but many from the more pastoralist south became porters. By attaching themselves to the caravans, young men were able to break away from dependence on village elders and accumulate wealth. For example, a single trip to the coast could result in enough

³⁰ For the most comprehensive treatment of the nineteenth century lake route, consult: Gerald Hartwig, "The Victoria Nyanza as a Trade Route in the Nineteenth Century," JAH, 11,4(1970):535-552

cloth to buy as many as 15 cows or several bulls at home.³¹ By the 1880's and 1890's the arrival of the missionaries and Germans at the Mwanza station spurred the demand for men; and ecological and economic pressures drove even more to participate in order to rebuild community herds.³²

Coastal merchants - Arab, Indian and Swahili - established themselves at Kageye in the early 1850's. The coastmen proceeded cautiously, forming alliances with the batemi, and attempting to integrate themselves into regional trade networks.³³ Unlike indigenous, politically directed Basukuma caravans, the coastmen were organized by ties of merchant capital. Acting independently, or representing coastal trading houses, these merchants sought to accumulate wealth through "unequal" exchange. Hence, they bartered relatively inexpensive items from the coast: cloth, wire, beads, arms and ammunition for high cash value ivory and slaves

The tenure of the coastal merchants was by no means secure, however. They had frequent fallings out with their Wasukuma patrons. Moreover, rival batemi feuded over them,

31 A. Buluda Itandala, "A History of the Babinza of Usukuma, Tanzania to 1890," Phd Dissertation, Dalhousie University, 1983. p.231

32 C. F. Holmes, "A History of the Bakwimba," p.151

33 Holmes, "Zanzibari Influence," p.484

wanting to keep traders close by in order to accumulate trade goods in taxes, and firearms and ammunition in support. Many early ivory traders intended, however, only a short term residence; staying just long enough to accumulate sufficient profits from one or several ventures to return to the coast wealthy. For example, in Kagei, the principal Usukuma trading port, only one to three major traders were present at any one time, and their activity rose and fell depending on the availability of ivory.³⁴

By the 1870's the lake route was transformed, as it became the principal link with Buganda and the northern lake.³⁵ At various points during this period, coastal traders established additional depots in the Mwanza area and, later, at Magu and Massanza to the west. Their numbers and households grew as many recruited immigrant porters, soldiers, clerks, boatbuilders and sailors from the coast. Their influence, however, did not increase proportionally; since their role was restricted by host batemi to commerce and arms supply.³⁶

34 Itandala, "A History the Babinza," p.223

35 Hartwig, "The Victoria Nyanza as a Trade Route," pp.545-6

36 Itandala, "A History of the Babinza of Usukuma," p.234

Long-distance trade, too, was not necessarily a force towards political centralization, economic concentration or urbanism. Traders came and went according to the availability of ivory, and moved from site to site according to circumstances of regional politics. More importantly, their depots served as collection points for ivory, or distribution points for trade goods only. The hubs of long-distance trade, the points to which accumulated profits flowed, were Tabora or Ujiji upcountry and Bagamoyo or Zanzibar at the coast. Thus, the traders themselves provided no stable basis for a new or increased concentration of population.

1.5 Mwanza Ntemiship

The Mwanza ntemiship was one of the smaller in the region. Located on the edge of Smith Sound, it covered a relatively limited area, and probably included 20,000 inhabitants. Its lack of importance vis-a-vis its immediate neighbors was the driving force in Mwanza's internal development and external relations during the nineteenth century.³⁷ Its leaders participated in trade networks, hosted and struggled with coastal traders, and sought military alliances both to strengthen the position of the

³⁷ C. F. Holmes stressed this theme repeatedly in "Zanzibari Influence as a Trade Route in the Nineteenth Century," *JAH*, 11,4(1979):535-52

ntemi and banangwa at home, and to fend off neighboring ntemiships.

Like other lakeshore ntemiships, economic life in Mwanza revolved around fishing, agriculture and herding. The principal crops were rice, sorghum and millet, supplemented by plantain and vegetable gardening. Owing to East Coast Fever, cattle could not survive for extended periods near the lake, though the people had extensive herds of sheep and goats.³⁸ In addition, immigrant blacksmiths in the ntemiship worked ed iron implements, and local artisans built large canoes, fashioned wooden implements, produced fishing nets and gear, and wove baskets.³⁹

To augment their own production, the people of Mwanza obtained commodities from other ecological zones. In particular, they focused their efforts on Ukerewe and Uzinza. The Mwanza ntemiship had marriage ties to Ukerewe through refugee princes, and moreover obtained a number of lake region commodities collected and traded there. With Uzinza they traded goats for iron implements, specifically hoes.

38 While perhaps not the most accurate evidence, colonial livestock surveys in the early 1920's put the size of Mwanza ntemiship goat and sheep herds at approximately 13,000. 1926 Mwanza District Map. CO691/83:524

39 Kollmann, The Victoria Nyanza. pp.148-60

To gain leverage against their neighbors, successive Mwanza batemi sought alliances with coastal traders and the Baganda. The first coastmen arrived in the early 1850's and settled at Bwiru.⁴⁰ Relations, however, were tense. According to local tradition the traders were provided with accommodation and food by the ntemi Magaka, but both sides fell out over the issue of slavery, with the coastmen setting fire to part of the village of Nyakabungo before fleeing.⁴¹ Magaka had been tempted by presents, but his people refused to gather slaves. Later, traders again plotted to take slaves in the Mwanza area, but Magaka had been replaced by Muhaya as ntemi, and he was hostile to their overtures until his death in the early 1880's. Consequently, the coastmen avoided Mwanza.⁴²

The animosity towards the coastal traders did not, however, prevent the Mwanza ntemi from profiting by their presence in the region. Despite the coastmen's advantage in firearms, for nearly twenty years Muhaya and his successor Ikingo were able to reduce the traders' port of Kayeyi in the neighboring Basukuma ntemiship to tributary status.⁴³

40 Holmes, "Zanzibari Influence," p.485

41 *ibid*

42 Hartwig, "The Victoria Nyanza as a Trade Route," pp.548-9

43 *ibid*

By the late 1870's Mwanza had paid tribute to the Baganda, and in 1881 one of the Kabaka's traders, Sungura, moved his operations there.⁴⁴ While having the Baganda close at hand was not an altogether enviable position, the Mwanza ntemi used this alliance to gain needed arms and trade goods, as well as to threaten his neighbors. In the early 1880's, in particular, Ikingo used his Baganda ties to place pressure on the Bukumbi ntemiship.⁴⁵

Mwanza's success, however, was largely its survival. It did not expand during the late-nineteenth century, nor did it accumulate considerable wealth from long-distance trade. Moreover, the collapse of Buganda's influence in the southern lake following the death of Mutesa, left Mwanza's leaders in search again for allies. The presence of the coastmen did influence the area around the ntemi's residence. New crops made their way along the trade routes, and people built coastal-type houses and donned coastal clothing.⁴⁶ Thus, life in the cluster of villages: Bugalika, Nyakabungo and nearby Bwiru that later formed Mwanza town was altered, but did not yet receive the population increase or concentration of activity necessary to become to form a contiguous urban area.

44 *ibid*, p.550

45 Holmes, "Zanzibari Influence," p.494

46 Refer to section 2.5

1.6 Conclusion

For a variety of political, economic and ecological reasons the people of precolonial Usukuma developed networks of human settlements, but no large, urban, central place. Production and exchange were diffused throughout the region, as was political power. The expansion of long-distance trade and the arrival of coastal merchants did not necessarily lead to significant changes in this settlement pattern. The merchant capitalists' presence was tenuous, the commodities with which they were concerned limited, and the wealth accumulated through exchange left the region.

2 German Station, 1890-1906

Owing to the Mwanza ntemiship's relative weakness vis-a-vis its neighbors, during the early 1890's its leaders opted to court the Germans. The latter were also searching for allies, but, more specifically, for safe bases of operation. Having arrived in the area in 1890, German military expeditions needed a point of resupply on the lake. Mwanza offered a strategic location, caravan connections to the coast, and local military support. Gazetted a military station by 1894, over the next decade, Mwanza evolved into a garrison town and caravan terminus.

At the outset, the Germans used Mwanza primarily as a supply depot in their conquest of the surrounding ntemiships. The town, per se, consisted of a garrison "boma" and lines, the adjoining villages of Bugalika and Nyakabungo, and scattered trader and caravaneer compounds. The area also attracted an increasing number of caravans, coastal traders and private soldiers away from Kagei, Massanza or Magu. These Swahili-speaking immigrants settled in compounds and enclaves in and around what became the

nucleus of the colonial town, participating in trade, agriculture, construction, and dhow transport.

2.1 Military Boma

German forces first appeared in the Mwanza area in 1890, participating in an expedition sponsored in part by the Anti-Slavery Society. While they encamped near the White Fathers mission at Bukumbi, Emin Pasha and Lt. Wilhelm Langheld surveyed the area, accompanied by Charles Stokes, a renegade CMS lay volunteer turned ivory trader and caravaneer. Later, Stokes aided Emin Pasha in negotiating treaties throughout the southern lake region.¹ He also acted as a local agent organizing porters and supplies for German expeditions to southern Lake Victoria led by Langheld in 1892 and Oscar Baumann in 1893. Mr. Stokes maintained a series of depots in Sukumaland, including one on the lake in the Mwanza ntemiship, where the German forces rested and were resupplied.²

In 1894, Langheld bought Stokes's Mwanza compound for cash and a post on Ukerewe Island abandoned by the failed

¹ Ralph Austen, Northwest Tanzania under German and British Rule: Colonial Policy and Tribal Politics, 1889-1939 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 32

² For a more detailed treatment of the career of Charles Stokes, consult: Anne Luck, Charles Stokes in Africa (Nairobi: EAPH, 1972); and Nicholas Harman, Bwana Stokesi and his African Conquests (London: Jonathan Cape, 1986).

Anti-Slavery Society.³ The leaders of the Mwanza ntemiship were anxious for an alliance, and thus the German garrison there was rather secure. In that same year it was gazetted as an official military station, only one of two on Lake Victoria.⁴ The selection of the Mwanza area for a post was thus more a matter of business opportunity, local politics and convenience than of forceful conquest or careful military planning.

The initial German presence in Mwanza was almost exclusively military: a few irregularly posted officers, several NCOs and a rather eclectic, 40 to 70 man schutztruppe company.⁵ By 1894 there was a medical officer and customs master. In fact, in 1894-5 it was the medical officer, a Dr. Zupitza, who essentially commanded the garrison.⁶ There were no German missionaries, and the nearest missions were at least fifteen miles away: the White Fathers at Bukumbi and the CMS at Nassa. Long-distance commerce was largely in the hands of coastal merchants;

3 Maj. Wilhelm Langheld, Zwanzig Jahre in deutschen Kolonien (Berlin: Wilhelm Weicher, 1909), 180

4 The other was at Bukoba. After the turn of the century, the Germans also established a substation at Shirati. Austen, Northwest Tanzania, p.33

5 For more information on the garrison refer to section 2.3

6 C. F. Holmes, "A History of the Bakwimba of Usukuma, Tanzania from earliest times to 1945," Phd Dissertation, Boston University, 1969. p.192

there were no more than three European traders near the post; and the DOAG resisted setting up a depot in Mwanza until 1898.⁷

Not surprisingly, the German garrison showed little concern for local, Mwanza affairs beyond their own safety and maintenance. Nearly all the stationchefs during the 1890's were preoccupied with the difficult task of establishing or expanding their hegemony over Sukumaland. The officers were few and constantly shuttling between Bukoba and Mwanza. The garrison was also much too small to mount an extended rural campaign. Initially, the Mwanza station attempted to strengthen its position through alliance building. Soon though, it was drawn into a long series of short, violent "punitive" raids.

In 1893 and 1894 Lt. Langheld constantly toured the southern lake region, meeting with leaders from the Bukoba region to Sukumaland. He used these "barazas" to exact tribute in food, livestock and ivory and pledges of military support, in return for vague promises of arms and support from the schutztruppe. And, on occasion, as in the case of Ukerewe in 1893, he did in fact launch alliance related raids. After Langheld, stationchefs followed a strategy of supporting the ambitions of individual ntemi against local

7 Austen, Northwest Tanzania, pg.36

factions of headmen and elders, in effect, laying the groundwork for a system of indirect rule.

During Langheld's absence, however, Sgts. Hoffmann and Hartmann, left unsupervised at the Mwanza station, launched a series of punitive raids against ntemiships which refused to pay tribute, either in ivory or corvée labor.⁸ The situation became increasingly difficult, as station caravans and mails were attacked in reprisal.⁹ By 1895 tribute demands and involvement in local succession struggles sparked a wave of more intense military conflicts.¹⁰ Subsequently, the Mwanza garrison launched annual forays into the countryside, supporting allies, harassing rebellious batemi or displaced headmen and elders, and forcibly collecting taxes. This pattern eventually culminated in 1905, with the final conquest of southern Sukumaland.

2.2 Indigenous Response

Initially, the Mwanza leadership had welcomed the German presence. Since mid-century they had sought alliances with coastal traders and regional powers to balance the strength of competing ntemiships.¹¹ The station

8 *ibid*, pg.41

9 Holmes, "A History of the Bakwimba," pg.176

10 Austen, Northwest Tanzania, pg.44

11 Refer to section 1.3

did in fact gradually became a focal point for regional politics, but not perhaps as the indigenous Mwanza leadership could have imagined. As the Germans strength grew, so the Mwanza ntemi's role and influence was reduced.¹²

The Ntemi Makongolo actively supported the Germans. He provided access to land for the station and fortifications, as well as agricultural plots. Furthermore, he provided laborers and auxiliary forces to supplement the schutztruppe on the station's raids and campaigns; and eventually, he allowed the recruitment of local, Mwanza men for the schutztruppe and police. In the early years of the station, Makongolo also occasionally accompanied the commanders Wilhelm Langheld and Paul Kollmann on their tours. With Langheld, in particular, he appeared to manipulate the relationship to intimidate the batemi along the Mwanza Gulf to the south, causing recriminations at Mwanza based barazas.¹³ For Kollmann, who gathered extensive linguistic, anthropological and military data, Makongolo was a frequent

¹² The general theme of the decline of local authority in the presence of a German station was outlined by Beverly Brown for Ujiji in her dissertation: "Ujiji: The History of a Lakeside Town, c.1800-1914," Boston University, 1973. Pp.210-7. In particular, she stressed the growing influence of the Liwali, and incursions made by the local, colonial land commission.

¹³ Langheld, Zwanzig Jahre, p.174

guide and supplier of informants, thereby influencing the flow of information within the local administration.¹⁴

The Germans, however, soon sought regional allies beyond the small Mwanza ntemiship. Almost from the beginning successive German stationchefs insisted that allied or dependent batemi post representatives, or katikiros, near the fort, in order to relay messages, oversee tribute payments, and co-ordinate military and labor exactions. Prior to the rebellions of 1895 there were some 14 residents, but as German dominance increased, there were 40 by 1900.¹⁵ Barazas were by this point quite large, and consequently the role of the Mwanza ntemi as ally, explainer and intermediary was reduced.

Locally, the station officers followed no formal framework for governing the emerging town. Virtually no records were kept, and except for the customs master, there were no civil officers.¹⁶ Beyond tax demands, control over the surrounding villages rested with the Ntemi. The garrison, however, enjoyed its own jurisdiction in the Askari village and police lines. A British visitor in 1893

14 Paul Kollmann, Auf deutschen Boden in Afrika (Berlin: Alfred Schall, year unknown), 228

15 Austen, Northwest Tanzania, p.49

16 Joyce Hutchinson and Ralph Austen, "Memoirs of a German District Commissioner in Mwanza 1970-1916," TNR 66(Dec. 1966):172

noted that around the fort, sergeants held trials for accused local villagers and garrison members alike, frequently administering public whippings.¹⁷ And, the growing, Swahili-speaking, Muslim community increasingly looked to the Liwali, and later also neighborhood Jumbe for leadership.

With military and political affairs resolved in a de facto, communal manner, the remaining areas of contention were control of labor and access to land. In the early years of the station, the Ntemi's co-operation in mobilizing labor was vital to construction. As German influence expanded, however, corvée was extracted from much wider afield; for example Usmao and southern Sukumaland for the 1896/7 construction season.¹⁸ Moreover, skilled artisans were increasingly recruited from the coast, or drawn from the resident coastal community.

Land was more problematic. By the turn of the century, the expanding station and newly arrived European, Asian and coastal merchants made increasing demands for access to land, both for construction and agriculture. Most negotiated directly with the Ntemi or his headmen, but others began to strike cash deals with individual African

17 Lionel Decle, Three Years in Savage Africa (London: Methuen & Co., 1898), 379-81

18 Kollmann, Auf deutschen Boden, pg.229

occupants, eventually leading to disputes over rights of access.¹⁹

Finally, relations between the ntemi and station disintegrated into crisis in 1905. It was not, however, the direct result of struggles over political influence, labor or land. Rather, the spark was the garrison leadership's misinterpretation of the Maji Maji rebellion far to the south. Apparently disturbed by dispatches and rumors of rebellion elsewhere, Lt. Paul Baumstark, the stationchef became convinced that Makongolo and the followers were plotting against him. He ordered Wasukuma police and schutztruppe rotated from the garrison, had a detachment of German marines rushed to Mwanza via Kenya, and also received troops and auxiliaries from Bukoba. Makongolo was deposed and twelve of his headmen and elders arrested. Many of the accused were freed after a change in command in 1906, but Makongolo was deported and the position of subsequent Mwanza batemi never recovered.²⁰ Thereafter, it was German colonial authorities who laid out the political and legal framework of town government, terms of labor, and access to land.

¹⁹ Testimony in the 1928 and 1935 Arab claims cases. TNA 10158 and Acc.215/435/I and II

²⁰ Accounts of this incident were related in detail by both Ralph Austen, Northwestern Tanzania, pp.59-60; and C. F. Holmes, "A History of the Bakwimba," p.214.

2.3 Maintaining the Station

The German garrison sought to maintain itself in as independent and as dominant a position as possible. Consequently, successive stationchefs recruited additional troops, established better lines of communication and supply to Tabora in the south, organized caravans, assembled a station labor force, and developed sources of food - all to reduce their dependence on local allies.

The early garrison was not terribly large. Command was divided between Bukoba and Mwanza, and the officers spent much of their time in Bukoba, leaving either a lieutenant or sergeant in charge of Mwanza. In the early 1890's the garrison numbered approximately 70 men: comprised of Zulu recruits, Swahili volunteers from the coast, and about 40 Sudanese mercenaries remaining from Emin Pasha's column.²¹ By the mid-1890's, stationchefs were recruiting locally for the schutztruppe and also to create a police force.²²

The Germans' first priority was to construct a defensible position. The garrison had quickly outgrown their original camp, and later Stokes' compound as well. The soldiers had wives, children and assorted camp

21 "Einem Berichte des Kompagnieführers Hermann über die Lage der Stationen Bukoba und Mwansa vom 1. Mai d. Js.," DKB 17(1.9.93):419; and Landheld, pg.118

22 Holmes, "A History of Bukwimba," pg.194

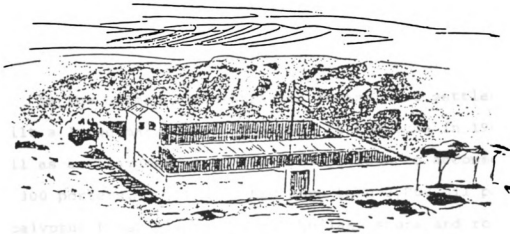
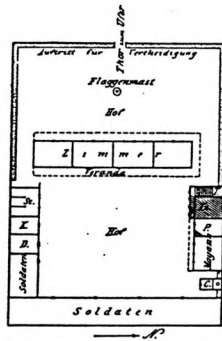


Abb. 222. Station Mwansa.

Abb. 223. Grundriss der
Station Mwansa.

T. Treppe, Ts. Thurmzimmer,
P. Pulverkammer, C. Closet,
St. Stall, K. Küche, D. Diener.

Sketch and Plan of
the Original Mwanza
Station, c.1893

Drawn by Franz
Stuhlmann in: Durch
Massailand zur Nile-
quelle (Berlin, 1894)
p.684

followers, all of whom eventually had to be accommodated. Thus, in 1895/6 Lt. Kollmann and Sgt. Hartmann directed the construction of a stone fort and, later, a permanent Askari village and police lines.

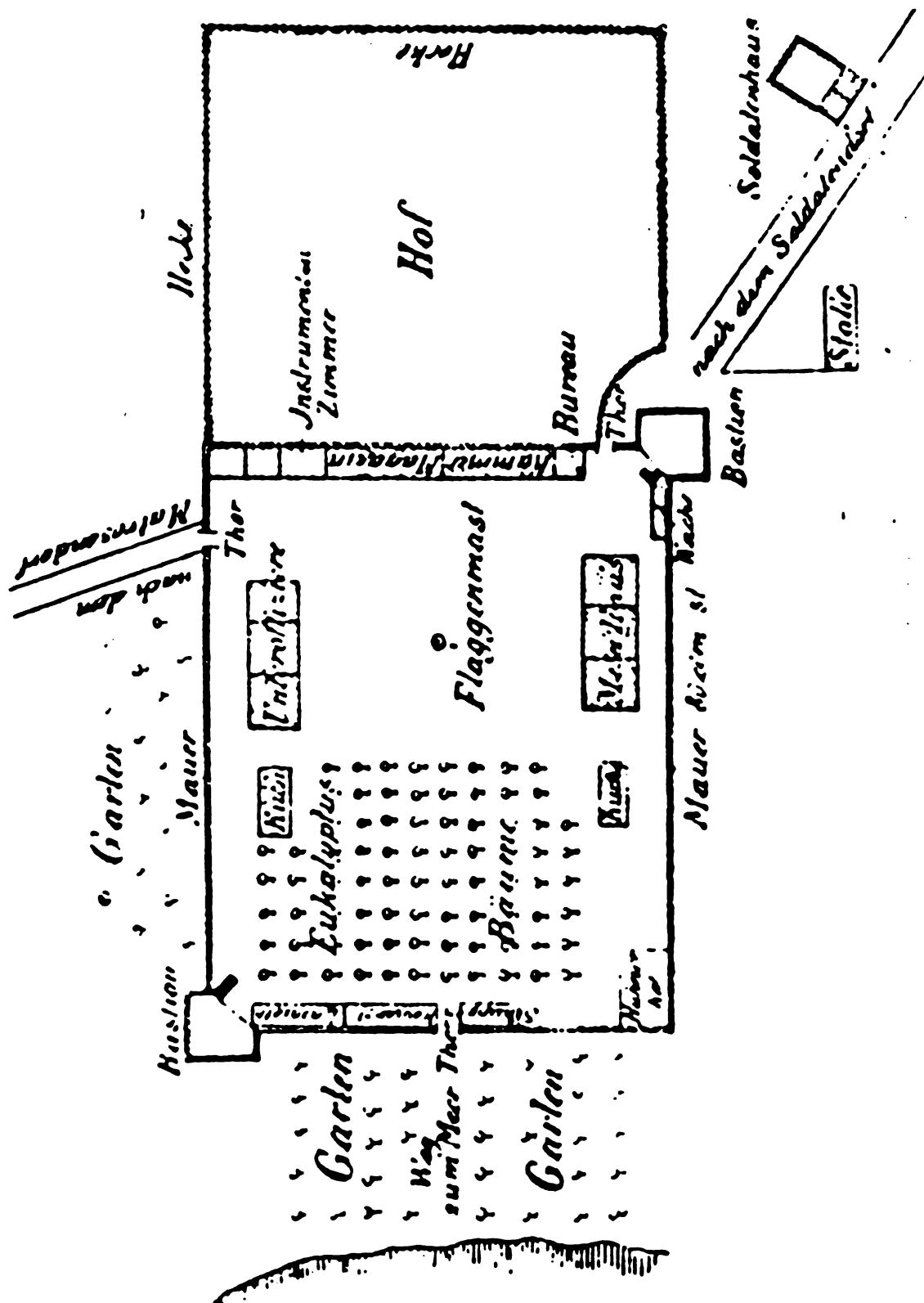
As the German administration became more settled, it built a large market hall adjacent to the Boma in 1900, as well as a caravanserai on the edge of town to accommodate up to 300 porters.²³ It also had more than 2,000 oil palm and eucalyptus trees planted along the lake shore and roads for shade.²⁴ Much of the labor for these early station projects was drawn from the garrison and camp followers. However, for the stone fort and barracks, some 600 corvée laborers were taken from Nera and Usmao.²⁵

Gaining greater control of food production or marketing was also vital for the garrison. Early on, Mwanza station relied upon local exactions and shipments from Bukoba for its food rations. In particular, the soldiers used cowries

23 "Nachrichten aus den deutschen Schutzgebieten Muanza und Schirati," DKB 13(1.7.01):485

24 Lt. Konstantin Cramer, "Auszüge aus den Jahrbereichten der Bezirksämter und Militarstation für die Zeit vom 1. Juli 1900 bis 30. Juni 1901," Berichte über Land- und Forstwirtschaft in Deutsch-Ostafrika, Erster Band, Heft I, Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1902. Pp.131

25 Kollmann, Auf deutschen Boden, pp.229-30



Plan of Mwanza Station, c. 1896. Drawn by Paul Kollmann in: Auf deutschen Boden in Afrika (Berlin: Alfred Schall, no date), 115

and exchangeable items taken in tax collections to trade in the villages near the station for food. By 1892, however, the garrison had already begun a vegetable and potato garden and planted nearly 100 fruit trees. They also had a herd of some 800 confiscated sheep and goats, and 85 cattle.²⁶ The confiscations continued throughout the German administration, with punitive raids replaced by fines in produce and livestock for insubordinate peasant villages.

The Mwanza station's early line of supply was either the caravan route to the coast via Tabora or, for some food requirements, by water from Bukoba. Early caravans to the coast were organized by Charles Stokes, the ivory trader and station agent. He and others had been forming large caravans from Sukumaland for several years before the Germans arrived, and the stationchefs simply tapped into existing networks. Most of the porters were Wasukuma, recruited through Stokes's ties to local batemi. The journey to Bagamoyo or Pangani on the coast took approximately 90 days.

The land route to the coast was vital to the survival of the station. Replacement officers as well as orders, arms, ammunition, medical supplies and imported trade goods

26 "Von der Station Muanza am Viktoria See," DKB 5(1.3.92):146; "Von der Station Muanza," DKB 8(15.4.92):237; and "Von der Station Muanza," DKB 9(1.5.92):260

could only arrive by this route. It is not surprising, therefore, that early garrison raids often revolved around local attacks on caravans, or on the failure of batemi or headmen to supply corvée carriers.

The level of rural tension was further heightened between 1898 and 1901 when the Tabora and Mwanza stations coerced labor in order to complete a road between their two posts.²⁷ Later, it was planned, though never realized, to link important villages to the station by road.²⁸ Such routes were more a matter of colonial expectation than immediate local necessity, for most transport remained dependent on human portage over already established routes.

The real transformation in communication and supply for the Mwanza station came from the lake route. Initially, Langheld and Herrmann had been dependent on large local and Baganda canoes and crews to make their tours of the lake shore ntemiships, to travel back and forth to Bukoba, or simply to ferry supplies. This was no small organizational problem, since many indigenous lakecraft often required as

27 C. F. Holmes, in his dissertation, "A History of the Bakwimba of Usukuma, Tanzania from earliest times to 1945," Boston University, 1969, pp.203-5, gives an extensive summary of the resistance to road construction.

28 "Nachrichten aus den deutschen Schutzgebieten Muanza und Schirati," DKB 13(1.7.01):484

many as 60 oarsmen, either a matter of considerable expense or military extortion.

By the mid 1890's successive expeditions had accounted for the construction of several small, wooden steamers, with local materials and imported parts. In 1898 a small aluminum one was carried in sections from the coast. Finally, after the arrival of the Kenya Uganda railway to Kisumu in 1901, the boats could be redirected there for supplies; and there was no limit on the bulk, weight or volume of supplies the garrison could receive.

2.5 Waswahili, Waungwana and Caravan culture

There was another wave of immigration to the Mwanza area parallel to the German occupation. Coastal traders, their households and clients, caravan porters and private soldiers formed a large portion of the non-local population. Originally many had settled in Kayenze area, and later at Magu. However, the Germans raided and harassed these settlements in 1890, crippling their trade. Moreover, the establishment of the German station later shifted much of the caravan traffic to Mwanza instead. Thus, during the 1890's many settled in and around Mwanza, to pursue commerce, but also to participate in agriculture, lake transport, and fishing.

All of the coastal immigrants were Muslim and shared or adopted a common Swahili culture; nevertheless, they were a differentiated group in place of origin, occupation and status. Some of the traders were Arabs, many were Waswahili born on the coast, while others were upcountry Waungwana who had converted to Islam and adopted Swahili cultural conventions. Occupationally, the most notable immigrants were traders, but most were porters, guards, clerks, or artisans. A later German survey in 1912 also found 300 slaves residing in the district, predominantly in the households of coastal traders and artisans.²⁹

The driving, organizing force in the coastal community was merchant capital. Together with Islam, it served as the basis for social organization, leadership, and even the settlement pattern. During the 1890's coastal newcomers settled in enclaves and compounds under the patronage of prominent traders. These were essentially commercial operations with an extended, household organization.³⁰

29 Theodor Gunzert, Memo, 26.8.12. TNA G45/1:no page

30 Such enclaves were obviously a local recreation of coastal society, albeit on a smaller scale and under a different political regime. Fred Cooper in Plantation Slavery on the East African Coast (New Haven, 1977) argued that on the nineteenth century coast, social and economic organization, or at least its ideological underpinnings, revolved around the leadership of Muslim patriarches. Given the weak coercive powers of the Zanzibari state, such paternalistic and decentralized leadership was necessary. Thus, for their plantations and mercantile ventures such men employed a household ideology, appointing themselves the interpreters of law and religious doctrine, the organizers

Merchants brought family and servants, but also recruited porters, guards and craftsman, all living in close proximity.

Authority within these enclaves, and the broader community, was in the hands of the principal merchants, who mediated internal disputes as well as negotiated external relations with the indigenous authorities and the Germans. Moreover, religion, culture and business reputation, as interpreted and regulated by the commercial elite, served as legal and social basis for interaction.³¹ Beginning at some

of production, the distributors of necessities, the granters of protection, and the sponsors of community events.

Upcountry, slavery was a less significant part of business and community organization; yet the patriarchal, household ideology was retained. Beverly Bloser Brown, in her dissertation, "Ujiji: The History of a Lakeside Town, c.1800-1914," found this pattern to be the case in a similar caravan town. She identified similar coastal groups in Ujiji: Arab and Waswahili traders, Waungwana middlemen and laborers, and a limited number of slaves. Most were organized into large commercial "household" enclaves.

31 Anthropologist Abner Cohen, in an essay entitled "Cultural strategies in the organization of trading diasporas," which appeared in Claude Meillassoux's The Development of Indigenous Trade and Markets in West Africa (London, 1971) theorized that ethnic trading diasporas, like that of the coastal traders in East Africa, were a rational response to political fragmentation. That is, in the absence of a co-operative network of states, long-distance traders faced numerous problems of information gathering, transport of goods, establishing credit and trust relations, creating a system for arbitrating disputes, and maintaining an authority structure with sufficient sanctions. It was not that many precolonial societies did not provide these mechanisms, but that they were not uniform or enforceable over the great distances.

Trading groups which maintained exclusivity or distinctiveness based on ethnicity or religion, Cohen further argued, were able to overcome these hurdles. By limiting admission of new members, providing a common

point in the 1890's, the coastal community was also presided over and represented by a Liwali, a local "governor," also a prominent merchant, who mediated commercial disputes.³² The first, Abdulla bin Ali, held the office until his death in 1913.³³

This commercial organization was even reflected in the settlement pattern. The traders, their families and employees settled in enclaves and compounds around the station and up the lakeshore to Kagei.³⁴ They built large, language and cultural basis for communication and understanding, and most importantly, a religious or legal framework for authority and relations of trust, such groups could trade with confidence over great distances.

32 The office of Liwali was perhaps best analyzed by Norman Bennett in Mirambo of Tanzania 1840?-1880 (New York, 1971). He stated that the Liwali, or governor, was appointed by the Sultan of Zanzibar, and placed under the direction of the Customs Master, to make known the Sultan's policies to upcountry traders through "extended discussion and persuasion." Bennett, however, noted that in fact the Sultan would appoint the most prominent merchant already established in a settlement. Moreover, the Liwali also had more coercive, commercial means of enforcing compliance within the coastal trader enclaves. As he was the representative of the Customs Master, he could legally enforce contracts and debt obligations, both upcountry and with the coast; and he held the power of banishment for the Zanzibari sphere over the heads of resistant, debtor merchants.

33 According to testimony for the Arabs claims cases in 1928, longtime Mwanza residents contended that Liwali Abdulla bin Ali arrived sometime after 1890 and died in 1913. His arrival having coincided with the establishment of the German hegemony, his precise relation to the Zanzibari sultanate is unclear. For a summary of his local interaction with the German regime, refer to Chapter 4.

34 Kagei, sometimes written Kageyi, was later termed Kayenze by the German and British colonial authorities.

rectangular wattle and thatch Swahili houses, surrounded by outbuildings, gardens, fruit trees and perhaps an enclosure, often a sisal hedge. In the villages of Bugalika and Nyakabungo Wasukuma porters who had been to Tabora or the coast also built rectangular Swahili houses. In fact, the Ntemi Makongolo's brother built a large one, two stories high, either in preference for this style, or not to be outdone by the newcomers.³⁵ Later, as the enclave pattern began to breakdown, and coastal neighborhoods, or mitaa, emerged in Mwanza town, coastal artisanry and architecture once again influenced town layout.

An early German account provided a description of Said bin Sef's compound at Massanza. This inventory of buildings, persons and wares, while not at Mwanza, may be considered typical of the period. There were nine mud and thatch, "Zanzibar-style" buildings occupied by six "Arabs and Beluchis" together with 30 to 40 "coastal people." Also, according to the report, there were about 40 slaves awaiting the trek to the coast. In the storehouse there were 130 ivory tusks, 80 loads of cloth, 12 loads of beads, 87 muskets and 550 pounds of gun powder.³⁶

³⁵ Paul Kollmann, The Victoria Nyanza (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co., 1899), 142

³⁶ Franz Stuhlmann, Mit Emin Pascha von Afrika (Berlin: D. Reimer, 1894), 112

By the early-1890's the Buganda slave trade had ceased. Coastal traders still collected the remaining ivory and also gathered more exotic exports like beeswax, gum arabic, or skins for export to the coast.³⁷ Of course, many had credit ties to coastal trading houses, and thus distributed cotton cloth, beads, wire and manufactured items in exchange for these commodities. Increasingly, however, these merchant capitalists directed their efforts to local and regional food trade, in particular rice, and also to cattle and hides.

Some coastal merchants also organized caravans and lake transport. In particular, Mwanza became a transshipment point on the Tabora-Bagamoyo route. Since the 1870's traders had brought boat builders up from the coast to construct dhows for them. These craft, together with large canoes, were used to transport ivory and slaves from around the lake to Kayei, Magu and later the Mwanza area. Later, in the 1890's dhows were still used to collect ivory, local food products, hides, and skins; and to distribute trade goods carried up from coast. At this time, Kirumba, adjacent to Mwanza, became the home port for nearly 20

37 Shemhiliu, Slaltiel Togolai. "The Economic History of Bagamoyo," MA Thesis, University of Dar es Salaam, 1977. p.96

dhows, and the area in which many boat builders and sailors settled.³⁸

Other coast people turned to agriculture and trade in local food markets. Since the beginning of the ivory trade to the south, new crops had entered the region along the caravan routes. In particular, the Wasukuma adopted maize, cassava, tomatoes, onions, and near the lake, new varieties of rice.³⁹ Immigrants usually planted orange, mango, lime, guava, and papaya trees from the coast around their settlements in order to reproduce the familiar cuisine of the coast.⁴⁰ In fact, in Mwanza oral tradition, the first traders reportedly tempted the Ntemi Magaka with "Arab" food, among other gifts.⁴¹ Near Mwanza at Mkuyuni, around the turn of the century, Ali bin Seleman planted nearly 55 acres in fruit trees.⁴² Near Mwanza at Kirumba, the Liwali

38 "Die Entwicklung der Handels- und Wirtschaftsverhältnisse am Viktoria Nyansa," DKB 8(15.4.05):236

39 A. Buluda Itandala, "A History of the Babinza of Usukuma, Tanzania to 1890," Phd Dissertation, Dalhousie University, 1983. p.232

40 *ibid*, also O. Guise Williams, DO Maswa to Land Office, DSM, 14.12.29. TNA 10158:121

41 C. F. Holmes, "Zanzibari Influence at the Southern End of Lake Victoria: The Lake Route," African Historical Studies, 4,3(1971):485

42 J. J. Craig-McFeely, for the Land Officer, DSM to I. C. Chopra, Mwanza, 6.2.34. Statement of Muhina bin Said. TNA Acc.215/435/I:86

Abdalla bin Ali, obtained a shamba, planted trees and sugarcane, and eventually built a small sugar mill.⁴³

These economic activities, however, required access to land for residence and cultivation and the ability or power to mobilize labor. Prominent merchants negotiated for land with the Ntemi and his banangwa. A manangwa in the nearby Kayenze area later claimed that all applications were made to the "chief or sub-chief," that the immigrants were obligated to cultivate the plot; and only in the case of vacant or useless land, "pori," could direct alienations be made.⁴⁴ In particular, friends and employees of the first Liwali later claimed that he obtained a number of shambas from Ntemi Makongolo, both for payment and on the condition they continuously cultivate it.⁴⁵ In several other instances coastal propertyholders later claimed land was sometimes obtained by simply making payments of cloth to Wasukuma occupants.⁴⁶ For example, an Arab merchant, Abdulla Sahal, was alleged to have bought at least four

43 Statement by Gunzert, 14.5.25. TNA 10158:90

44 Arab Claims Commission interview with sub-chief Sikumbira, Kayenzi, c.1928. TNA 10158:82-3

45 Affidavit of Fundi Khamisi bin Tokali, 14.12.35; Affidavit of Msaramda bin Mauzi, 13.12.35; and Affidavit of Abdulla bin Hassani, 14.12.35. TNA Acc.215/435/II:369-72

46 Files pertaining to Arab claim no.5, appearing throughout TNA Acc.215/435/I.

Mwanza area plots directly from Africans between 1900 and 1916.⁴⁷

Later, however, property near town was obtained directly from the Germans. Clearly, coastal land claimants discerned and capitalized on the rapid shift in power between the Ntemi and the German station. One Mswahili town jumbe under the Germans, Omari bin Nasibu, later testified:

At that time a stranger arriving would select a piece of vacant land and settle there. He would not pay anything to the Chief but he might have to pay house tax to the Government.⁴⁸

Another, Seleman bin Yussuf, claimed:

...after he had taken over and planted or cultivated the land he could dispose of it as he liked without sanction provided he notified the Government of the transaction. This did not include merely disposal of crops the land was considered by all persons to be his absolutely.⁴⁹

Initially, coastal merchants made their own, local arrangements for labor as well. Much of their requirements were met through those settled within their enclaves. Needed workers, especially craftsmen, were recruited from the coast. Others, such as porters, were attracted to compounds by the promise of employment or access to land and housing. Market gardeners employed a tenant system. Much

47 Schedule of Arab Claims, c.1928. TNA 10158:79

48 Statement of Jumbe Omari bin Nasibu, 30.10.28. TNA 10158:96

49 Affidavit of Seleman bin Yussuf, c.1928. TNA 10158:98

like the coast, tenants grew crops like millet or vegetables, while landowners retained rights to trees. In some cases tenants were long time household employees, in others they were non-Muslim migrants to the area who needed a place to settle.⁵⁰

As the demand for caravan and station labor grew, however, many porters and tradesmen for the coast and interior began to settle around the town, often outside the coastal enclaves. Caravan porters often did not stay long, but with the extended trips, in particular, some would cash out at Mwanza. For example, as early as 1892 from a German caravan some 18 private soldiers and porters opted to stay by near the station.⁵¹ Tradesmen -masons and carpenters - recruited by the Germans, also settled near the garrison.⁵² Finally, many soldiers from the garrison, in particular original Sudanese mercenaries, retired to the town. Some become policemen, others farmers, and several successful local cattle traders.⁵³

50 Affidavit of Msaramda bin Mauzi, 13.12.35. TNA Acc.215/435/II:370

51 Oscar Baumann, Durch Massailand zur Nilquelle(Berlin: D. Reimer, 1894), Appendix 8, 370-6

52 Refer to section 4.2

53 "Die Entwicklung der Handels," DKB, 8(15.4.05):238

2.6 Conclusion

Settlement at late-nineteenth century Mwanza was quite fractured. Mwanza villages, the German station and Askari village, and coastal merchant enclaves maintained distinct territorial and cultural boundaries. By the turn of the century, however, increasing German political and military dominance combined with settlement by coastal entrepreneurs and workers had begun to erode the indigenous Mwanza social order. Soon, merchant capital, with its need for workers and space, filled this vacuum and became the driving force in creating a colonial town.

3 Merchant Capital and the Growth of Mwanza Town, 1893-1916

Shortly after the construction of the German station, several coastal trading houses established branches at Mwanza. Initially they and the smaller Arab and Swahili traders in the area sought to integrate themselves into preexisting, regional trade networks in food and animal products. In 1903, when the Kenya Uganda Railway (KUR) Marine service linked Mwanza to the coast via the Kisumu-Mombasa rail line, there was rush of merchants to the town, and the volume of export trade from the region increased dramatically.

It was at the turn of the century, as well, that Mwanza began to take shape as a colonial town, and merchant capital was the driving force in this process. During this period the emerging town became the trading hub of the southern lake region. It became a bulking and transshipment point for a succession of regional exports and imported trade goods, providing employment to an increasing number of local and migrant laborers and tradesmen. Finally, both merchants and workers needed to appropriate or reshape commercial and

residential space to accommodate their growing numbers and expanded activity.

3.1 Early Firms and Connections to the Coast

Two export/import houses from Bagamoyo: Sewa Haji & Co. and Alidina Visram & Co. were among the first to place branches in Mwanza. Initially, the Bagamoyo merchants used Mwanza as a depot and staging point for commerce across the lake with Uganda. Caravan merchants had used Kageyi and Magu previously, but conflicts in Buganda, as well as locally with the station garrison and Anti-Slavery society force had weakened the commercial presence in these precolonial ports. Sewa Haji had placed an agent and storehouse nearby in Bukumbi as early as 1892, and, somewhat later one in Mwanza.¹ Haji was also a major creditor of caravan and ivory trade in the Mwanza area. Until his death in 1895, Charles Stokes had extensive credit, transport, trade good and ivory sale arrangements with both Haji and Visram on the coast, and his depot and boat, the "Limi" were based at Mwanza.² Moreover, Sewa Haji and the German firm of O'Swald & Co. had been creditors and transport arrangers for early German expeditions to the lake region.³

1 A. T. Matson, "Sewa Haji: a Note," TNR, 65(1966):92

2 Anne Luck, Charles Stokes in Africa (Nairobi: EAPH, 1972), 165

3 Letter from O'Swald & Co., date illegible. TNA G6/21:56

As Alidina Visram's business increased in Uganda in the late 1890's, he opened a permanent Mwanza branch for lake transshipment, moving goods also on the Mwanza-Tabora-Bagamoyo route. From the late 1880's onward, Visram had been establishing branch shops and creditors throughout East Africa, distributing trade goods, and collecting export produce. After Sewa Haji's death in 1897, he assumed his interests as well.⁴ By the turn of the century, he had over 30 branches along the Bagamoyo-Ujiji route, in Uganda, and along the Mombasa-Kisumu route.⁵

Firms like Haji's or Visram's were built upon the remnants of the declining ivory and slave trade networks. Similar to earlier coastal houses, these firms had a patriarchal ideology, with networks of clients who identified with their charismatic patron. Further, religious and ethnic trust relations were again an important basis for establishing credit and shipping arrangement over great distance. Haji and Visram, like many of their shopkeeper clients, were Asian and Ismaili. Like the coastal traders before them, their's was not an exclusive

4 Shirin Remtulla Walji, "A History of the Ismaili Community in Tanzania," Phd Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1974. p.60

5 J. S. Mangat, "Was Alidina Visram a Robber Baron or a skillful and benevolent commercial pioneer?" East Africa Journal, 6,2(1968):34

ethnic solidarity, for they did business with all who paid a return: European ivory traders, government and mission caravans, or Arab and Swahili commodity buyers. What was novel about the operations of Haji or Visram, however, was that they were essentially financiers and wholesalers, supplying networks of rural shops, or "dukas," with credit and trade goods.

For Mwanza these firms connected the town and region to the coastal export/import economy more thoroughly than the precolonial ivory and slave trades had. Their Mwanza branches were wholesale depots which advanced goods on credit to local and rural traders. In fact, until 1901 Mwanza was the main transshipment point for goods flowing north to Uganda from Bagamoyo. Moreover, Mwanza was no longer a remote gathering point for Tabora traders, but a trading settlement with direct links to coastal financiers.

3.2 German Firms and Metropolitan Capital

The first, and for some time only, European firm to locate in Mwanza was Köther & Sixdorf, later simply H. L. H. Köther. This was an ivory buying firm which set up shop in 1893 and then filled the void created after the death of Charles Stokes.⁶ During the decade or so it did business the

⁶ Ralph Austen, Northwest Tanzania Under German and British Rule (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 36

firm employed four European and three Asian buyers and clerks, and had some 61 African employees based in Mwanza.⁷

In general, large German colonial firms with metropolitan ties were not anxious to locate in Mwanza.⁸ It was simpler to make occasional arrangements through a local agent. Deutsch Ostafrika Gesellschaft (DOAG), the state sponsored wholesale and financial firm, opened an official branch in Mwanza in 1898. It dispensed imported trade goods to the coastal traders, advanced credit and arranged shipping. The local DOAG branch also purchased export items like ivory and hides on order for other metropolitan firms, acting as their local agent. For this reason, until 1903, it remained the only other European firm in town.

3.3 Kenya and Uganda Railway Marine

The completion of the Kenya Uganda Railway, in 1901, to Kisumu across the lake, was perhaps the most important factor in the expansion of Mwanza town. By 1903 Mwanza was connected to the rail line by a steamship service. Initially, one of two 600 ton steamers, the Sybil or the Winifred, called once every three weeks, delivering trade

⁷ "Berzeichniss der in Schutzgebiete thätigen Firmen und Erwerbsgesellschaften nach dem Stande von 1. Januar 1898," DKB, 12(25.6.98):353

⁸ This point was also argued by Austen in Northwest Tanzania, p.36.

goods and passengers, and taking on export produce.⁹ Within a few years the railway steamers arrived weekly, making a circuit of the lake ports, from Kisumu to Shirati, then Mwanza and on to Bukoba, Entebbe and Jinja.

The steamer service was almost entirely operated by the British railway. The KUR supplied funds to the German administration for the construction of a pier and customs houses, and was responsible for hiring and supervising the dock crew.¹⁰ Local booking arrangements were made through the DOAG, later Deutsch-Agentur.¹¹ Always expanding, the steamer operation had difficulty accommodating the rising volume of traffic. The pier was extended twice between 1903 and 1913, and lighters were added in each port to haul livestock or additional freight.¹²

For Mwanza merchants, the transportation revolution drastically reduced costs, both for importing trade goods and exporting local commodities. It opened up lake ports to regional food and livestock shipments, more rapidly and on an expanded scale. Moreover, the steamship line enabled

9 "Die Entwicklung der Handels- und Wirtschaftsverhältnisse am Viktoria Nyansa," DKB, 8(15.4.05):236-8

10 *ibid*

11 *ibid*

12 *ibid*; Pier and Customs House Plans, c.1906, TNA G7/44:2 ; and KUR Memo, c.1906, TNA G7/181:80

Mwanza commodity buyers to export bulky products such as hides, rice, groundnuts and later cotton to markets on the coast.

3.4 Commercial Center

After 1903, Mwanza was no longer a mere transshipment point on the way to Uganda, but a major port on the lake. At first, it served as a distribution point for unprecedented quantities of imported trade goods. Within a few years, however, it became a processing and bulking center for such regional produce as hides, rice, groundnuts and cotton, all exported on the KUR. The expansion of scale, linking Mwanza more directly with the world economy, created a boom between 1903 and 1913.

The rapid increase in the volume of freight moved through the port was dramatic, as can be observed in the annual customs receipt totals:

1900	128 Rp.	
1901	888 Rp.	
1902	7,885 Rp.	
1903	20,505 Rp.	
1904	103,000 Rp.	
1910	336,590 Rp.	13

13 Compiled from: "Die Entwicklung der Handels- und Wirtschaftsverhältnisse am Viktoria-Nyansa, Schuss II," DKB, 9(1.5.05):293-6; Bischof Henning, "Aus den Bereiche der Missionen und der Antisklaverei Bewegung," DKB, 10(15.5.06):320-1; and "Nachweisung der Brutto-Einnahmen bei den Binnengrenz Zollstellen von Deutsch-Ostafrika im Rechnungsjahr 1910," DKB, 5(1.3.12):207.

The rail line and steamers made the import of bulky trade goods possible on a massive scale. In particular, rural African consumers desired cotton cloth; and in 1904 Mwanza wholesalers imported nearly 300 tons of bolt cloth and piece goods, some two-thirds of the value of all imports for that year.¹⁴ On a much smaller scale they also imported metalware and glassware, as well as building materials and consumer goods intended for town residents.

More efficient rail and steamer traffic soon replaced the Bagamoyo route for Mwanza shippers and wholesalers. The comparative advantages of mechanized transport in volume, speed and cost were considerable. Mwanza wholesalers were able to become cloth suppliers to traders in the Tabora and Ujiji markets to the far south and southwest, again displacing Bagamoyo.¹⁵ Not until the completion of the Central Line from Dar es Salaam to Tabora in 1912, and on to Kigoma in 1914, did Mwanza's distribution area begin to contract.¹⁶ During the meantime, the Mwanza customs house and caravanserai tallied caravan traffic as follows:

14 "Auszenhandel des Deutsch-ostafrikanischen Schutzgebiets im Kalenderjahre 1904," DKB, 21(1.11.05):36-42

15 In his MA thesis, "The Economic History of Bagamoyo" (UDSM, 1977), Slatiel Togolai Shemhilu argued that the loss of the Uganda traffic to the Mombasa route, and the western Tanzanian wholesale trade good market to Mwanza transshippers severely reduced Bagamoyo's economic power.

16 C. W. Leverett, "An Outline of the History of Railways in Tanganyika 1890-1956," TNR 47-8(1957):110

To Tabora

Year	Caravans	Porters	Loads
1904	147	3,027	2,808
1905	414	11,134	10,465
1906	1,180	22,013	20,955
1909	-	32,587	30,950

From Tabora

1909	-	3,169	3,036
To Ujiji			
1905	56	1,087	1,076
1906	259	4,755	4,708

To Other Locations

1909	-	60,656	39,803
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From Other Locations

1909	-	687	633 17
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Distributing trade goods alone, however, was not the key to success for Mwanza's merchant capitalists. Rural traders exchanged cotton cloth, metal tools and beads for hides and agricultural commodities which could now be cheaply shipped to markets on the coast. Wholesalers and large shippers in town extended credit to small traders, bought up their produce, or in some cases had their own staff of buyers. Thus, capital circulated from town to countryside, and from stocks of trade goods to stores of export commodities. Even German observers on the spot noticed that Mwanza traders took advantage of the relatively

17 Paul Fuchs, Wirtschaftliche Eisenbahn-Erkundungen in mittleren und nördlichen Deutsch-Ostafrika (Berlin: Kolonial Wirtschaftes Komitee, 1907), 160; and Mwanza and Shirati Yearbook, 1909. G45/1: Appendix II

lower labor costs and greater productive capacity in Usukuma over the coastal region, exchanging trade goods for undervalued African produce.¹⁸

The value of export traffic from Mwanza lagged behind imports for some time, but nevertheless expanded rapidly. Less bulky, high value trade goods like cloth could be cost effectively carried much further into the hinterland than awkward agricultural produce could be carried to Mwanza. Thus, in general Mwanza's distribution area for trade goods was much larger than its collection area for more bulky export commodities. Also, it took time for Mwanza merchants to build buying networks for new cash crops, and time for rural cultivators to be induced or coerced to increase their production. Still in 1904, a year after the steamers began operating, Mwanza merchants shipped 432,191 kg. of rice, 579,821 kg. of groundnuts, 227,673 kg. of hides and skins and 108,066 kg. of ghee down to Mombasa.¹⁹ Within a decade, the port handled 914,000 kg. of rice, 6,156,000 kg of groundnuts, 970,000 kg. of hides and skins, and 676,000 kg. of cotton.²⁰

18 "Entwicklung der Handels," DKB, 8(15.4.05):236-8

19 "Auszenhandel des Deutsch-ostafrikanischen Schutzgebiets im Kalenderjahre 1904," DKB, 21(1.11.05):43-50

20 Ralph Austen, Northwest Tanzania, p.271

Mwanza was thus quickly drawn into the Mombasa economic orbit, becoming a distribution center for Mombasa-based financiers, shippers and wholesalers; and then a collection point for commodities delivered to mills there. This was not quite as dramatic a commercial reorientation as it would appear on the surface, however. By 1906 both Alidina Visram & Co. and Nasser Virji & Co. had relocated their headquarters from Bagamoyo to Mombasa, and maintained large branches in Mwanza. With the advent of the steamer service, Alidina Visram & Co. was well established in Mwanza, and able to dominate the importation of trade goods and dramatically expand exports of bulky goods: hides, gum arabic, groundnuts, rice, and beeswax.²¹ Within several years of steamship operation, his firm held a number of properties in Mwanza, was a major lender, and had a fleet of eight of its own dhows and 40 employees to collect produce and distribute goods along the lakeshore.²²

European firms, those with metropolitan connections or smaller settler ventures, were slow to locate in Mwanza after the steamer service. William O'Swald & Co., a major Hamburg commodity buyer, established a branch in 1903. It was followed by Hansing & Co., which later opened a cotton

21 A point originally made in "Entwicklung der Handels-", DKB, 8(15.4.05):236-8 and reiterated in virtually every monograph pertaining to Mwanza in this period.

22 1906 Firm List; and "Entwicklung der Handels-", DKB, 8(15.4.05):236-8

ginners at Mwanza in 1910. The final German venture was Deutsche Nyanza-Schiffahrtsgesellschaft (DNSG), a small, local rice buying and milling firm begun in 1909. Most of the European businesses, however, were not German. Two American concerns, Ross & Schindler and Max Klien were hide exporters, as was the Old East African Company, a Kenyan firm. Società Colonia Italiana exported hides and produce, and two French organizations, L. Besson & Co and Enterprises Commerciale Victoria Nyanza were in import/export.

Both in volume of trade and numbers, metropolitan firms were in the minority, and becoming increasingly less important in Mwanza. As a matter of comparison, in 1905 the DOAG was the largest European firm in Mwanza. Its local gross receipts were Rp. 250,000. Other European firms were in the range of R. 100,000 to 150,000. By contrast, Alidina Visram & Co's gross receipts for the same period were Rp. 350,000.²³ While most Asian firms were considerably smaller than Visram's shops and rural buying operations, their numbers grew.²⁴ While there were never more than 12

23 "Entwicklung," DKB, 8(15.4.05):236-8

24 In her dissertation, "A History of Indian Merchant Capital and Class Formation in Tanganyika," Martha Honey argued that the colonial state attempted to mold Asian enterprises to suit metropolitan interests. During the German period there was rather unequal competition for control of wholesale trade and finance; and thus many Asian firms eventually acted as middlemen for metropolitan shipping lines and export/import firms. In a similar vein, John Iliffe in Tanganyika Under German Rule (p.97) contended that neither the colonial regime nor metropolitan interests were upset at the apparent domination by Asian merchants of

metropolitan firms directly represented in Mwanza, the overall number of enterprises grew as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of firms or traders</u>
1898	1
1900	2 (only European firms listed)
1906	47
1907	51
1911	90
1913	72
	25

Thus, by 1913 in Mwanza town, there were 12 European-owned firms, 50 Asian owned, and 20 regarded by the colonial authorities as Arab owned.²⁶

Most of the new enterprises in Mwanza were in fact shops and storage firms for commodity buyers. For example, the 1906 registration list reveals that only four businesses had more than 25 local employees, 15 had between 10 and 25, but 28 had fewer than 10.²⁷ Moreover, in any of

retail and regional wholesale markets, since they distributed European manufactured products and in turn shipped commodities to metropolitan industries.

25 Compiled from: Firm List, signed Baumstark, Oberleutnant, c.1906; Firm List, signed Klenze, 5.3.07; Kolonial - Handels - Adressbuch, 1911 (Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftlichen Komitee, 1911), 91-3; and Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1920), Band II, 596

26 Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1920), Band II, 596

27 Firm List, c.1906, signed Klenze

the firm lists, nearly 90% registered as general traders, not as wholesalers or shippers. This does not mean small traders did not have extensive networks of employees in the countryside.²⁸

3.5 Commercial Population: merchants, buyers and workers

In addition to supplies and trade goods, the steamers also brought immigrants. New commercial opportunities attracted many would be shopkeepers and buyers. Some came as agents or branch managers for large firms, but many more were smaller traders from Uganda or Kenya hoping to invest their savings in a shop in Mwanza or its hinterland. The majority of newcomers to Mwanza during this period, however, were workers seeking employment in the new commodity buying firms, shops, warehouses or processing mills.

Relatively few Europeans were drawn to the Mwanza area by the trade boom. Settler agriculture was almost uniformly unsuccessful and, under the civil administration, actively discouraged; by 1910 there were only 17 settler estates registered in the District.²⁹ Since metropolitan firms were slow to locate in Mwanza, Mombasa- or Uganda-based Asian firms dominated local commerce. Consequently, few European branch managers or businessmen came to Mwanza. Most

²⁸ Refer to Section 5.4 for information on rural-urban buying links.

²⁹ Kolonial-Handels-Adressbuch, 1911, p.75

Europeans residents either worked for the administration, were associated with mining in the Mara area, or the Christian missions along the lakeshore.

In various sources, Mwanza officials accounted for European immigration as follows:

1897	20 (District total)	
1908	64	
1909	77	
1913	85	
1914	150	30

Asian immigration to Mwanza, however, was quite rapid and considerable:

Year	Mwanza Town	Mwanza District	
1901	-	14	
1909	352	-	
1910	339		
1913	315	571	31

30 Compiled from: "Uebersicht uber die im Schutzgebiete von Deutsch-Ostafrika ansassige Weisse Bevolkerung," DKB 15(1.8.97):467; 1909 Mwanza-Shirati Yearbook, TNA G1/5:no page number; Die Deutschen Schutzgebiete in Afrika und der Südsee 1912/1913, Tabellen II, p.10; Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon, Band II, 596; and Gunzert, "Memoirs," p.172

31 Compiled from: 1909 Mwanza and Shirati Yearbook, TNA G1/5:no page number; Die deutschen Shutzgebiete in Afrika und der Südsee 1912/1913, Tabellen II, p.10; Deutsches Kolonial-Lexikon, Band II, 596; and Dr. Ranier Tetzlaff, Kolonial Entwicklung und Ausbeutung(Berlin: Duncker & Humbolt, 1970), 162.

Moreover, most of the newcomers were young men seeking work or business opportunity. Following the Uganda Railway construction up from the coast, most had emigrated from Kenya or Uganda. Some came as branch managers for large firms, while other opened shops in town or moved on to trade settlements in the interior. Most Asian immigrants, however, were recruited workers: tradesmen, clerks and shop assistants. According to 1910 census data 248 were in commerce employment, while 25 were artisans.³²

Less remarked upon, though more numerous were African job seekers in Mwanza. The town's overall African population was approximately 4,000 in 1905 and nearly 5,000 by 1914.³³ The arrival of traders and firms generated employment, both within business, and around town as laborers, servants and water carriers. The company registration lists revealed that most wholesale and commodity buying firms were overwhelmingly staffed by African buyers, clerks and workers:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of firms</u>	<u>Asian employees</u>	<u>African employees</u>	
1898	1	3	61	
1906	47	-	500	
1907	51	-	325	34

32 Tetzlaff, Kolonial Entwicklung, p.162

33 "Die Entwicklung der Handels," DKB 8(15.4.05):236-8; and Gunzert, "Memoirs" p.172

34 Compiled from: "Berzeichniss in der Schutzgebiete thätigen und Erwerbsgesellschaften nach den Stande von 1.

Moreover, given the African population figures, there were at least 1,000 adult men residing in town, and of them somewhere between 30 and 50% thus worked for commercial firms.

3.5 Housing, shops and the bazaar

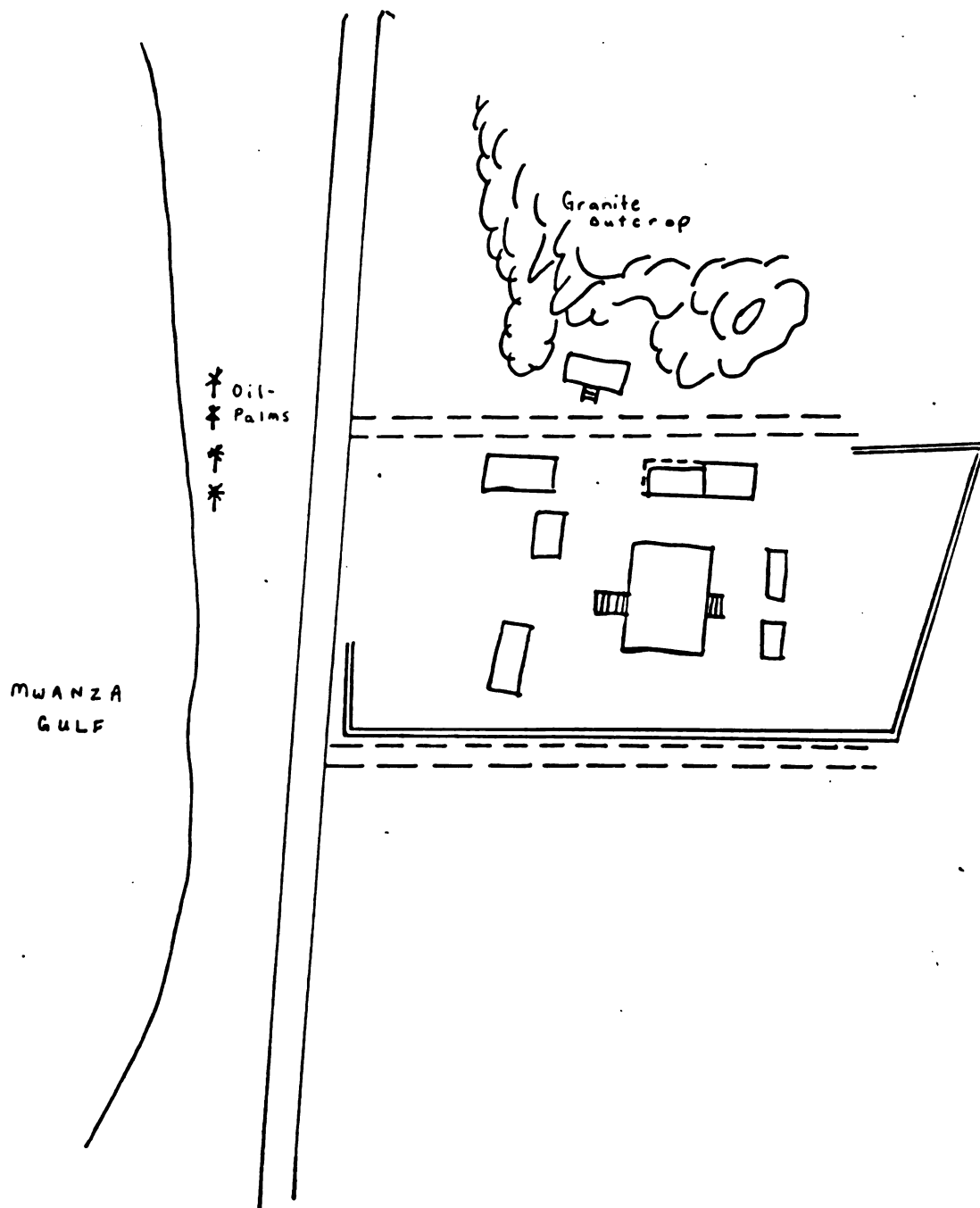
The success of merchant capital did much to determine the physical layout of the emerging town. As Mwanza became a wholesale and commodity bulking center, merchants required space for storage and processing. Moreover, new merchants and migrant workers alike need housing. The old, fractured pattern of commercial enclaves, indigenous villages and military encampments gave way to what one German official termed a more "open city."³⁵

Prior to the arrival of the railway steamers, commercial branches in Mwanza adhered to the early, compound settlement pattern. Acquiring land, increasingly with the support of the military administration, trading agents set up self-contained "factories" - residences, workshops and storage building enclosed by an outer wall.³⁶ Unlike the coastal merchants, however, these new European and Asian

Januar 1898," DKB, 12(15.6.98):353; and 1906 Firm list, signed Klenze; and 1907 Firm List, signed Hermann.

35 Gunzert, "Memoirs," p.173

36 For an analysis of administration involvement in commercial land acquisition refer to Section 4.3.



DOAG Compound, Mwanza
Begun c.1898
source: TNA G45/54: no page

traders did not locate on the fringes of town, but instead opted for sites along the lakeshore in rather close proximity to the Boma. For example, in 1898 the DOAG constructed a walled, stone complex near the lake, which was more widely commented upon by official travellers than the station itself.

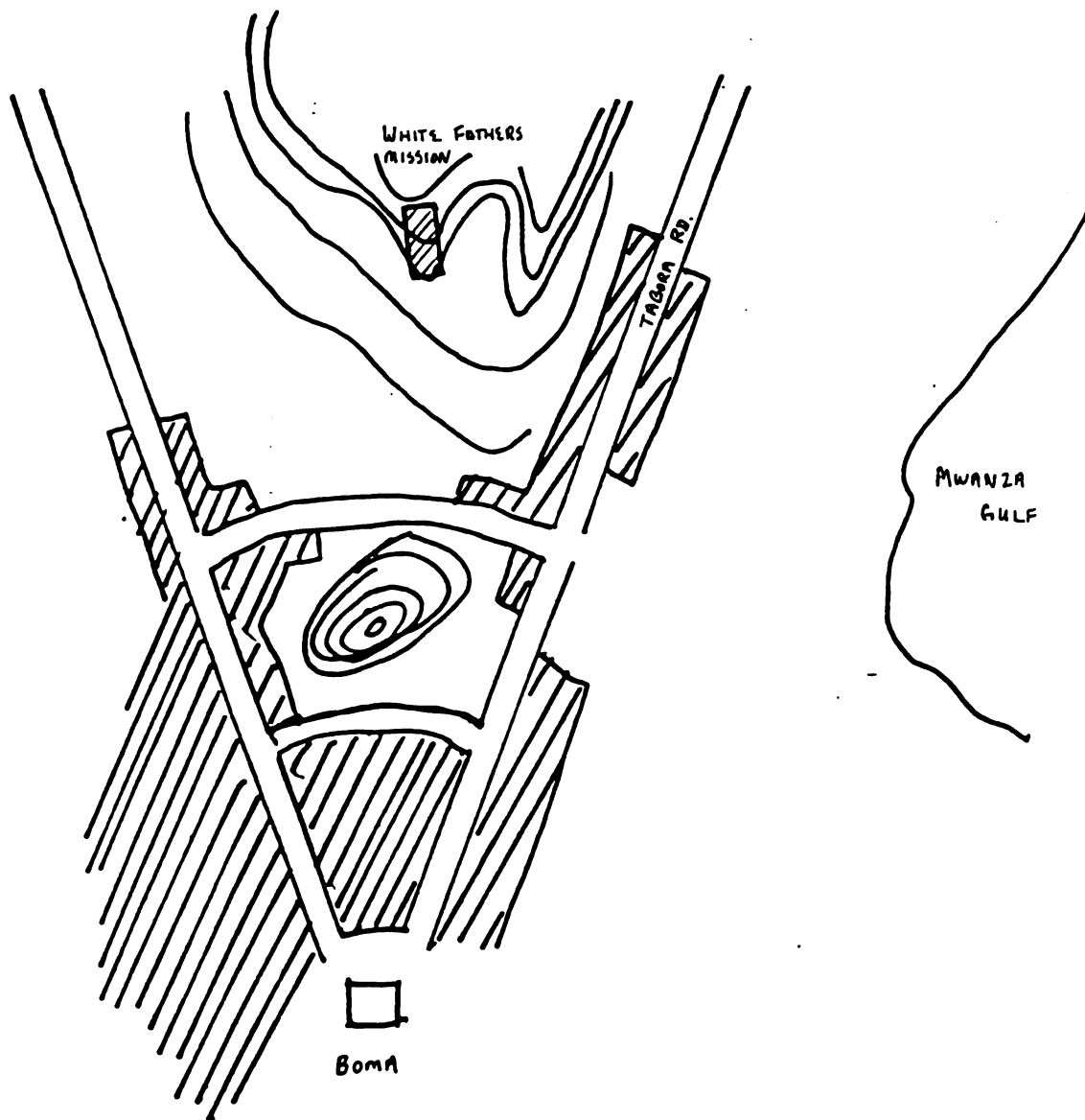
With the arrival of the steamer service, and consequent upsurge in trade and traffic, there was a building boom in Mwanza. In 1905 a visiting customs official estimated that the town had grown to include 700 houses, and in that year alone. there were 40 new construction projects underway.³⁷ He also believed at least half the structures in town to be of either baked or sun-dried brick, much of it from the station brick oven.³⁸ By 1909 there were 814 houses in town on the tax list.³⁹ Construction labor was seasonal, as work had to halted during the rains.⁴⁰ Materials were in part local, although the rail and steamer link enabled those who could afford it to import concrete, treated lumber, nails and tin sheeting.

37 "Entwicklung der Handels," DKB, 8(15.4.05):236-8

38 *ibid*

39 Mwanza and Shirati Yearbook, 1909. G1/5:page unnumbered

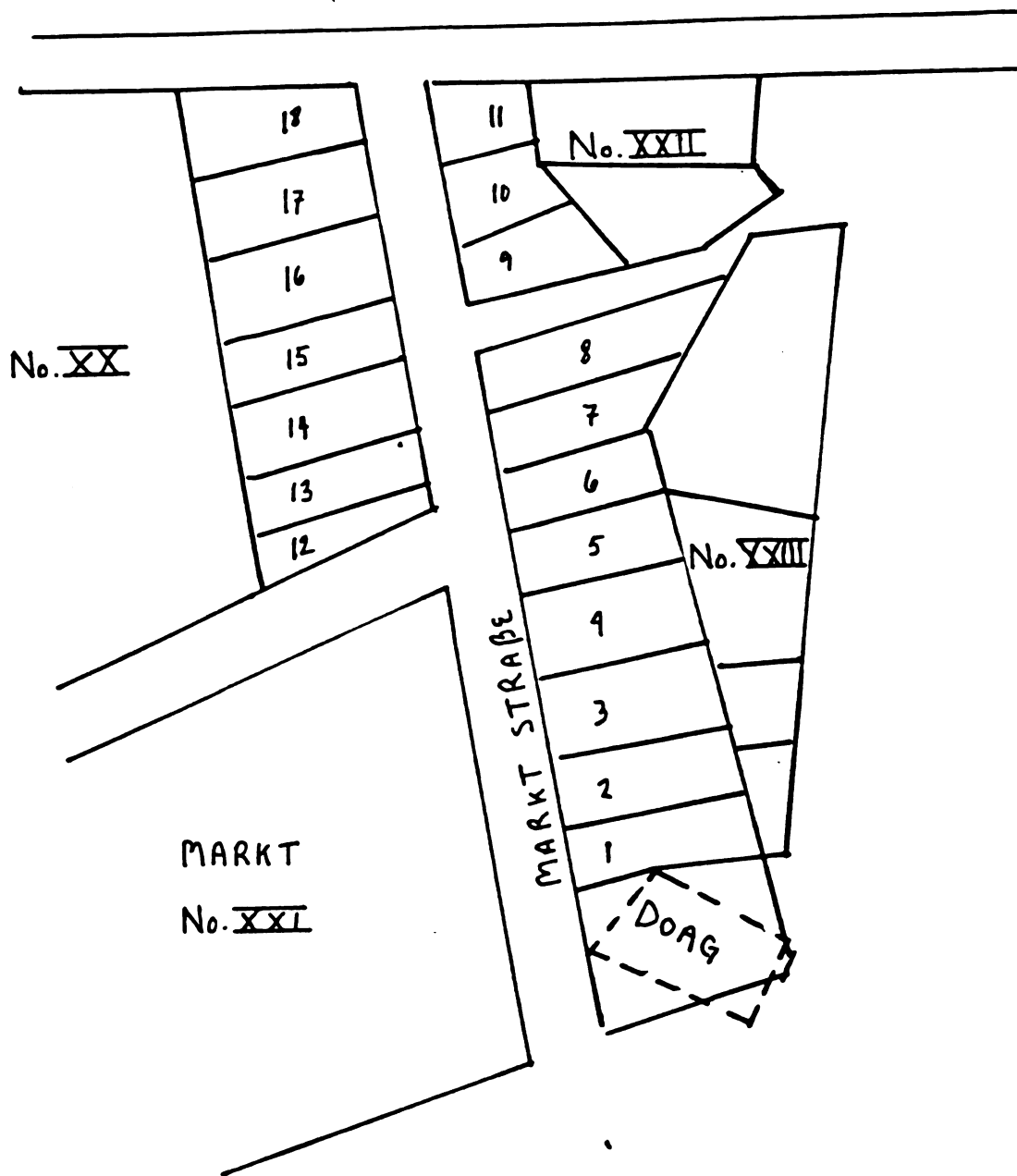
40 For information on construction labor, refer to Section 4.2.



Sketch of Construction
along Tabora and Ikoma
Roads, c.1906
source: TNA G45/13:12

The growth, however, was by no means planned. The military, and later the civil administration did alienate land for construction on a case by case basis. German officials also assisted in street layout, and had laborers broaden the main Tabora and Ikoma Roads; but exercised little control over residential and business construction. New building took place in the central area between the Boma and surrounding villages and compounds. Thus, there were overlapping settlement patterns, with new, brick buildings lining the streets, but adjoined by mud and thatch structures, and often divided by fruit tree groves or garden plots. Moreover, many older trading compounds, storage buildings, and hide tanneries were soon surrounded by residences. If there was a pattern to growth, it revolved around access to the new KUR pier.

The pier and customs house quickly became the focus of the town, practically and symbolically displacing the Boma in importance. The emerging street layout, in which the main roads led to the Boma, also focused on the pier. Also, in 1911 the administration auctioned 18 plots in the heart of town, across from the Boma and market hall, which became the bazaar. Purchased by small wholesalers and larger retailers, these two blocks along Market Street became the



BOMA PLATZ

Market Street Plot Auction
c. 1911
source: TNA G45/55:3

retail center.⁴¹ Other shops and warehouse radiated out along Tabora Road. In general, commodities and livestock were held on the edge of town, and carried or driven to the pier on steamer days.

3.6 Conclusion

The extension of KUR steamer service to Mwanza stimulated a regional trade boom; drastically reducing the cost of imported goods, and making practical the export of bulky, agricultural produce. Within a decade Mwanza town emerged as the hub of regional commerce, attracting businesses and immigrant workers. In such an atmosphere, merchant capitalists and their enterprise were the driving force in shaping economic and spatial organization, and, as will be argued in the next chapter, a pressing political force in creating the colonial town as well.

⁴¹ Registers of Indian and Arab Plots, Mwanza, 1911-6.
TNA G45/55:1-4

4 Creating the Colonial Town: exerting control over Labor and Space, 1906-15

In 1906, the military administration was superseded by the civil service, and not long after the town received an imposing commissioner: Theodor Gunzert. His administration aggressively promoted cash crop agriculture in the rural hinterland. In town, Gunzert supervised a construction program, established colonial departments, and formalized relationships with Mwanza's indigenous leadership and Arab and Asian mercantile communities.

Vital to this process was the appropriation of land for administrative, commercial and residential use by non-Africans, and the coercion or recruitment of local labor for construction, roadbuilding and dockwork. The commercial establishment pressed for the increased alienation of property in and around the town, necessitating official mediation between merchants and local residents, and legal recognition of capitalist property relations. Successive labor regimes gave way to contract and wage labor, requiring the legal reinforcement and occasional intercession of the

town court. The creation of the colonial town thus revolved around the commodification and control of labor and land.¹

4.1 Gunzert and the Civil Administration

In 1907, the lake region was placed under civil rule. Mwanza's growing economic importance, and the garrison's poor handling of political affairs in 1906 dictated a change. Further, officials in Dar es Salaam hoped to bring outlying regions like Mwanza under greater central control. Instead, however, by all accounts their appointee, Theodor Gunzert, interpreted policies quite independently.² And, since Mwanza was quite distant from Dar es Salaam, and communications were poor, he was able to do so until 1916. Thus, rural and urban administration were regularized, but in a local fashion.³ Gunzert's focus was still

1 Frederick Cooper, ed., Struggle for the City (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Press, 1983). In the introduction to this volume, Fred Cooper outlined the thesis that urban class struggle and colonial mediation revolved around the issues of time and space. More specifically, he argued that the colonial state, capital and workers clashed over workers' job discipline and social behavior, and over the control and use of urban space.

In creating a colonial town, however, these struggles were at an incipient stage. The colonial regime did not then aim to regulate an existing state of affairs, as was the case in Cooper's urban schema, but rather to facilitate a transformation: to commodify labor, to discipline new relationships between labor and employers, and to recognize and enforce capitalist property relations.

2 Ralph Austen makes this point in Northwest Tanzania, p.83; as does C. F. Holmes in his dissertation, "The History of Bukwimba" p.220.

3 John Iliffe, in Tanganyika under German Rule (London, 1967) coined the phrase "local compromise" to describe diverse German approaches to policy and administration.

overwhelmingly rural, his men pressed for greater tax revenues through increased cash crop production but employed methods not approved by Dar es Salaam. In town the new administration embarked on a construction program, and eventually attempted to delineate formal plot boundaries and to survey the town survey; but it was not in full compliance with public finance regulations or land policy.

As Mwanza's only Bezirksamtman, or district commissioner, Theodor Gunzert held the post from 1907 until the town's fall to the British in 1916. He had previously served as a district judge in DSM in 1902, then in Tanga in 1904, and finally had been an administrative officer for Pangani in 1905-6.⁴ Gunzert was an energetic, self-styled non-bureaucrat, the quintessential "man on the spot" who deliberately disregarded and underinformed his superiors and

Essentially, the emerging colonial state was forced to contend with African, settler and mercantile pressure groups in different combinations in different regions, and thus opted for different ruling strategies. In 1907 German and colonial officials attempted to legislate greater conformity, which resulted, however, in a series of contests between settlers and administrators. Relatively distant regions like Mwanza thereby escaped close central scrutiny.

4 Accounts of Gunzert's career may be found in chapter six of Ralph Austen's Northwest Tanzania; and in the introductory notes to Joyce Hutchinson and Ralph Austen, "Memoirs of a German District Commissioner in Mwanza 1907-1916," Tanzania Notes and Records, 66(Dec. 1966):171-7.

laid down his own local policies.⁵ He later recounted in his memoirs:

I organised the internal work as unbureaucratically as possible and without the usual paper war. I put on record only what had documentary value, such as land sales, and for the rest relied on my memory. I seldom wrote reports except when government edicts required I placed the greatest value on keeping in contact with and gaining the confidence of my district and its inhabitants by constant travelling.⁶

Under civilian rule, the administration became more routine. While the schutztruppe garrison of 170 officers and men remained at Mwanza, the commissioner came to rely much more on the 125 man district police force which was directly under his command.⁷ Non-military personnel were also appointed to a number of local posts. According to Gunzert, his station came to employ some 19 European officials: an assessor or deputy, medical, veterinary, agricultural, customs, and a public works officers, several clerks and seven or eight policemen.⁸ In addition there was an African staff of at least six clerks, 13 to 20 tax

5 Ralph Austen has made this point in Northwest Tanzania, p.83, at one point poetically comparing him to the fictional DC in Sanders of the River.

6 Joyce Hutchinson and Ralph Austen, "Memoirs of a German District Commissioner in Mwanza 1907-1916," TNR 66(Dec., 1966):173

7 "German Statistics (1914) of the Old Mwanza District," Mwanza Province Book I/misc. section: no page

8 Hutchinson and Austen, "Memoirs," p.173

collectors, a number of ox-cart drivers, several crews of salaried construction workers, and a hospital staff.⁹

Gunzert's approach to personnel was not entirely orthodox, however. He reinforced the katikiro system, continuing to work closely with the batemi to co-ordinate tax collection and force cash crop production. To this end, Gunzert's administration constructed a new residence for each ntemi, or his representative in town.¹⁰ Further, he augmented his staff with failed settlers in quasi-official roles, to co-ordinate transport, recruit labor or promote cotton production drives. For example, he appointed a former White Fathers lay brother, Alphonse Wurfel, an "Economic Inspector" to enforce cotton planting schemes.¹¹

The central focus of Gunzert's administration was in fact the promotion of cash crop production. The commissioner repeatedly toured the district on foot inspecting fields, and regularly solicited progress reports and surveys by European commodity buyers who also travelled in the hinterland.¹² Moreover, he personally encouraged

9 Austen, Northwest Tanzania, pg.99; and Gunzert to Governor, telegraph 3.6.07. "Wirtschaftsplane 1907-9." TNA G4/119:2-4

10 "Memoirs," p.173

11 Austen, Northwest Tanzania, pg.99

12 "Memoirs," p.173; and travel reports in TNA G45/34

processing enterprises to locate in Mwanza, in particular a German owned rice mill.¹³ From 1910 onwards, his deputies, in league with indirect rule African officials, led programs of seed distribution and compulsory cultivation. These measures were much more intrusive than those advocated in Dar es Salaam, but for Gunzert, they served the twofold purpose of expanding and rechanneling rural production into export commodities, thereby increasing tax revenues.

In town, Gunzert's aims were much more modest, almost an afterthought. Following the removal of the sultan Makongolo and his men, local decision making was much more firmly in the hands of the administration. The new sultan, Mwanaweri, retained control over the affairs of his village, and of course the population of his wider sultanate; yet in matters which involved the interests of the administration or commercial community, he was reduced to an advisory role. Under Gunzert, a jurist and former magistrate, a town court was established, though, according to him, most legal decisions were made by fiat.¹⁴ In Mwanza town Gunzert's assistant, the Assessor, supervised affairs, regulating property transactions and collecting taxes.

13 Refer to Sections 5.1 and 5.4

14 "Memoirs," p.173

The Liwali Abdulla bin Ali retained a strong, if legally ill-defined, role. He was recognized by the government as the advocate for the overlapping, non-European Islamic and commercial communities; mediating local disputes, serving on commissions, and relaying the concerns of merchants to the administration. He also aided in the promotion of rural cash crop production, by extending his influence to regulate the activities of Mwanza traders in the countryside.¹⁵

The final institution in local government was the Kommunalverband, or communal league, a small council of local residents who managed the works budget. Mwanza's was established in 1905, but abolished shortly afterward in 1907 under the Dernburg reforms. Through the lobbying efforts of Commissioner Gunzert the body was reconstituted as a district council at least until 1910.¹⁶ The councils operated parallel to the civil administration, and were allotted 50% of the hut tax and 30% of the business tax for their budget.¹⁷ From Mwanza they set district hut tax rates and managed a large payroll including: construction workers, transport riders, and the police. Most

¹⁵ Refer to Section 5.5 for examples.

¹⁶ Austen, Northwest Tanzania, p.88

¹⁷ John Iliffe, Tanganyika under German Rule, p.88

importantly, though, the council set the agenda for works projects.

While the councils became a vehicle for settler politics elsewhere in the colony, in Mwanza it represented church, state and commerce. There were only three council members, and according to a decree from Dar es Salaam all had to be literate in German.¹⁸ The District Secretary, von Gross, was an official member, along with Father Superior Barthelemy of the White Fathers mission and the William O'Swald & Co. manager, H. Meyer.¹⁹ Obviously the council members' perspective and circle of informants was largely limited to the town's European and commercial communities, and moreover there was no record of formal hearings. Father Barthelemy was considered the expert on, and advocate of, African subjects.²⁰

Not surprisingly, the construction priorities of the communal and district councils reflected the concerns of merchants about rural transport and urban sanitation. Transport infrastructure clearly facilitated business. In particular, between 1907 and 1910 the council financed the

18 *ibid*

19 Gunzert to DSM, 16.10.06. TNA G4/118:5; Minutes of Meeting, 13.2.08. TNA G4/118:34

20 Klenze for von Gross to DSM, 21.2.08. TNA G4/119:25-7

construction of a number of dhow piers at rice and cotton collection points along the lakeshore.²¹ As an added bonus to Mwanza merchants, the materials for these projects was ordered through local firms or branches. Thus, William O'Swald & Co. and Hansing & Co. captured the construction materials contracts, while Alidina Visram and Remtula Merali received the office supply and outfitting contracts.²²

Sanitation and public health were certainly problematic in Mwanza town. Malaria was endemic and drinking water came straight from the lake. In 1905 alone, the small Mwanza dispensary treated some 3,000 cases of dysentery.²³ The councils' response, however, was once again to act in accordance with the interests of the European, mercantile community, rationing sanitary services to the administrative and commercial elite. There was a mosquito control, drainage project in the stream which ran through the town. A meat market, or arbitior, was erected on the edge of town. And, in 1908 six water pumps were ordered to replace the faltering well at the fort.²⁴ The pumps proved difficult to

21 Kommunalverband meeting minutes, 13.2.08. TNA G4/118:34

22 Assorted construction accounts, 1907-9. TNA G7/183

23 Paul Fuchs, Wirtschaftliche Eisenbahn-Erkundungen im mittlern und nordlichen Deutsch-Ostafrika (Berlin: KWK, 1907), 159

24 Klenze for von Gross to DSM, 21.2.08. TNA G4/119:25-7; and Mwanza-Shirati Yearbook 1909. TNA G1/5:no page number

install, and soon Gunzert was pressing Dar es Salaam for funds for a shore pump to draw water from the lake, closer to the European quarter.

Gunzert's regime also embarked on a building program, from the official budget. Prior to the war, the administration built the already mentioned katikiro's quarters, as well as new offices, storerooms, a prison, two hospitals, officers and clerk's quarters, police lines, a school, a market, and road projects.²⁵ In part, this work accomplished with locally recruited labor, though skilled artisans were also enlisted from the coast.

Administration construction, brush clearance, drainage and sanitation projects all required local labor, and put pressure on the land. With the town's merchants already bidding for new workers and negotiating with local residents and officials for land, Gunzert and his deputies were forced mediate an increasing number of disputes, and therefore had to formulate some local compromise on alienation.

4.2 Labor

In the early years of this century, Mwanza town's workforce was organized by several concurrent labor regimes: tributary or forced labor for either the indigenous or

25 "Memoirs," TNR, p.173

German authorities, household labor in and around merchant compounds, and wage, contract, or commission work for commercial enterprises or the Boma. The local administration's building program, as well as the very rapid expansion of the commercial establishment, however, quickly stressed tributary, corvée or household means for mobilizing labor. Thus, after 1906, mercantile and official employers were increasingly forced to promote and expand wage labor in town.

By 1907, commercial firms directly employed more than 300 African and Asian workers in town, either for wages or on commission.²⁶ The administration also contracted for construction craftsmen from the coast, and recruited laborers from throughout the region. For example, in 1908, the Mwanza administration signed six Asian and eleven African carpenters from Dar es Salaam to one year contracts. They received free roundtrip passage for themselves and their wives, and were paid either 110Rp. or 30 to 40Rp. per month. At the completion of three months work they had the option to buy out their contract and hire out privately in Mwanza.²⁷

²⁶ refer section 3.4

²⁷ "Vertrag," 21.6.08. TNA G7/182:245-6

Other station workers received considerably less, the cost of their services not having been bid up nearly as high by local business. Transport riders subsisted on a mere 8Rp. per month. Even literate tax recorders earned only 9Rp.²⁸ Laborers were signed to shorter, lesser paying contracts by the administration as well. In 1907. C. Hermann signed 42 workers to a three month contract, paying 5 to 8Rp. per month plus posho, or food allowance. Approximately 18 came from Mwanza district, though only two came from the Mwanza sultanate itself. Twenty-four came from outside the district, the largest contingent, seven, being from Ujiji.²⁹

Periods of work on contract were intensive. The carpenter's contract called for nine hour days, and no pay was given for days missed.³⁰ A schedule of days worked, from December 1907 through April 1908, for 13 laborers revealed that they put in between 89.5 and 47.5 days during that period, ten on the job more than 70 days, and six more than 80 days. Most worked 15 to 19 days per month, while some logged in as many as 27.5 days. Short months were fairly uniform indicating heavy rains.³¹

28 Gunzert to DSM, 3.6.07. TNA G4/119:2-4

29 Contract by Hermann, 11.12.07. TNA G45/1:no page

30 op cit.

31 List of Work Days, 8.5.08. TNA G45/1: no page

The cost of living was never an easy matter for wage or salaried workers in Mwanza. Many short term workers received posho, and might also have found temporary shelter near the caravanserai. For those who came for the longer term, especially with families, however, making ends meet was more difficult. Housing was in short supply and therefore rents were high. Many government employees slept in the lines, and commercial employees on shopfloors or storage areas. Several Asian clerks in the administration complained that their housing allowance was only 13.5 Rp. per month, while rent for an "Indian" house was 30 Rp.³²

4.3 Space

The physical expansion of the commercial establishment and administration also required increasing quantities of land. The arrival of the steamers transformed Mwanza spatially from a settlement of scattered compounds to a concentration of offices, shops, and warehouses around the pier, focusing land demands on specific areas, leaving little leeway for compromise with local residents. And, whereas in early occupation agreements or alienations the ntemi had been in a more decisive position, after the turn of the century, property relations in and around town were increasing regulated by colonial policy and law.

³² Damian Machado to DSM, 11.02.07 TNA G7/184:144; and Desai to DSM, 13.2.07. TNA G7/184:145

Early coastal immigrants had made their own arrangements with the ntemi of Mwanza for access to land. Over time, as German authority increased, however, they gradually came to rely on the colonial administration for legal sanction for their occupation.³³ Early alienations by German settlers and firms were also often local transactions, but the station did sometimes intervene on their behalf. For example, in 1895 a commercial clerk turned settler, Julius Wiegand, decided on a garden plot at Kirumba. While he paid compensation in cloth to the occupants, the station dictated the transfer to the ntemi Makongolo. A mwanangwa present at the baraza later recalled:

I was present at the Baraza of Chief Makongoro at Mwanza when information came from German Government to the effect that one Mr. Wiegand wanted and was being permitted to acquire a plantation at Mwanza.³⁴

Such alienations were not in keeping with official policy in Dar es Salaam, however. Authors of German colonial law viewed African land as either directly occupied, i.e. cultivated, or unoccupied and therefore "herenloss," ownerless.³⁵ After 1895 all land considered

³³ Refer to section 2.5

³⁴ Affidavit of Sarara bin Musabira, Matwali of Mahonze, 31.5.34. TNA Acc.215/435/I:190C

³⁵ John Iliffe, Tanganyika under German Rule, p.127

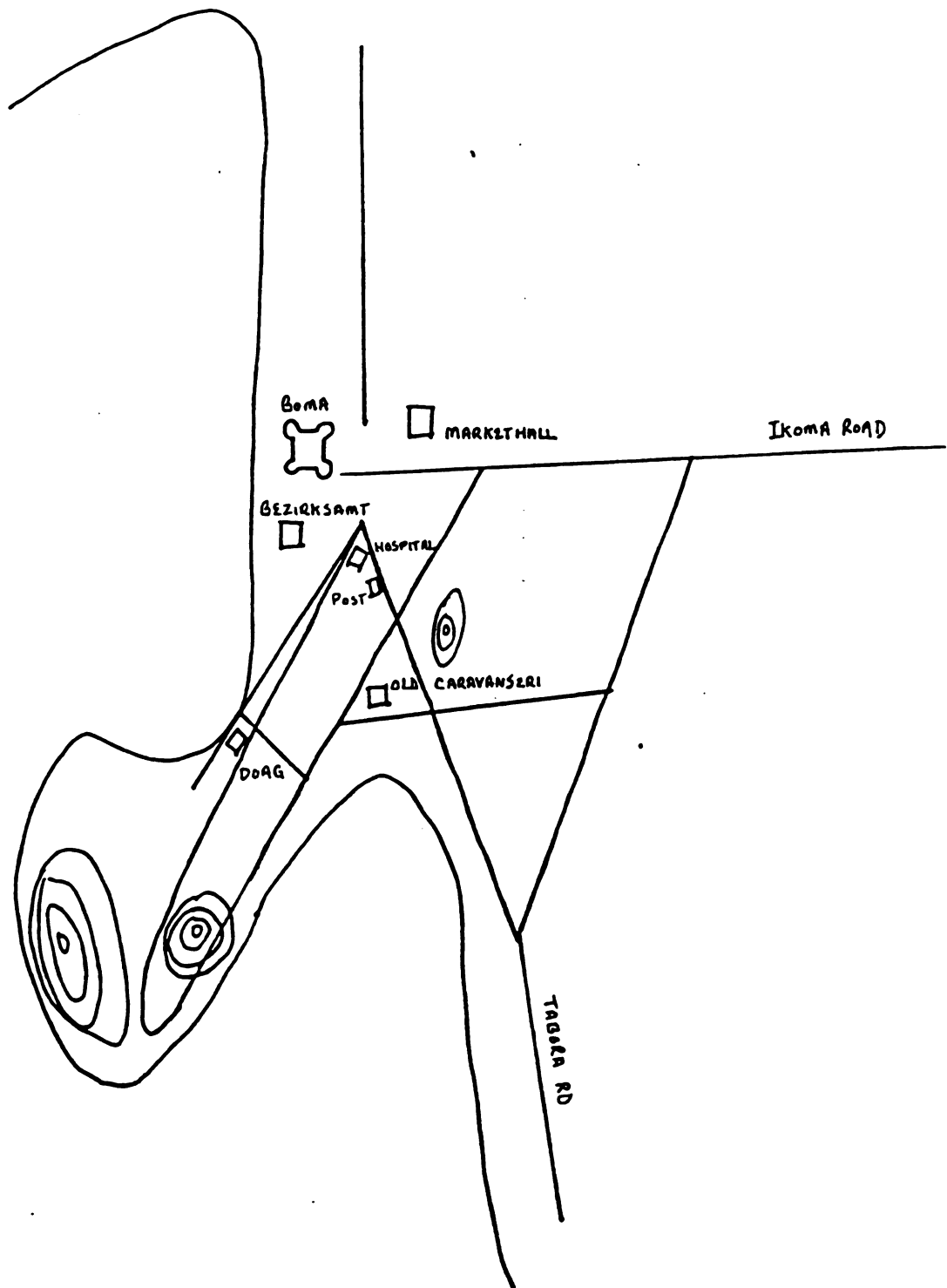
unoccupied could be declared crownland, and placed under the control of the DOA Landesfiskus.³⁶ Officially, alienation of African occupied land was always discouraged from the top, while titles and 25-year leases were granted through the governor on supposedly unoccupied plots.³⁷ Obviously in Mwanza, commercial pressure made this directive impractical to officials on the spot since prime sites were often cultivated, and thus some local compromise was necessary.

The rapid expansion of the commercial establishment after the arrival of the KUR steamers dramatically altered the layout of the town. Merchants now preferred their shops and warehouses to be concentrated near the pier. Thus, between 1904 and 1912 the streets radiating out from the Boma, Market Street and Tabora Road, became lined with brick and stone buildings. In the short term, much of the land for this expansion was held under kiwanja tenure. Essentially an invention of German administrators, kiwanja was a titleless urban tenure with tax provisions, intended for original or migrant African residents.³⁸ When enacted in 1905, it was also locally manipulated as a de facto tax category for merchants who rented land or structures from Africans.

36 ibid

37 ibid

38 Gov. Cameron to Amery, CO, 24.4.26. CO691/84:29-31



Land Commission
Sketch Map. c.1907

source: TNA G45/16:no page

Property documentation under the military authorities, and even under the Gunzert regime for that matter, was quite poor. Gunzert admitted that prior to 1906, no written records had been kept.³⁹ Moreover, the former Resident Magistrate Paulssen later recounted:

In Mwanza we had no grundbuch or register as it was not declared a township.

The agreements between natives regarding change of properties needed only a written statement signed by the Bezirksamtmann or his representative who also collected a small tax and registered the Deed.⁴⁰

While initially this lack of official paperwork was of less concern to merchants than capturing rural markets, over the next several decades it became a major point of contention in town politics.

Merchants from larger firms, especially those with connections to Uganda or Mombasa, soon pressured Gunzert's administration for titles and more secure tenure. Many had acquired their property from earlier coastal merchants, and wished their purchases notarized. In fact, most of the cases heard by Gunzert concerned transactions within commercial circles, rather than new or direct alienations. Many of these better connected men hoped to use titles for collateral in credit transactions. Large firms on the coast

39 Gunzert, "memoirs," p.172

40 Paulssen Affidavit, 30.5.33. TNA Acc.215/435/I:72

often viewed upcountry shops or warehouses as negotiable assets. In fact, as early as 1905, in the hide trade, a firm from Mombasa attempted to seize a Mwanza plot from a local branch which had failed to deliver consignments, but was for some time frustrated by bureaucratic inaction.⁴¹

Gunzert and his administration responded to commercial lobbying for land, if rather slowly, with a twofold policy: opening up access near the Boma through broad declarations of crownland, and limiting African grievances by entertaining claims only in or near town. Mwanza, however, was never formally declared a township. Thus, local policy was constructed around a clause in an official 1905 house tax declaration, whereby Gunzert empowered himself, through the agency of a local land commission, to declare crownland. Hence, merchants were appeased, and settlers doomed. African garden plots and homes in Mwanza were to be protected, though transfers still were possible.

The land commission was an ad hoc institution, generally convened by the request of an European or Asian resident to alienate land or establish title.⁴² It was chaired by the Assessor, and its members included the ntemi or his representative, the liwali, and one or two European

41 McNeely & Co., Aden to DSM, 11.3.09. TNA G45/8:4

42 John Iliffe, Tanganyika under German Rule, p.127

or Asian merchants. Meetings were open to all "tax paying" town residents, though no record exists of the degree of popular attendance or participation at these proceedings.⁴³ Most decisions were simply recognitions of transfers; however, in alienation cases the commission assessed compensation to the indigenous occupants and gained the nominal consent of the ntemi.

In 1910 Gunzert redirected the land commission to hold a series of hearings on the town, with the aim of declaring much of it crownland. To this end, a Mr. Frost, an official surveyor from Dar es Salaam, was employed to measure plots, delineate property boundaries, and create a layout map. Between 1910 and 1913 then, he and the land commission recorded approximately 55 existing plots.⁴⁴ Crownland was then auctioned by Gunzert's administration, both to alleviate merchant pressure for plots and to raise revenue through land sales.

4.4 Segregation

Struggles over space, during the German administration, were mitigated by the slow and often haphazard implementation of policy and land law. Local residents

⁴³ An extensive list of decisions and property sketches by the land commissions exists in files TNA G45/54.

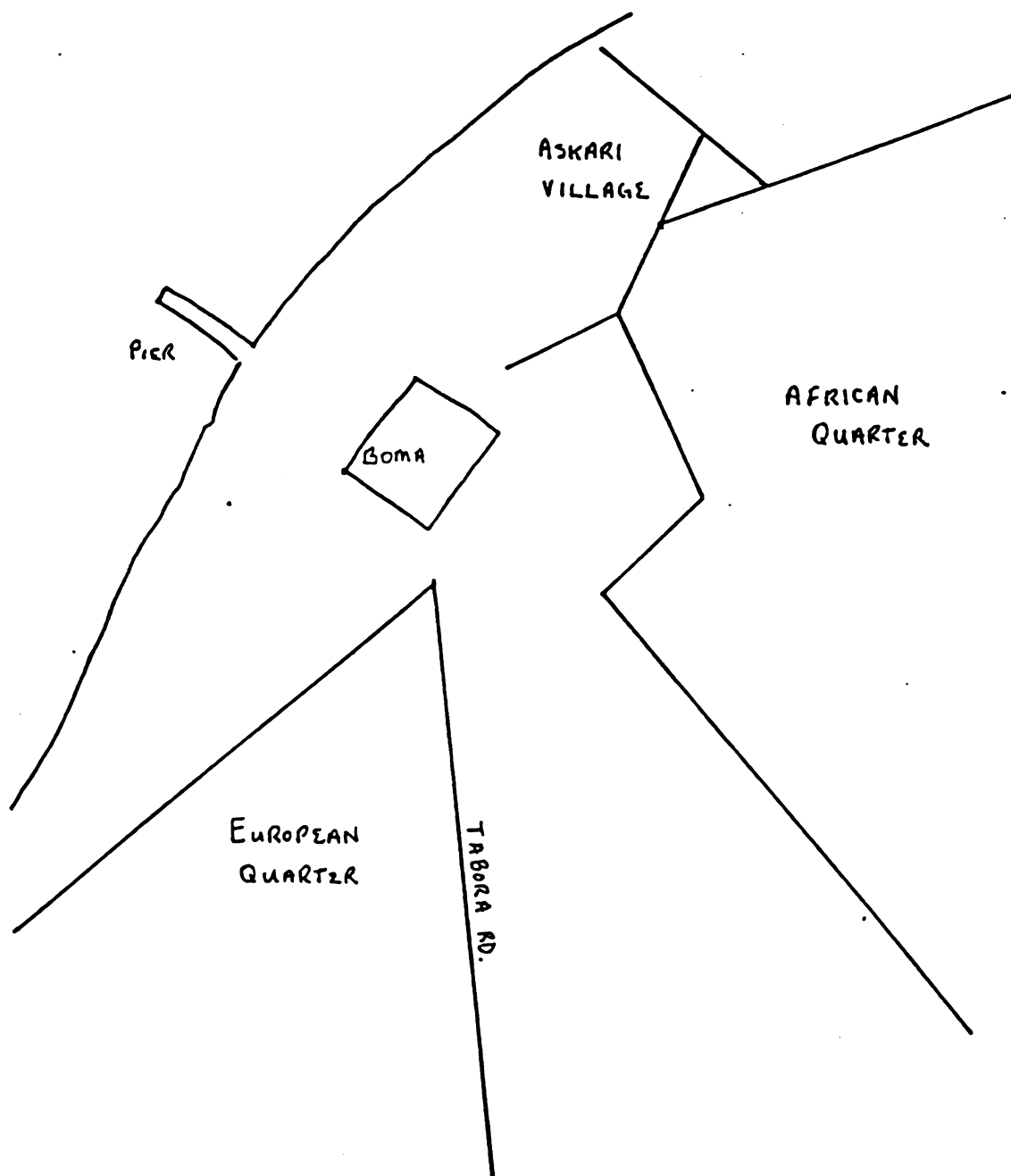
⁴⁴ "Stadtvermessung Muansa Vermessungsgeleühren," 18.9.12. TNA G45/41:no page; and 1928 Valuation List. TNA 10158:111-5

certainly were displaced, and with the acquiescence of the ntemi and his men. This was done gradually, though, and often incompletely, as original occupants retained scattered agricultural plots throughout the town. Thus, while Europeans attempted to lay claim to the lakeshore, and Asian immigrants congregated around the bazaar and along Tabora Road, no neighborhood was yet exclusive.

German officials did in fact envision a segregated town, frequently discussing Mwanza in terms of European, Indian and African "quarters," but took few steps to accomplish this. There were no building codes, and expensive commercial buildings stood side by side with mud and thatch structures. The kommunalverband did entertain questions of "hygiene," particularly over African neighborhoods in low lying areas where the drainage was poor, such as the old Askari village, the area surrounding the caravanserai or the outer limits of the Tabora Road.⁴⁵ For government accommodations, the council responded with new construction. In other cases, it lacked funds either for improvements or partition. In 1906 there was a suggestion of a cut rate cordon sanitaire, a series of stone walls to keep these areas out of sight; but no construction took place.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ 1909 Mwanza-Shirati Yearbook. TNA G1/5:no page; and Gunzert to DSM, 16.10.06. TNA G4/118:2

⁴⁶ *ibid*



Handsketch by
Maj. von Schleintz,
c.1906

source: TNA G7/182:114

The only overt segregation struggle, however, did not concern the living, but rather the dead. In 1908, an Indian merchant from Bagamoyo, communicated to the administration in Mwanza through a letter from Lt. Hermann, that he was concerned over the circumstances surrounding the burial of his son in Mwanza the year before. Apparently, he had been buried in the "colored" cemetery, and his father wished to acquire a separate plot, open to all Indians.⁴⁷

Shortly thereafter, the Land Commission was petitioned by the liwali and many prominent Asian and Arab merchants.⁴⁸ The subsequent negotiations with the administration were somewhat irregular in legal procedure in that they were entirely between merchant representatives of ethnic and religious organizations. Dar es Salaam had to be consulted as to the terms and cost of the cemetery plot sale.⁴⁹ Eventually, in 1909 an agreement was reached, between the Land Commission and representatives of the Arab, Swahili, Sudanese and Indian Muslim communities as well as with Hindu

⁴⁷ Hermann, Bagamoyo to Mwanza Station, 4.5.08. TNA G45/26: no page

⁴⁸ Cemetery Petitions, 26.10.08 and 31.10.08. TNA G45/26: no page

⁴⁹ Office of the Governor to Mwanza Station, 30.11.08. TNA G45.26: no page

merchants, to set aside segregated, walled blocks within the cemetery.⁵⁰

4.5 Conclusion

The Mwanza civil administration was organized and often acted in an unorthodox manner. In part, this reflected the eccentricity of certain personnel; but more importantly it was the result of local compromises between merchant capitalists, African residents and officials. Underlying change during this period was the commercial boom in the wider region, which in Mwanza spurred an emerging wage labor regime, and brought demands for capitalist property relations. Thus, in constructing the town, both physically and legally, this local compromise was essential in organizing and directing labor, and obtaining and legitimating land. The administration moved slowly, even carelessly, but it did act when pressured by merchants or driven by its own imperatives for revenue.

⁵⁰ Cemetery title agreement, 20.2.09. TNA G45.26: no page

Part II: Town and Hinterland

5 The Development of Commodity Buying, 1893-1916

Mwanza town's growth was fueled by a rapidly expanding, rural cash crop economy. During the nineteenth century, export commodity production was essentially extractive, and collection decentralized. The increasing dominance of the German station, and more importantly the development of the KUR steamer port at Mwanza, expanded the region's export capacity and concentrated the collection of commodities on the town. Subsequently, Mwanza merchants capitalized on administration cash crop promotion drives and new transport infrastructure by building credit-based networks of shops and buying stations in the hinterland.

By the close of the German period, Mwanza was the hub of an extensive trade network comprising Uzinza, northern Usukuma, Ukerewe, and up the coast to Majita and northern Mara. Production - cash crop agriculture - within this regional economy was rural, Mwanza's links to the hinterland were in the sphere of exchange, the circulation of capital through trade goods and commodities. Urban employment revolved around the movement of trade goods and commodities in and out of town; rural commercial employment involved

commercial employment involved purchasing produce and portering it to town.

5.1 The succession of commodities

Commodity production and trade developed within successive, expanding zones, radiating out to the south and east of Mwanza town. First came the extractive commodities: ivory, gum arabic and hides. To obtain these, Mwanza traders expanded the scale and scope of precolonial trade networks. Within a few years, however, urban buyers sought large quantities of agricultural produce, such as rice or groundnuts, to ship to distant markets. This demand drove rural cultivators to shift production from other food to cash crops, along the coast to rice, and in the hinterland to groundnuts. Finally, after 1907, the colonial administration pressured peasants to plant cotton, extending its production to scattered plots across the district.

Until the turn of the century ivory was the principal export. It was virtually the only commodity with a sufficiently attractive value per weight to warrant carrying it all the way down to the coast. As local ivory became exhausted, coastal traders used regional ports like the Mwanza area, Kagei, Magu or Massanza to transship ivory arriving from the eastern lake or Buganda. Charles Stokes, an ivory trader and caravan agent, used Mwanza as a base for ivory hunting expeditions to the western side of the lake,

and even as far as the Semliki valley, the outer limit of the East African ivory frontier. Before his execution for gun-running on the Congo boundry by Belgian authorities in 1895, he had organized a 3,000 porter ivory caravan to the coast in 1893.¹

When steamer and rail transport were available, the ivory trade was nearly at an end. Hunting organizations and their merchant patrons, however, were able to reorganize around lesser value, bulkier, but more plentiful hides and skins. Hence, lower transport costs triggered massive game slaughters across the Mwanza region between 1903 and the early 1920's. While the Mwanza region was rather densely populated, professional hunters focused on the woodland or brush regions lying between settled areas. Later, they hunted in the expanding sleeping sickness fly belts. In 1930 a Shinyanga ADO reported:

...when clearing brush about twenty miles west of Shinyanga, in 1929 or 1930,....he came upon a game fence twenty miles long. Following this up, he destroyed 148 traps and pits during the first day and came upon a camp of hunters, together with four tons of meat and 110 freshly skinned hides, including giraffe, eland, wildebeest and zebra. At the camp he arrested thirty-two Wasukuma who were running a regular business exchanging meat for cash, grain, groundnuts and other marketable commodities.²

1 "Einem Berichte des Kompagnie Führers Hermann über die Lage der Stationen Bukoba und Muansa vom 1. Mai d. Js.," DKB, 17(1.9.93):419

2 "Wholesale Destruction of Game by Natives for Resale and Barter," East Arica, 16.10.30, p.140

The great bulk of hides and skins in trade, however, came from either cattle or goats and sheep. With the region's cattle herds numbering more than one million head, and goats and sheep likewise, this vast hide and leather producing capacity attracted industrial buyers all the way from Europe and the United States. Cotton and calico cloth had quickly displaced leather for use in local clothing or shelter, allowing excess hides and skins to be traded to roving buyers. Essentially an extractive enterprise, this trade enabled herdsman to convert old or diseased cattle and slaughtered carcasses into cash or cloth.

Traders became further involved in local and regional food markets. Coastal immigrants introduced and later marketed a range of fruits and vegetables, as well as sugar and new varieties of rice.³ Initially this was done to meet immediate, local needs; however, Mwanza's increasing use as a caravan terminus created a market for food. Cattle trading was extensive in the region, and many former soldiers or caravan workers from town with a patron or some savings turned to it.

With the arrival of the steamers Mwanza became a food supplier to railway workers in Kenya. The KUR Marine

3 refer to section 2.5

service also enabled Arab and African traders from Mwanza to ship live cattle, goats, sheep and dried fish to markets in Kampala and Bukoba. By 1909 there were at least 46 registered cattle buyers, most focused on the lake trade.⁴ Dried fish were bought at roving fishing camps around Mwanza, or from fishing villages up the coast toward Majita.⁵ Mwanza wholesalers also became involved, supplying hooks, metal for sinkers, and thread for nets to roving peddlers or directly to fishermen.⁶

Most importantly, after 1904, lower food production costs and rail transport combined to spur a more extensive cash crop revolution. In particular, rice and groundnuts were in demand on the coast both for food and oil. Aware of these more outside markets, merchants from Mwanza negotiated with African leaders to promote more extensive cultivation the desired crops, in return for cash or trade goods. Later, roving buyers and rural shopkeepers induced cultivators to plant more groundnuts and rice, bringing production levels far above regional needs.

4 1909 Mwanza-Shirati Yearbook. TNA G1/5:no page

5 O. Guise-Williams, DO to PC, Mwanza, 21.7.27. TNA Acc.215/992/II:5

6 Hatchell, DO to PC, Mwanza, 16.11.28. TNA Acc.215/992/II:30

Cotton was the final cash crop to be adopted in the Mwanza region, but it expanded in a much different pattern. Earlier crops like groundnuts or rice were for the most part indigenous and food crops. Thus, cultivators were familiar with them, and trade-offs with other food crops were less difficult since the cash crop could be retained and eaten in a bad year. Furthermore, growing them was a matter of expanding existing production. Cotton, however, was alien and inedible. Moreover, it had to be grown in competition with food crops. Consequently, it was first adopted in areas where settlers, African authorities or the administration forced it. Later, high prices induced voluntary production, expanding the zone of cotton production to include scattered patches across much of the savannah.

5.2 The Duka Network

Mwanza town was linked to the cash crop revolution in its hinterland through a "duka network."⁷ Initially, urban

⁷ In her dissertation, Martha Honey used the term "duka network" to describe the commercial and cultural links between the Asian commercial and petty bourgeoisie. She contended that on the one hand, shopkeepers and petty traders were tied to wholesalers and shipping agents through credit: advances of goods and cash. On the other, she argued they were bound together by religious institutions, cultural organizations and commercial associations. Honey outlined the "duka network," with its commercial and cultural dependency, as an explanation for the later inability of the Asian petty bourgeoisie to organize politically, independent of the leadership of the urban, commercial bourgeoisie. See: Martha Spencer Honey, "A History of Indian Merchant Capital and Class Formation in

merchants dispatched employees to the countryside to peddle trade goods or buy produce. Soon, however, exchange became more hierarchical, with town based wholesalers and shippers advancing trade goods and cash to fledgling rural shopkeepers, who in turn engaged peddlers to arrange produce purchases. Eventually, these practices came to comprise a trade network, bound up in relations of supply, credit and transport. Mwanza was at the center of the regional duka network, with a number of dependent trade settlements radiating out along the lakeshore and inland roads.

Local African buying agents and peddlers were the first and most crucial element in establishing these new, colonial trading networks. Their local knowledge, not to mention language, negotiating and marketing skills were vital to their immigrant Asian, Swahili and European employers or wholesale suppliers. Moreover, many attained important positions within Mwanza or countryside firms, directing buying, handling accounts, arranging transport, or operating a trading post on their patron's license.

Some Mwanza based firms employed direct, local produce buyers. For example, Deutsche Nyanza-Schiffahrts Gesellschaft (DNSG), a local rice milling outfit run by a German settler, Carl Jungblutt, operated a series of at

Tanganyika c.1840-1940," University of Dar es Salaam, 1982. Pp.417-20.

least twelve rice buying posts along the lakeshore between Mwanza and Majita, and on Ukerewe Island.⁸ Jungblutt's African buyers, or karanis as he called them, manned buying posts during the harvest season and travelled during planting seasons, discussing prices with growers and local leaders.⁹ They handled company cash, kept accounts, hired temporary laborers to bag and carry rice, and collected and stored it at landings on the shore.

Most early Mwanza firms, however, supplied rural peddlers who passed in and out of town. A German official at Mwanza noted in 1909 that nearly every Indian and Arab merchant had at least ten buyers under him; and by 1908/9 there were between 460 and 800 peddlers licensed in the district.¹⁰ Martha Honey, in her thesis, also provided a general description of such rural operations. She maintained the typical Indian merchant in East Africa had as many as 50 African peddlers in his employ. He would advance them goods which they bartered for produce, or cash which they would loan to cultivators against their future harvests. In turn, these men would take their pay or commission in trade goods:

⁸ Carl Jungblutt to Bezirksamt, Muansa, 24.4.10. TNA G45/35: no page; and travel reports for 21.6.10 and 31.7.10. TNA G45/35: no pages

⁹ Karani is the Kiswahili term for clerk.

¹⁰ 1909 Mwanza-Shirati Yearbook. TNA G1/5: no page

kerosine, umbrellas, matches or cloth, which they would in turn trade on their own.

Both these buying systems were eclipsed, however, as more and more shopkeepers moved inland. Large Mwanza wholesalers advanced them stocks of trade goods, or lent cash during harvest season. Shopkeepers sold or bartered the goods for produce: groundnuts, cotton, hides, whatever customers brought in. These commodities were then resold to their urban creditors, who might also arrange dhow, porter or ox-cart transport to and from the port.

This wholesaler-shopkeeper-peddler, duka network succeeded for several reasons. First, rural shopkeepers were able to maintain themselves year round by retailing trade goods, buying a wide variety of produce, and giving credit in lieu of the harvest to customers. They met their obligations with credit, barter or commodities, less often with cash. Second, fixed costs in buying were borne by rural shopkeepers. Mwanza wholesalers thus had low overhead costs, and leverage over debtor clients. Finally, this system allowed the greatest mobility for merchant capital.

Even shopkeepers could circulate funds through trade goods and produce; adjusting the retail items which sold, and pursuing the agricultural commodities commanding the best prices in Mwanza. Wholesalers had both horizontal and

vertical mobility for their capital. They too purchased a range of commodities, but could focus on those in greatest demand in outside markets. They also could circulate capital through rural credit, rural-urban transport, trade good import, and commodity export, either to diversify or seek the highest return.

5.3 Penetration of the Coast

Mwanza merchants first focused their attention on the islands and coast east of Speke Gulf. Using dhow transport, Mwanza traders were able to collect bulky produce, in particular firewood, groundnuts and rice, and after the arrival of the steamship line they could export them to the coast. This early traffic created prosperity for Mwanza residents and growth for the town. However, sharp competition over lakeshore markets spilled over into disputes and rivalries between European and Asian merchants in the countryside and in town.

Lakeshore trade revolved around transport. The ivory and slave trades had primarily relied on large, 60 man canoes to reduced transport distances and costs. By the 1870's coastal merchants were having even larger sailing dhows constructed. When the KUR line reached Kisumu in 1901, these dhows were directed there, delivering ivory, beeswax and food, and returning with trade goods. When the steamer service began several years later, the dhows were

employed by their merchant owners as feeders, ferrying trade goods to lakeshore and island shops, and returning with bulky, agriculture produce. Within a decade there were between 15 and 20 dhows operating regularly out of Mwanza, eight of which belonged to the local branch of Alidina Visram & Co. and four to the liwali, Abdulla bin Ali.¹¹

The principal lakeshore crop of interest to Mwanza traders was rice. According to German officials, production costs were far lower in Usukuma and Ukerewe than on the coast, or more accurately, lakeshore growers were offered lower prices or bartered for trade goods.¹² There were several indigenous strains of rice, but local merchants introduced others more familiar to coastal consumers.¹³ The administration further restricted the planting and sale of indigenous rice, while the DNSG introduced new strains and distributed free seed.¹⁴

11 "Die Entwicklung der Handels- und Wirtschaftsverhältnisse am Viktoria Nyansa," DKB, 8(15.4.05):236-8; and Affidavit of Eugen Lowy, trustee of 1913 Liwali Abdalla bin Ali estate, c.1928. TNA 10158:86-7

12 *ibid*

13 There was some contention as to who actually introduced many export varieties of rice. Arab traders and Indian merchants have been suggested, though the DNSG head, Carl Jungblutt, later claimed to British authorities to have introduced them all. See: A. S. Richardson, Senior Ag. Officer, Northwest Circle to PC, Mwanza, 23.12.29. TNA 10071/II/sub-file 41:4

14 Jungblutt, Carl, Vierzig Jahre in Afrika 1900-1940 (Berlin: Verlag Paul Lipa, 1941), 57

Most of the early rural rice buyers were connected to Asian firms in Mwanza. The primary shippers of rice to the coast were Alidina Visram & Co. and in particular Nasser Virji & Co., both with their headquarters in Mombasa. They repurchased raw rice from rural middlemen, Indian, Arab and African, who travelled the lakeshore. Over the next decade, many of these itinerant buyers abandoned seasonal routes or posts in favor establishing shops in growing trade centers, but still looked to Mwanza wholesalers for wares, credit and an outlet for purchased rice paddy.

In 1907, a German firm, Deutsche Nyanza-Schiffahrt Gesellschaft (DNSG), also began rice buying operations in the region. Its local manager, Carl Jungblutt, employed a number of rural buying agents who made only cash purchases.¹⁵ Jungblutt also maintained a rice "plantation" in the Majita area, largely as a seed farm, for distribution schemes. The DNSG secured five small steam vessels to haul rice and supplies along the lakeshore, to and from Mwanza. Finally, in 1909 Jungblutt built a large rice mill in Mwanza to process rice locally before shipment, and later established another at Multanga on Ukerewe Island.

¹⁵ Refer to section 5.2

The intrusion of the DNSG sparked sharp competition in the rice trade, driving up prices for rural producers, but causing commercial and ethnic tension in Mwanza town. The DNSG had difficulty matching the prices offered by Asian buyers in rural markets where Jungblutt's buyers had to compete with cloth barter transactions, and in town where Alidina Visram & Co. offered higher repurchase prices to its rural clients than the DNSG.¹⁶ Essentially, the DNSG's karani buying network was less efficient than the emerging duka network. The DNSG made less favorable exchanges, that is, good barter trade was far more profitable than the DNSG's cash only policy. Further, Jungblutt's methods incurred more fixed costs at the center and in the field: maintaining the mills, steamers, and buying posts, as well as paying commissions to employees. Asian shippers, however, only repurchased rice, or received it in lieu of cash or trade good advances. Operating costs were borne by rural shopkeepers and buyers.

To gain advantage, both Jungblutt and competing Asian buyers bid for assistance from local sultans and headmen. For example, in Kayenze Jungblutt had an agreement with ntemi Magege to "support the karanis in purchasing paddy."¹⁷

¹⁶ Jungblutt Travel Report, Rugesi, 16.8.10. TNA G45/34:no page

¹⁷ Travel report by C. Jungblutt, 21.6.10. TNA G45/34:no page

Magege also assisted in supplying labor, and for a fee, had storage facilities constructed.¹⁸ Elsewhere, Jungblutt's karanis arranged with the ntemi of Usmao to provide porters.¹⁹ Asian buyers also made local arrangements with batemi. In fact, at one point Jungblutt alleged that Asian buyers had cut a deal with Magege, claiming that the liwali had ordered Magege to trade exclusively with his Indian clients.²⁰

Jungblutt also curried favor with the administration by maligning his competitors' business practices in travel reports to Commissioner Gunzert. In several letters he argued that the DNSG's cash payments were more beneficial to cultivators than barter arrangements, and also asserted that such cash buying facilitated government tax collection. Jungblutt also frequently complained that Asian buyers mishandled or adulterated unmilled rice, reselling an unclean or moldy product.²¹ When Alidina Visram & Co. made an unsuccessful attempt to set up a rice mill on Ukerewe to break the DNSG's local monopoly on processing, Jungblutt's letters reached new heights of paranoia. In his later

18 *ibid*

19 Jungblutt to Berzirksamt, Muansa, 6.9.10. TNA G45/34:no page

21 Jungblutt to Assessor Kausch, Mwanza 27.6.10. TNA G45/34:no page

21 Travel Report, Cajense, 29.7.10. TNA G45/34:no page; and Rugesi, 16.8.10. TNA G45/34:no page

travel reports he alleged that Asian buyers on Ukerewe and in Mwanza had "pooled resources" to undercut him.²² Included in this conspiracy were Alidina Visram and the liwali.

Not surprisingly, the DNSG sought further, direct support from the administration in Mwanza, and Jungblutt made frequent references to his efforts to develop the rice industry. He repeatedly appealed to the Boma and Kommunalverband for small steamer piers and storage space at lakeshore buying posts, which he received. Later, he proposed schemes to collect lakeshore taxes in rice, which he would buy from the administration and mill.²³

Gunzert did eventually respond to discord in lakeshore markets, but not necessarily in the manner Jungblutt proposed. German officials certainly shared many European merchants' dislike of rural Indian and Arab traders. Gunzert wrote in his memoirs:

These people [Asian and Arab traders] had previously settled, most singly, in native villages, where, free from competition and control - they had exploited the natives to their heart's desire.²⁴

22 Jungblutt to Assessor Kausch, Muansa, 27.6.10. TNA G45/34:no page

23 Jungblutt to Bezirksamt, Muansa, 11.11.09. TNA G45/34:no page

24 Gunzert, "Memoirs," p.177

His solution was to force rural traders and shopkeepers into appointed trade centers, where competition and "world prices" who govern their transactions. The administration also strengthened the hand of the batemi, urging them to monitor markets with police or "katikiros," and set standard weights, measures, and minimum prices.²⁵

Despite administration action, conflict within the rice trade remained unresolved as the war approached. Production peaked in 1914. The DNSG was confiscated in 1916, its mills later auctioned. Cut off from coastal markets, prices and production languished. Later, many rice fields on Ukerewe were replanted with cotton. Nevertheless, in Mwanza town there was lingering ethnic distrust and animosity over market shares, fueled by the declining fortunes of smaller European firms and their subsequent efforts to enlist government support.

5.4 Penetration of the Hinterland

Even while competition in the lakeshore rice trade was intensifying, most Mwanza merchants had already redirected their attention to the vast savanah hinterland. The people of the savanah ntemiships kept enormous herds of cattle, creating interest in the livestock and hide trades. While the principal food crops were sorghum and in particular

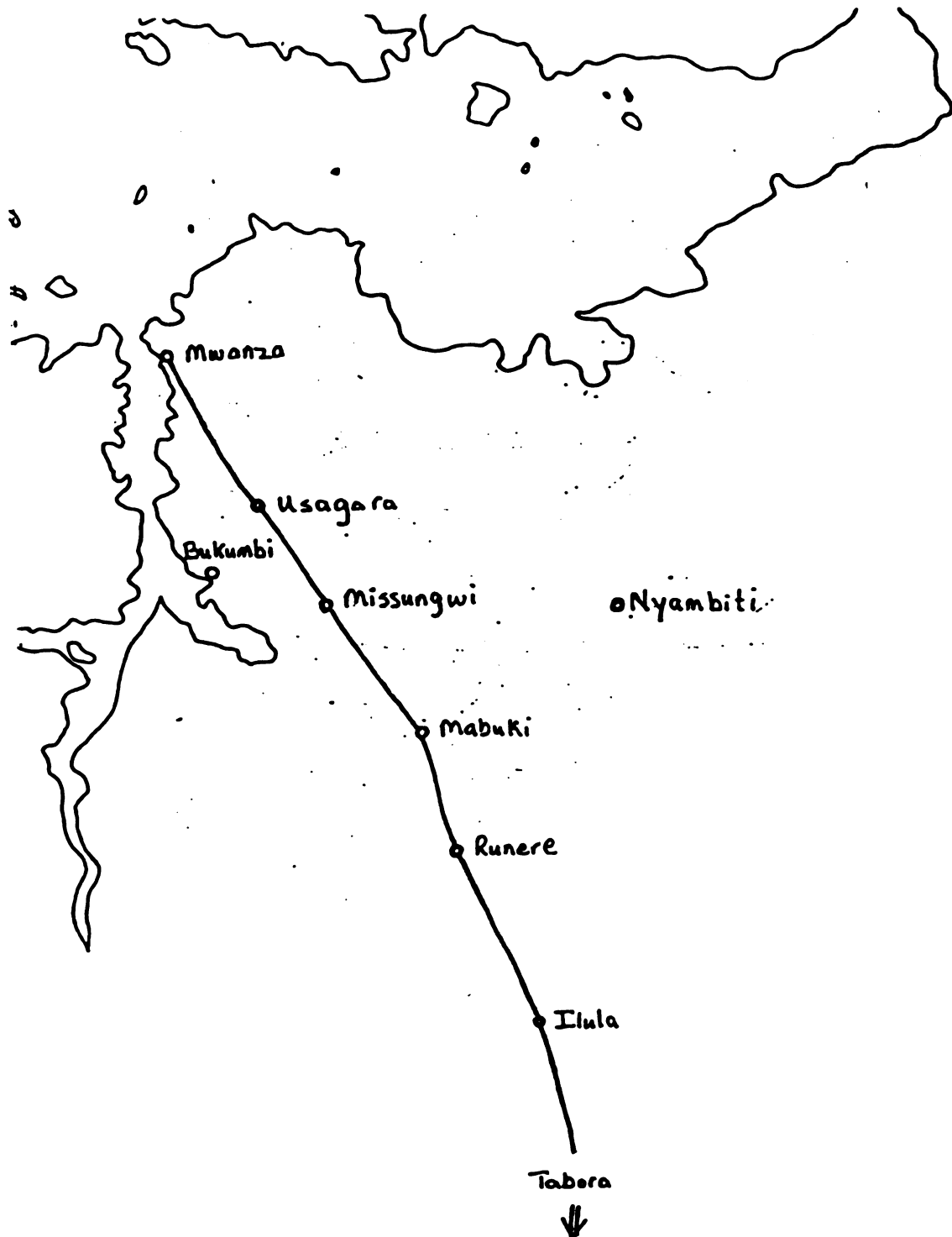
25 *ibid*

millet, market inducements and political compulsion soon drove cultivators to plant greater quantities of groundnuts and simsim for trade. Finally, after considerable pressure by the administration, compulsory cotton growing was dramatically expanded in the years just before the war.

As along the lakeshore, the penetration of the hinterland was dependent on transportation. Livestock had to be driven, and produce carried considerable distances. Hence, over time, hinterland networks developed around the road system and emerging trade settlements. The Mwanza-Tabora Road was initially envisioned as a military project to improve communication and facilitate troop movement to and from the south. Commercially, it was hoped the road would provide a link to the Central rail line planned to reach Tabora in 1912.

Instead, the Mwanza-Tabora Road became a main distribution artery for Mwanza town wholesalers, and later was also used to funnel rural commodities into town. Huge quantities of trade goods were carried southward to Tabora.²⁶ Porter traffic also covered shorter distances of the road, 50 to 100 miles out, bringing groundnuts, hides and cotton to town. In 1909 two British travellers on the Mwanza-Tabora Road claimed in ten days to have passed

26 Refer to section 3.4



Hinterland Trade Settlements, c.1906
source: compiled from trade centers listed in
C. F. Holmes, "A History of the Bakwimba," PhD
diss., Boston University, 1969, p.244

porters carrying some 5,000 loads.²⁷ In all, Mwanza officials reported 30,950 loads southward to Tabora in 1909, and 39,803 bound elsewhere.²⁸

The key to this transport system was labor - porters. Just as production in the regional economy was concentrated outside the town, so was most commercial labor, which took the form of portage. Most observers during the initial cash crop boom reported that the standard wage on the Mwanza-Tabora route was Rs. 5.50 for the 17 day trip.²⁹ Porters fell out for food along the way at roadside shops and trading stalls, and in fact portage must have significantly stimulated food production and commercial food imports along the main road.³⁰

For extremely heavy or bulky loads, cotton or groundnuts inbound, or building materials outbound, duka network organizers enlisted several Boer settlers to act as ox-cart transport riders. A Goanese cattle trader named T. S. Fortes operated out of Runere at roughly the same time.³¹ They were later joined by several larger, Asian

27 Frank Melland and Edward Chalmeley, Through the Heart of Africa (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1912), 66

28 1909 Mwanza-Shirati Yearbook. TNA G1/5:no page

29 op cit, p.61

30 ibid, p.71

31 Grieg, Land Office, DSM to C. Sec., DSM, 2.1.31. TNA 10071/II/sub-file 60:1

owned outfits; providing the district with a total of 38 ox-carts by 1913.³² Mechanized transport did not arrive until that same year, and then only in the form of three Mercedes Benz trucks the administration used for cotton promotion.³³

The earliest inland trade was in livestock, which obviously required no transport. Overland drives between Mara and the mines to south were common, as was long-standing traffic between the Mwanza savanah and Tabora, or westward to Bukoba. The steamers provided a lighter service by 1905, however, enabling traders to ship live cattle, goats and sheep quickly by lake to markets in Bukoba and Kampala. This concentrated much of the livestock trade on Mwanza, with many of the more successful African traders residing there.

Hides and skins were also a rapidly expanding inland market. Hunters were tied to either rural shopkeepers or urban merchants, both to dispose of their hides and obtain firearms and ammunition. To this end, Mwanza wholesalers stocked considerable quantities of hunting gear. For example, for nearly two years during the war, the Mwanza

32 Refer to section 6.4 for information on Asian transport riders.
Hall, R. de Z., ADO Mwanza District. "German Statistics (1914) of the Old Mwanza District," Mwanza Province District Book, Misc. Section, no page.

33 Gunzert, "Memoirs," p.177

shutztruppe and volunteers were largely outfitted with arms and camp gear from local merchant warehouses and shops. Later, in 1924, a merchant with shops in Mwanza and Bukoba was tried for employing a "gang" of rhino hunters in Karagwe, and for possessing 110 horns.³⁴

Unlike itinerant livestock buying, however, the hide trade was soon conducted from permanent buying posts and shops. For example, by the turn of the century, several Mwanza based Arab, Indian and African livestock buyers had established themselves as far away as Lalago, in the Mwagalla ntemiship, nearly 100 miles from Mwanza. At first they had planted gardens and fruit tree groves, and traded livestock. Later, they set up permanent shops to trade in hides.³⁵ Most traders though, opted for sites along the Mwaza-Tabora Road, in settlements like Usagara, Missungwi and Runere, providing easier porter or ox-cart transport to tanneries in town.

Once established many buyers and shopkeepers began to buy and sell a variety of commodities: hides, simsim, gum arabic, beeswax or groundnuts. Extractive commodities like

34 "Wholesale Destruction of Game by Natives for Resale and Barter, East Africa, 16.10.30, p.140.

35 Grieg, Land Office to C. Sec., DSM, 26.6.30. TNA 10158:119; O. Guise-Williams, DO Maswa to Land Office, DSM, 14.12.29. TNA 10158:121; and O. Guise-Williams to Land Office, DSM, 6.3.30. TNA 10158:124

hides soon reached their maximum output, and others like game skins actually declined. Moreover, agricultural produce had far greater potential output, and demand from coastal markets. Groundnuts were the early favorite, and consequently between 1904 and 1913 groundnut exports rose nearly 1400%.³⁶

Unfortunately, groundnut production was also highly susceptible to drought, as was the case in 1907, the first year of Gunzert's administration. In fact, repeated setbacks in the groundnut harvests led German authorities to press for additional cash crops.³⁷ In particular, Commissioner Gunzert promoted the introduction of cotton. Despite objections from Dar es Salaam, the Mwanza administration organized successive compulsory cotton planting campaigns, with the assistance of a handful of settlers and most of the batemi. Gunzert's men distributed seed, set up model plots, required each village to set aside land for cotton cultivation, and dispatched the police to inspect fields and dole out fines and corporal punishment in villages which did not comply.

³⁶ Comiled from export tables in Ralph Austen, Northwest Tanzania under German and British Rule, p.271.

³⁷ This point was agrued by Ralph Austen in Northwestern Tanzania under German and British Rule, pp.94-100.

While Mwanza's merchants and their rural clients were clearly the beneficiaries of such official production initiatives, they hesitated to buy cotton. Gunzert had hoped to circumvent the duka network altogether by negotiating an exclusive buying arrangement with a metropolitan association. This deal, however, fell through, and the local administration was forced to purchase an entire crop with misappropriated funds.³⁸ Later, in 1910, Hansing & Co. erected a ginnery just outside Mwanza town, and with a certain local purchaser, rural middlemen began to collect cotton.

5.5 Trade and the Bezirksamt

Before the Gunzert regime, military authorities in Mwanza took little interest in trade. Mwanza was a backwater, and commerce with the coast was limited to what could be taken by caravan. Moreover, Mwanza was essentially under the control of the schutztruppe until 1906, and the haphazard assortment of sergeants and lieutenants in command were more interested in military objectives: suppressing resistance, supporting indigenous allies, and establishing communication links with to the coast.

The only station official involved in trade matters was the customs master, and until 1903 he had very little to do.

38 *ibid*

The Liwali Abdulla bin Ali, however, was quite active in commerce. He himself was one of the largest merchants in the area, with a number of agricultural enterprises and four dhows in lakeshore trade. Thus, during the German administration the liwali would appear to have acted in his earlier Zanzibari role, mediating disputes between merchants, interpreting business law, and witnessing contracts and property transactions. Those British "travellers" on the Tabora-Mwanza Road in 1909 maintained the liwali was the "real power" in the region, asserting that he, the sultans and the police had more authority outside the town than the civil administration did.³⁹

The Gunzert administration took a much more activist approach to colonial economy, breaking with official policy by using the indirect rule framework, taxation and threats of force to compel rural communities to produce cash crops. Moreover, his officials appropriated funds for commercial infrastructure, and encouraged local and metropolitan entrepreneurs to establish processing mills.

Mwanza merchants and duka network traders' relationship with the administration was one of mutual advantage, not active co-operation. Merchants, rural shopkeepers and buyers were dependent on the administration and batemi to

³⁹ Melland and Chalmeley, Through the Heart of Africa, p.98

organize rural production, to provide order, and to enforce a legal framework for capitalist enterprise. In turn, Gunzert's administration needed merchants to purchase and export commodities, and thereby circulate cash in the hinterland. This was vital for tax collection, and ultimately the survival of the state. Nevertheless, there was great distrust between merchants and the administration. European merchants clearly enjoyed greater access to officials, and repeatedly used this advantage to attack more effective competitors. Moreover, Gunzert himself was rather hostile to non-European, rural traders, viewing them as essentially dishonest.⁴⁰ The administration increasingly viewed its role in rural trade to be an arbiter of prices and practices, forcing traders into specific settlements and regulating their activities with market police.

5.6 Conclusion

During the decade between 1903 and 1913 Mwanza town's merchants developed an extensive rural trade network encompassing much of the district. For their own part they did so by distributing trade goods, extending credit, organizing transport, and purchasing regional agricultural produce and livestock. They depended, however, on the political and economic power of the German administration and its indirect rule authorities, to organize rural production and provide transport infrastructure.

40 Gunzert, "Memoirs," p.177

Increasingly too, they came to view Commissioner Gunzert's regime as an inevitable, if sometimes unwelcome, arbiter of commercial disputes.

6 After the Great War: Mwanza Town and the Scramble for Mwanza Province, 1917-29

The southern lake basin was further drawn into the colonial economy during the first decade of British rule. By the 1910's cotton production was lagging in the northern lake region, causing corporate ginners, large buyers and shippers from Uganda and Kenya to search out new sources of raw material. Hence, after the war, new firms and buyers descended on the Mwanza region, bidding up the price of cotton, and lobbying the administration for improved transport and trading privileges; thereby inducing a cotton boom.

Mwanza merchants plunged into the cotton boom as well. Along with experienced buyers, shopkeepers, shoemakers, garage operators, and rice traders rushed into the rural Trade Centres, laying claim to plots and cotton stores. During the boom, competition was fierce: new traders flocked to the region to become cotton middlemen, and large firms lobbied for processing licenses and clashed over local cotton output. Prices rose and fell sharply, making fortunes, but also ruining many speculators. Credit from Mwanza shippers and metropolitan ginners was vital to rural

buying, and thus during the 1920's, the credit-oriented "duka network" expanded to its zenith.

This cotton boom reached its peak with construction of the Mwanza-Tabora Railway extension between 1926 and 1928. From a regional perspective, these infrastructural developments further heightened Mwanza town's position as a competitive point between the Mombasa and Dar es Salaam export/import spheres. In local terms, however, these improvements actually altered the pattern and flow of trade, destabilizing the duka network and damaging the position of many Mwanza merchants as wholesalers and transshippers.

6.1 After the War

Immediately after the war the Mwanza region was beset with severe problems. The cash crop economy was thoroughly disrupted by the fighting and subsequent trade restrictions. Moreover, wartime dislocation and labor extractions caused rural famine and epidemics in 1919.¹ Within Mwanza town living conditions were much better. However, the collapse of trade hit hard at the merchant community and their employees. Many of the successful prewar firms, in particular Alidina Visram and Nassar Virji & Co., dissolved under the pressure of trade restrictions and unpaid German debts. Of course, the principal German firms: William

1 Hollis to CO, 1.5.19. CO691/22:88

O'Swald & Co., Mwanza Agentur (DOAG and Hansing & Co.), and Deutsche Nyanza-Schiffahrtsgesellschaft all were seized by the British military, and their assets liquidated or leased in 1917/8. Thus, as the new administration began, the slate was wiped clean of large prewar firms, and no one had a solid foothold in southern lake region.

A horde of speculators, petty traders and non-German shippers rushed in to fill the void. All who could raise capital in non-German funds bid for commodities piled up in warehouses and on the Mwanza docks. For example, in 1917 it was estimated there were 3,000 tons of hides stored in Mwanza town, valued at £ 392,000.² And beyond quick profits, firms on the spot further pressured the new administration for access to former German commercial facilities.

Not surprisingly, surviving local concerns and larger shipping agencies or branches had the most to gain. The Alidina Visram properties quickly fell to local merchants. A branch of Max Klein, an American hide-buying firm, and the Società Colonia Italiana dominated the wartime hide auctions.³ Another Italian organization, Frigerio & Co.,

² War Office. "Export of GEA Produce for USA & UK," 1917. CO 691/10/75

³ *ibid*, p.75

was the first to gain control of the DNSG rice mill; and also sought to lease the Hansing & Co. cotton ginnery.

Many of the commercial arrangements both during and after the war, however, occurred completely outside the colonial legal framework. For example, local residents alleged that several Greek planters alienated a former German estate and local market gardens and coerced the tenants in cotton production between 1917 and 1919.⁴ In another case, an itinerant Greek trader was arrested in 1918, after having acquired more than 800 head of cattle without any permits.⁵ Moreover, many local petty traders, in particular transport riders, claimed to operate businesses or hold property without documentation, but with the verbal "permission" of the Mwanza Political Officer, Mr. Grant.⁶

The military and political authorities were disturbed by such unregulated trade, but were even more distressed that it was primarily Asians and Greeks, who were capitalizing on these opportunities. Thus, they attempted to impose a trading permit scheme, in effect from 1916-20,

4 Affidavit of Msaramda bin Mauzi, Mwanza, 13.12.35. TNA Acc.215/435/II:370

5 P. Grant, Political Officer, Mwanza to Sec. of Administration, DSM, 13.2.19. CO691/21:335-9

6 Runga Punjabi to DO, Mwanza, 26.3.28. TNA 10071/I:5

to limit access to the newly conquered territory. As headquarters in Dar es Salaam informed the War Office:

The chief reason for notice being issued was to prevent Greeks, Goanese and Indians already settled in territory under the Germans getting too firm a hold on trade of the country by admitting British firms of standing in British East Africa and other places.⁷

The policy was not successful. Trade permit records, while incomplete, indicate that only approximately 50 applications were filed for Mwanza, an extremely low number, given that many were new firms, and considering that there were at least 90 in the area in 1911.⁸

Most British colonial firms were not interested in capitalizing on trade permits or abandoned German enterprises. In Mwanza Province, their primary concern was reviving and expanding the fledgling pre-war cotton industry. As early as 1916 the British Cotton Growing Association (BCGA) had sent a representative to Mwanza to inquire about opportunities.⁹ By war's end he had been joined by agents and lobbyists for the Liverpool Uganda Co., Empire Cotton Growing Association (ECGA) and the British East African Corporation (BEAC).

⁷ Tele GOCE to DMI (War Office), 20.12.17. CO 691/11/447

⁸ Trade Permit Applications. CO691/4:171-2; 5:107-9, 472; 6:153, and 566; and Kolonial-Handels-Adressbuch, 1911 (Berlin: Kolonial-Wirtschaftlichen Komitee, 1911), 92-3

⁹ Hutton, BCGA to Butler, Colonial Office, 5.12.16. CO691/1:171 File 55512

6.2 Cotton

While hides, rice and ex-enemy assets drew the initial attention of speculators, by the war's end cotton dominated the economy. World demand for leather products had declined, groundnut production was still erratic, and the production capacity for rice was limited. World prices for cotton, however, were high. Therefore, just as in the German period, administrators and merchants alike considered it the best cash crop for Mwanza's vast savannah hinterland.

Without markets or government coercion, cotton production had dropped sharply during the war. As the figures below illustrate, cotton production and exports from did not recover to prewar levels until 1923/4.

1912	364 tons		
1913	675		
1917/8	157		
1918/9	87		
1919/20	54		
1921	115.5		
1922/3	357.2	1923/4	876.5 10

The 1920's, however, saw the expansion of cotton production in the Lake Victoria basin. After output fell in Buganda during the 1910's, cotton ginners and metropolitan associations sought new cultivation zones. The war delayed

10 These figures were compiled from: Rept. by Acting Ad. Hollins, Mwanza, Dec. 1920. CO 691/36:388-92; Tele Byatt to CO, 17.5.21. CO 691/44:451; and T.T. Annual Rept., 1924. CO 691/77:33.

this effort, but shortly afterward cotton production was introduced or expanded in northern Uganda, western Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi and northwest Tanganyika.

In Mwanza Province ginnery agents arrived shortly after the town fell into British hands in 1915 and began to press the military administration to reopen the trade. The Uganda administration immediately urged Mwanza authorities to purchase the local crop and ship it there. Later, they loaned a cotton agricultural officer to help raise production in 1917.¹¹ Between 1916 and 1924 the province was also visited by a series of cotton experts funded by the British Cotton Growing Association, or representing the Liverpool Uganda Company and British East African Corporation. These men submitted reports on local prospects to investors in Britain and lobbied local officials on behalf of their respective companies.

Cotton agents were able to affect production by supplying free seed. The BCGA imported it from their ginneries in Uganda, and used the Agricultural Department and colonial chiefs as a distribution network. In the early 1920's they supplied:

1922	115 tons
1923	140
1925	447

¹¹ H. Worsley, BCGA Kampala to Political Officer, Mwanza, 23.8.20. CO691/40:536-7

1926 500 12

From the standpoint of agents and merchants such programs earned consideration from the administration, while at the same time assuring an export quality crop.

Local authorities played an essentially reactive role during the cotton boom. Programs were in large part spurred, manned and funded by agents of the metropolitan cotton lobbies. Moreover, the administration's rural impact was eventually constrained by the Mandate. Direct state compulsion on African cultivators was not possible; and after 1926 tribute labor for "enterprising" colonial chiefs was illegal as well. Thus, officials were limited to "persuasion," extension services, and of course, cash taxes.

Therefore, after the war, cotton production was revived through a combination of free seed, Native Authority "exhortation," taxes and the inducement of high prices. Mwanza's merchants were a vital link in this industry. Rural shopkeepers provided material inducements for potential cash crop growers, local middlemen bought up cotton on commission or for resale to large ginneries, and urban wholesalers provided a steady stream of trade goods,

12 Compiled from: Excerpt from Agriculture Department Report, Cotton Production and Ginneries, 4.5.22. CO691/55:222; and an excerpt from W. H. Himbury, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika: As Sources for Increasing our Raw Cotton Supplies (Manchester: BSGA, no.94, 1926), 57. CO691/84:567

credit, and transport which kept capital and commodities circulating.

Buying cotton was a contested matter, however. Initially, the ginning corporations and the administration endorsed and tested a government auction scheme. The BCGA had come up with the plan in 1920; asking for a three year prohibition on "the buying of seed cotton from Natives by Traders or at Dukas."¹³ They argued such control was necessary to establish this "infant industry," allowing ginners and administration to set grading standards and stabilize prices. Moreover, the BCGA was willing to set a reserve auction price and guarantee any government losses.¹⁴

The initial ginners - the BCGA and British East African Corp. - fought a battle to gain concessions on two fronts: against cotton buyers or "middlemen" from Mwanza and against rival Asian ginnery applicants from Uganda. Petty buyers were threatening to large firms, as they bid up prices and shipped raw cotton out of the province. An ECGA expert wrote in 1922 that "over 180 licenses were issued to buy cotton, which is far too many, and the evil of the unnecessary middleman has already got a strong hold on the

13 H. Worsley, Mgr. BCGA Uganda to Political Officer, Mwanza, 23.8.20. CO691/40/534-5

14 *ibid*

District and must be suppressed."¹⁵ British ginnery agents explained their animus towards buyers, not in terms of economic competition, but rather over product quality and the "the future of the industry." For example, another ECGA expert wrote: "the whole future of the industry at present appears to be imperilled by the greed of Greeks, Indians and others, who by picking and buying the crop of the second years' growth appear determined to spread disease and ruin the price of Mwanza cotton."¹⁶

While the British firms obtained the first four new ginnery sites, Asian firms had also applied for ten sites and several were soon in business. To protect their initial investment from competition, those firms already on the ground lobbied for ginning ordinances like those in Uganda, giving company buyers a monopoly within a 12 mile radius of their ginnery.¹⁷ Even as late as 1925, Col. French, an agent for the Empire Cotton Growing Association, recommended a cotton marketing board, like those in India to tightly control sales and quality.¹⁸ He, and virtually all other

¹⁵ 5th Report of Mr. Wood, ECGA, 22-26.3.24.
CO691/40:85

¹⁶ Maj. Hasting-Horne's Report to the ECGA, 9.7.21.
CO691/51:274

¹⁷ H. Worsley, Manager, BCGA Kampala to BCGA, Manchester, 8.9.20. CO691/40:530.

¹⁸ Excerpt from a pamphlet by Col. French, c.1925.
CO691/82:252-6

European ginnery agents and experts decried competitive buying as unfair to the grower, and debasing to the product.

While ginnery agents made proposals, however, their initial cotton buying schemes were disintegrating. In particular, the government run auctions were becoming too large and contentious for the understaffed local administration. A succession of Mwanza officials complained to their superiors, and the first Provincial Commissioner opposed them on principle.¹⁹ Moreover, the Mwanza Indian Association made repeated complaints to DSM, arguing the auction system unfairly favored large buyers able to bid on full lots, and did not necessarily guarantee the grower the maximum price.²⁰ In 1922 ginners blamed the administration for not fully supporting the sales; and finally, in 1923 they accused Asian buyers of boycotts and rings.²¹ By 1924 the auctions were discontinued.

6.3 The Rush for Plots

The principal focus of the Mwanza merchant community during the cotton boom was securing trading plots in rural settlements and cotton markets. The actual rush for rural

¹⁹ 5th Report of ECGA expert Mr. Wood, 22-26.3.24. CO691/40:83

²⁰ Director of Agriculture. Memo over Mr. Wood's Report, no date. CO691/40:99

²¹ op cit., p.83

outlets had begun de facto in 1919, but after the breakdown of the auction system, these plots became the means to a cotton buying license and commercial opportunity. By the cotton peak of 1924-6 merchants wanted more secure tenure in these settlements, since they needed to use these properties for collateral in seasonal lending. Thus, through the Mwanza Indian Association and Chamber of Commerce, they pressured the administration for right-of-occupancy leases and new plot auctions.²²

Beginning in 1925 there were a series of right of occupancy auctions on plots in existing trade centers near Mwanza and along the lakeshore.²³ Current occupants had first option, with a land and upset rental fixed by the government. After 1927 interest in plots shifted to the Shinyanga area, out into Maswa District, and to new trade centers and cotton markets.

The rush in and around Mwanza may be derived from the occupation date given on right-of-occupancy applications below for: Ikoma Road in Mwanza Town and the trade centers of Kayenzi, Missungwi, Usagara, Karuma, Nansio and Mabuki:

²² For further background on rights of occupancy, credit and commercial politics see sections 9.2 and 9.4.

²³ Auction Notices, 1925-8. TNA Acc.246/20/46: numerous

Year Ikoma Rd Kayenze Missungwi Usagara Karuma Nansio Mabuki

pre-1900		1						
1901								
1902	1							
1903		1						
1904								
1905	2							
1906	2		1					
1907		2	1					
1908	2							
1909								
1910	2	1					1	
1911		2	1				1	
1912	3	1	1					
1913	4	1				2		
1914	3	3	1			2		
1915	1		2		1		1	
1916	2	1			1			
1917		1						
1918	3		1			2	1	
1919	3		5			1		
1920	1		10		2	1	1	4
1921	2	1	4			3	5	3
1922	4		3			2	9	4
1923		1	4			1	4	4
1924	6	1	7		1	1	3	2
1925	1		1			1	1	1
1926		1	7		1	2		1
1927	3							
1928	11							

24 Compiled from Right of Occupancy Application List, no date. TNA 10158:25-33. The occupation dates listed were those of either the current occupant or the believed date of initial habitation. Only those applying for right of occupancy were listed. Many former traders still in occupation did not apply. Thus, many of these settlements were active in trade much earlier than these dates would imply.

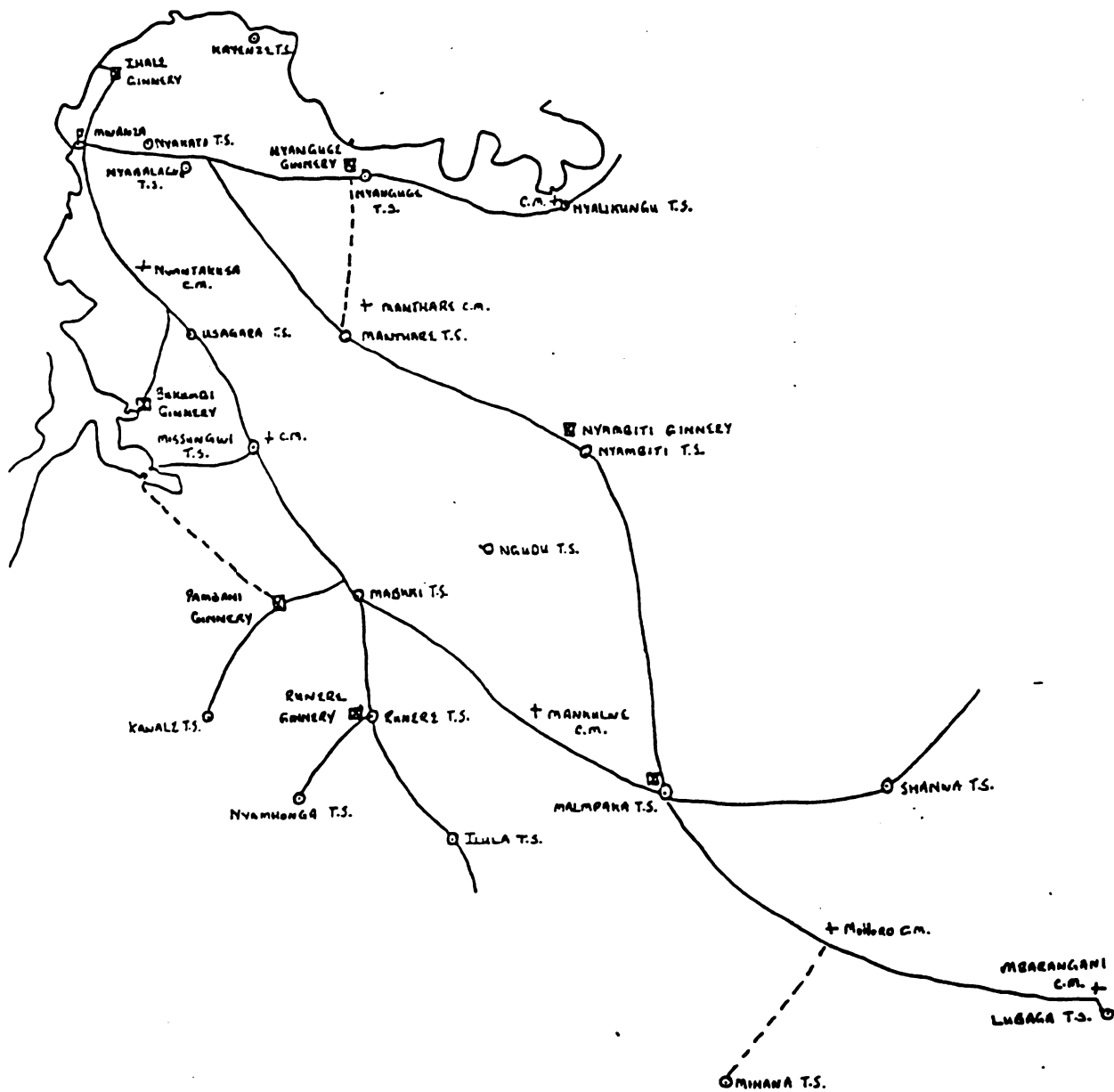
⑥ T.S. Trade Settlement

+ C.M. Cotton Market

— Main Road

— — — Wagon Road

☒ Cotton Ginnery



From a Sketch Map by

A. D. M. Turnball

27-1-26

source: C0691/83:536

While not an entirely comfortable relationship, local officials initially worked closely with the Indian Association, Chambers of Commerce and major firms to set up the auctions and establish new trade center sites. The Mwanza DO actively encouraged merchants to bid on rural trade plots. For example, in 1927 he showed the plot map of Kisumbi Township near Shinyanga to "representatives of the 22 most influential firms in Mwanza."²⁵ Merchants also often had veto power over auctions, since the administration consulted them on the suitability of new trade center locations. This was the case in 1928, when the Indian Association called for the cancellation of auctions for sites in Uzinza, declaring its members had unanimously decided not to bid on advertised plots there.²⁶

6.4 The Duka Network

The cash crop boom of the 1920's brought Mwanza town's position within the regional economy to its zenith. While demand for prewar commodities: hides, rice, groundnuts, and gum arabic leveled off or declined, the cotton trade expanded dramatically. Urban wholesalers, rural shopkeepers, and seasonal commodity buyers spurred local

²⁵ DO Mwanza to DO Shinyanga, 15.1.27. TNA Acc.246/20/46:21

²⁶ D. K. Patel, President, Indian Association to DO, Mwanza, 9.3.28. TNA Acc.246/20/46:49

production, collecting and reselling cotton to the new ginneries. They were linked into extended, Mwanza-based trading networks through licensing, credit and transport agreements, a system earlier referred to as the "duka network."²⁷

The principal link within the duka network remained credit. Many rural shopkeepers and seasonal commodity buyers obtained loans against, or mortgaged, their urban properties or Trade Centre plots. Large Mwanza wholesalers, certain moneylenders, shipping agents, and later the cotton ginneries advanced money for cash crop buying. Rates of interest were steep, in excess of 20%, and most charges against property were resolved in one to three years, though many traders borrowed against their plots nearly each season.²⁸

Rural shopkeepers also depended upon Mwanza wholesalers for their merchandise. While cotton made the town a major bulking and transshipment point, Mwanza also retained its initial role as the regional distribution locus for imported manufactured items. In order to maintain a vertical distribution chain, some larger firms maintained branches in the trade centers. Others rented their plots to clients,

²⁷ Martha Honey, *op cit.*

²⁸ For a more complete discussion of property and credit, refer to section 9.5.

reducing operating costs, yet still advancing goods on credit. Independent shopkeepers travelled to Mwanza town to view goods, to meet wholesalers, and to discuss prices and the terms of credit.²⁹

Licensing similarly indebted rural traders to urban patrons. The administration required an ever increasing number of licenses and fees, not only for retail trade, but for each aspect of commodity buying as well. Single item trading licenses were 100/-, while a general retail permit started at 600/-. Itinerant buying was discouraged, forcing petty traders to do business under the license of a large Mwanza firm, or hope to share one unnoticed by the authorities.

Transport was the final link within the duka network. Immediately after the war, portage, ox-carts, and dhows remained the principal means of moving commodities to Mwanza port or trade goods back to the rural shops. Organizing and operating transport was often beyond the means of small shopkeepers or petty traders; thus, they became dependent on rural transport riders or Mwanza shippers who organized labor, or owned oxen or dhows.

²⁹ Lamb, DO Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 1.6.34. TNA Acc.215/620/32; and S. D. Patel, Sec. Mwanza Indian Association to PC, Mwanza, 19.11.31. TNA Acc.215/620/9

Transport riders, using ox-carts, had been hauling cotton to Mwanza on a modest scale during the German period. Then, the traffic was primarily in the hands of a few Boers and their employees. After the war a group of five Asian transport riders and merchants based in Missungwi and Mwanza, expanded and dominated the traffic.³⁰ The largest, Chanan Singh, maintained cattle pens and outbuildings on three hundred acres near Missungwi. Having arrived in 1917, he amassed seven heavy wagons and nearly 500 head of cattle.³¹ Another Asian transport rider, Ranga Punjabi, had pens and 50 acres grazing for five wagons and 80 cattle.³²

While their transport role was quite vital, these men existed on the legal fringe of the colonial economy. Few had title to land, claiming occupation through official "permission," or by local bargaining. They were well acquainted, however, with the local Native Authorities. Mr. Singh supplied oxen, three large plows and trained 20 ploughmen for an indirect rule chief's cotton planting.³³

30 Hatchell, DO Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 26.11.28.
TNA 10071 Vol.1/sub-file 12:3

31 *ibid*, p.3

32 *ibid*, p.4

33 Hatchell, DO Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 9.1.29.
TNA 10071 Vol.1/sub-file 12/22

The ox-cart was supplanted by the heavy truck in the mid-1920's. This development greatly expanded the volume of trade since lorries were faster, covered great distances, and carried larger loads than other forms of transportation. Thus, while in 1913 there were only two trucks in the district, by 1931 there were 80 in the immediate Mwanza area.³⁴ Trucks rarely ran empty, instead they operated in circuits; carrying bulky commodities to Mwanza for processing and export, returning with consignments of trade goods for the rural shops.

Beyond spurring trade, transport also consolidated wealth and power among large Mwanza-based firms. Since motor lorries represented a cost few others could afford, they further increased the rural buyers and shopkeepers' dependence on the organizers of the duka network. While several transport riders made the transition, most vehicles now belonged to large Mwanza wholesalers or the ginneries.³⁵ Small traders had no choice but to depend on these shippers. For example, the DO at Kwimba wrote:

In a good produce season over a thousand tons of groundnuts, rice, hides, ghee, cassava and grain are purchased at Nyambiti and railed from Bukwimba. Only one or two of the traders are able to purchase and maintain a motor lorry and it follows that the lorry owners have a considerable control over those small traders who cannot afford

³⁴ S. D. Patel, Sec. Mwanza Indian Association to PC, Mwanza, 19.11.31. TNA Acc.215/620/9

³⁵ *ibid*

to possess a lorry. These small traders may have to pay a shilling a ton mile for the hire of a lorry and often cannot obtain motor transport when they wish to rail produce. If it is only by the establishment of a settlement at the station these small traders can free themselves from the bondage of the lorry owner."³⁶

6.5 Productive capital and processing

Several larger, Mwanza merchants attempted to transfer their profits from trade into small scale manufacturing and agricultural processing. Producing trade goods or local consumer items augmented the returns to merchant capital. Likewise, by exerting control over agricultural processing, some local merchants sought to further expand their hold on regional produce marketing.

At the war's end, Enrico Bonini gained control of the DNSG rice mill in Mwanza through Friggerio & Company. Likewise, rice trader Ladha Meghji of Mwanza bought the DNSG rice mill on Ukerewe at the ex-enemy property auction. During the 1920's several other small rice mills were opened in Mwanza South, as well as a small groundnut oil plant, a soap factory, and a soda water and ice plant.

The lucrative cotton ginneries, however, quickly fell into the hands of larger corporations. While the administration did not institute ginning zones as existed

³⁶ D. C. MacGillivray, Act. DO Kwimba to PC, Mwanza, 6.2.35. TNA 10933 Vol.1/57-8

elsewhere in East Africa, it did limit the number and location of new ginneries through a licensing system. Thus, in order to start a ginnery in Mwanza Province's expanding cotton lands, sufficient capital and reputation, as well as a detailed legal knowledge of the application and auction process were necessary.

Initially, European firms aggressively entered the market. Moving on from the old Hansing's ginnery in Mwanza, the BCGA opened new ginneries in Nyanguge and Nyambiti. Also, in 1923 the British East Africa Corporation was high bidder for two ginnery sites, one in the south at Malampaka and the other to the southwest in Runere. It accepted annual rents of £ 74/5/0 and £ 94/10/0 respectively, much higher than other ginners were willing to pay. Further to the south in Tabora Province the firm bid an annual rent of £ 1,000, an unheard of sum, for a ginnery site in Usogore.³⁷

Asian, Uganda based firms also occupied five ginnery sites in the 1920's. The Mwanza ginnery fell to the Nakasero Trading Co., and new ginneries were opened by Bhagwanji Sunderji & Co. at Bukumbi, Kampala General Agency at Pambani, Narandas Rajaram & Co. at Nassa, and finally, in 1928, G. H. Abdulrasul & Co. at Ihale. Such firms came prepared with more than 20 years experience in Uganda and

³⁷ Manager, BEA Corp., Shinyanga to Director of Agriculture, DSM, 18.6.28. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:56

Nyanza District in Kenya. They had their own agricultural consultants and ginnery engineers, as well as seasoned buyers and shippers. Moreover, they could raise capital and lobby the administration for ginnery and cotton market sites more effectively than local merchants.

Thus, entry into cotton ginning was difficult, if not impossible, for Mwanza cotton traders or shipping agents. Even when they were able to gather information, raise capital and obtain legal advice, a ginnery site was not guaranteed. Ladha Meghji, perhaps Mwanza's largest commodity buyer during the interwar years, first applied for a local ginnery site in 1926, and subsequently every year from 1929 until 1940 without success.³⁸

Perhaps the difficulty of entry for local traders was best illustrated by the case of M. N. Patel and Narandas Rajaram & Co. M. N. Patel was a Mwanza based barrister and cotton trader who had nine buying stores: three in Thuju, and others at Magu, Nansio, Buchosa, Karumo, Missungwi and Kibara.³⁹ In 1926 Mr. Patel entered into a scheme to lease

38 A. Pitcairns, District Ag. Officer to Ladah Merji, Mwanza, 1.5.26. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:1; and Ladha Meghji to Director of Agriculture, DSM, 5.1.40. TNA Acc.215/772/I:no page

39 M. N. Patel to Narandas Rajaram & Co., 9.5.27. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:11

a new ginnery from E. Boschetti at Nassa, with borrowed Shs.200,000/- capital from Narandas Rajaram & Co.⁴⁰

His efforts were met with opposition in 1927, however, when other traders protested Patel's purchase of cotton on his new ginnery site. Competing traders complained in person to the Maswa DO that a ginnery had not been anticipated when they had bid for cotton store sites in Mihana and Thuju markets, and now it was decreasing the business and value of their plots.⁴¹ The Indian merchants of Nyahanga also petitioned the PC claiming much the same.⁴²

An immediate inquiry concluded that the property tenure and licenses were not in order. Apparently, Mr. Boschetti bought the land in 1924 from a second party, one year after it had been auctioned as ex-enemy property; and applied for a right of occupancy as an agricultural plantation.⁴³ He had a cotton buying license, which Patel was using "as a friend."⁴⁴ Patel had applied for the ginnery license, but

⁴⁰ C. H. Shah, Narandas Rajaram & Co. to DO Maswa, 23.6.27. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:11

⁴¹ Baxter, DO Maswa to PC, Mwanza, 29.6.27. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:15

⁴² Nyahanga Indians to PC, Mwanza, 21.7.27. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:25

⁴³ A. Greig, Land Officer, Secretariat File Minutes, 8.8.27. TNA 10933:13-4

⁴⁴ M. N. Patel to PC, Mwanza, 22.6.27. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:9



Nassa Ginnery Application

M. N. Patel/
Narandas Rajaram & Co.
c.1928

source: TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:11

it was unclear whether it had been granted. What was clear to the competing middlemen, however, was that Boschetti and Patel had already erected six cotton stores on the property. Moreover, they were reportedly selling trade goods on the site, although Boschetti had been refused such a license.⁴⁵

By 1927, M. N. Patel was overextended anyway, and his creditor, Narandas Rajaram & Co., "purchased" his assets: the Nassa ginnery and all nine cotton stores. There was a brief struggle over the ginnery, Boschetti claiming only to have leased the site, at three times his right of occupancy rental, while Patel and his creditors maintained to have purchased it for Shs.160,000/- in 1926.⁴⁶ The administration was confused, but Narandas Rajaram was able to produce documents and a sale agreement.

Thus, Narandas Rajaram quickly cleared up the mess. With Mr. Dalal as their local manager and M. N. Patel their barrister, the company soon had the ginnery in order. They applied for and received a new ginning license, cotton buying license, and retail license.⁴⁷ Further, Narandas Rajaram pursued the property's title, arguing it should

⁴⁵ Baxter, DO Maswa to Mr. Boschetti, 28.6.27. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:16

⁴⁶ M. N. Patel to Narandas Rajaram & Co., 9.5.27. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:11

⁴⁷ M. N. Patel to PC, Mwanza, 9.7.27. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:19

become freehold. And, within a year, it was they who were harassing nearby ginners and cotton middlemen to maintain the new buying area.

The case of M. N. Patel and Narandas Rajaram & Co. was not simply the tale of a fast deal.⁴⁸ It underscored the difficulty for local merchant capitalists in transferring their resources into productive enterprises. M. N. Patel lacked sufficient capital, was burdened with debt, and had difficulty gaining legal leverage in the business. What he could not overcome, however, Narandas Rajaram surmounted with ease. This company's ability to influence the administration enabled it obtain a viable ginnery through rather roundabout means.

6.5 The Railway

The final stage in Mwanza's cotton boom was the construction of the Mwanza-Tabora railway extension from 1926 through 1928. Though politically the Mwanza region lay within Tanganyika Territory, economically it was in the Kenyan orbit, since its primary export/import link was the Kenya Uganda Railway and the port of Mombasa. Likewise, its commercial focus - the home office of most of its agencies, shippers, and ginners - was either Mombasa or Kampala. Some

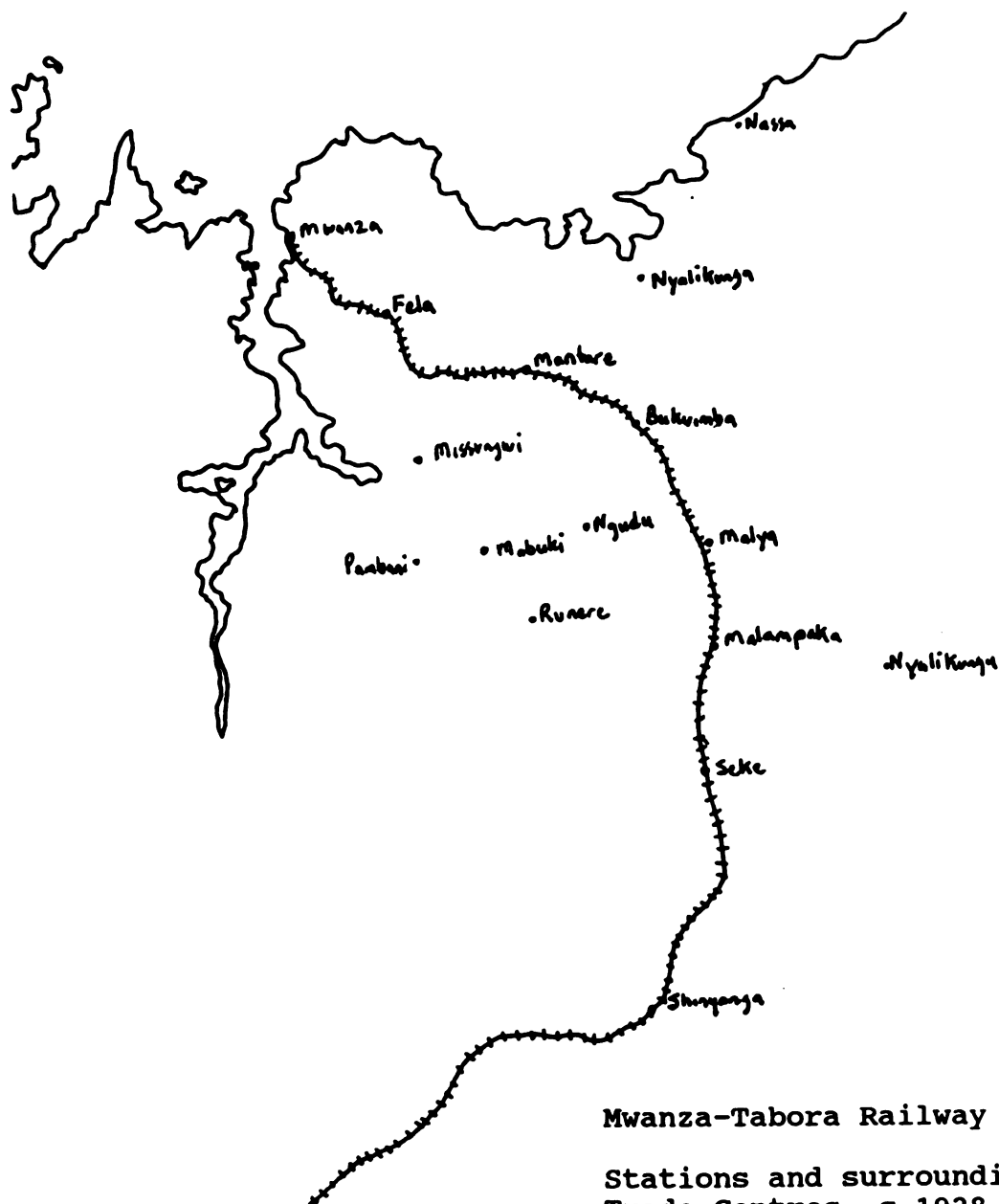
48 M. N. Patel was not at all undone by the deal. He continued in Mwanza as a barrister and agent for Narandas Rajaram & Co., eventually becoming president of the Indian Association and Chamber of Commerce.

traffic from the region flowed south to Tabora on the Central Line, and some merchants still maintained business ties with firms in Dar es Salaam, but these connections were not nearly so extensive or profitable.

The Germans had begun work on a Tabora-Kahama-Mwanza line in 1913, but had abandoned it during the war. As early as 1920, the Dar es Salaam Chamber of Commerce had pressed the new administration for a railway extension into Mwanza Province.⁴⁹ It petitioned again in 1923, and once more in 1925; however, the administration responded cautiously that funds were short.⁵⁰ The administration did embark on a road improvement program between Mwanza and Tabora in the mid-1920's, and the Public Works Department attempted to organize a ten lorry transport service. The administration made the case to London for additional transport funds, and some officials argued that Mwanza needed better communication and supply links to Dar es Salaam. Tanganyika Railways was losing money, and the administration hoped to increase its traffic. At Tabora, officials noted that in 1922 7,390 tons of produce had been ported to the rail station from an average distance of 50 miles, and cotton

⁴⁹ Papers from the Dar es Salaam Chamber of Commerce over a Mwanza-Tabora Railway, 1920. CO691/32:44-61

⁵⁰ Editorial, Dar es Salaam Times, 29.9.23. CO691/69:82



Mwanza-Tabora Railway

Stations and surrounding
Trade Centres, c.1928

source: D. W. Malcolm,

Sukumaland (London, 1953)

often came from over 100 miles to the north.⁵¹ Any transport improvements in Mwanza Province would therefore improve the viability of the Central Line.⁵² By late 1925 Dar es Salaam officials were advocating a rail extension, not so much because of commercial pressure, but because of the declining revenues of the Tanganyika Railways. The Tanganyika administration approached the colonial office and treasury with piecemeal proposals: first requesting a spur to Shinyanga, then an extension to Kahama, and finally a Tabora-Mwanza line. By 1926 the full plan had been approved and construction begun by the end of that year. One crew worked south from Mwanza, while a second northward from Tabora.⁵³ The line was opened in early 1928.

The subsequent politics and economic impact of the railway were not, however, what anyone in DSM or Mwanza had envisioned. Gov. Cameron quarreled with colonial officials at the 1926 Governors' Conference over the role for the railway. Supporters of the KUR feared it would decrease rail traffic through Kenya and the ports of Kisumu and Mombasa. The port of Mwanza was at the heart of the debate,

⁵¹ Unsigned. Memo on Railroad Development, c.1926. CO691/87:20 File 18074

⁵² Gov. Cameron to Amery, CO, 3.5.26. CO691/84:62-4

⁵³ For a summary of railway labor recruitment and the involvement of the Mwanza Town administration and workers in constructing the line see sections 6.2 and 9.4.

being labelled a "competitive point."⁵⁴ There were negotiations in 1928, but the spheres to be controlled by the KUR and Tanganyika Railways were not formally agreed to. Both lines then sought to lower rates in order to control Mwanza area traffic, but in this competition decreased their receipts, thereby defeating the administration's aims.

Likewise, while at first Mwanza merchants believed the new railway would lower their costs and increase their trade, they soon discovered it actually damaged the town's regional position. Whereas before, nearly all trade from the province flowed through Mwanza, now buyers and ginneries to the south could ship produce to Dar es Salaam from rural railway stations down the line, bypassing the port. Moreover, many shopkeepers in the trade centers wished to relocate nearer the line, breaking their road transport ties to Mwanza shippers and wholesalers. The town held on as a bulking, shipping and wholesale center, while its rural duka network underwent considerable dislocation.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ File minutes, c.1936. File 42029/5/36. CO691/148:3; and "Ormsby-Gore Commission Interview," East Africa, (8.1.25):370

⁵⁵ See section 9.1

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THE DISTRICT TOWN AND THE ARTICULATION OF COLONIAL RULE:
THE CASE OF MWANZA, TANZANIA 1890-1945
VOLUME II

By

Laird Revis Jones

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7 Capitalism vs. Control: administrative intervention 1927-40

Economic collapse during the early years of the Great Depression forced an official reorganization of the colonial commercial framework. Revenue shortfalls and failing state industries spurred colonial administrators vigorously to promote agriculture and "rationalize" rural produce marketing and processing. Eventually, the reform program was advanced in three parts: stricter market controls, attempts to limit competition between local capital and colonial departments or large corporations, and the promotion of state sponsored enterprises.

The reform process was complicated, however, by contradictory official commitments to Indirect Rule, colonial corporations, state industries, and local merchant capital. Local officials were torn between directives from Dar es Salaam and the economic health of their own districts. Local merchant interests obviously resisted new regulations and pressured administrators to modify or ignore policies. Finally, large firms, often the best informed and capitalized, stood to benefit from a more regulated, less

competitive colonial economy, and therefore urged officials to press on.

For the merchants of Mwanza town, the new "rationalization" policies were a severe challenge, threatening to erode their credit and transport-based "duka network" at its rural fringes.¹ Immediate attempts to contain and regulate rural marketing in 1931 and 1932 restricted the activities of shopkeepers and roving buyers. Larger firms used the new rules to attempt to gain monopolistic advantages, further threatening the viability of hinterland trade centers. Finally, the local administration and the railway attempted to limit the role of local capital in transport, requiring merchants to ship via the Mwanza-Tabora line.

7.1 The Boom and Bust Economy

By the late 1920's the cash crop revolution was rapidly giving way to international depression. Export commodity prices began to decline in 1927/8. By 1930 the colonial economy was at a standstill. Across Eastern Africa peasants

¹ In her dissertation, Martha Honey argued that during the interwar period, the British administration sought to contain and reshape Indian merchant capital, both to serve its own interests and those of metropolitan capital. To this end, she used the Mwanza dhow owners and cotton industry as case studies of colonial efforts to limit or channel local merchant capital. "A History of Indian Merchant Capital and Class Formation in Tanganyika c.1840-1940," UDSM, 1982.

abandoned cash crops for subsistence production, despite the subsequent urgings of officials to "plant more crops." In the southern lake region the oncoming depression was particularly notable in the decline of cotton prices and later cotton production:

Mwanza Province avg. price cts/kilo		
Season	Grade A	Grade B
1925	.54	.26
1926	.35	.12
1927	.48	.19
1928	.36	.17
1929	.38	.14

2

Rural cultivators left cotton to rot in the fields, whereas those who grew rice, simsim or groundnuts still had a limited local market, and at worst could eat their crops.³

Colonial officials, moreover, had no immediate means of reviving agricultural production. In 1926 the colonial chiefs had lost their coercive powers to collect "tribute," and therefore could not force people to plant cash crops any longer. Markets, had been gazetted into trade centers during 1925 and 1926, removing many isolated rural buying stations that promoted production in fringe areas. There was also no official market mechanism to support current producer prices.

2 Act. Director, Ag. Dept., DSM to C. Sec., DSM, 29.10.29. TNA 12951/24

3 East Africa, 18.11.26, p.255

In Mwanza town, the decline in trade, following so quickly on the heels of a wave of speculation, caused a rash of bankruptcies:

1921	2	
1922	2	
1923	2	
1924	3	
1925	3	
1926	13	
1927	7	
1928	6	
1929	9	
1930	8	4

Local officials were alarmed, not simply at the number of cases, but at the difficulty of resolving them. Hidden assets, intra-family ownership transfers, broken contracts, unpaid fees, unmet occupancy terms, and flights from town preoccupied the ADO in particular for years.⁵

In the Trade Centers many trading plots were abandoned and rights of occupancy surrendered, rolling back the earlier buying plot rush. In 1927, 100 additional T.C. buying plots were offered at auction, but only 49 were actually taken.⁶ By 1930 surrenders of rights of occupancy exceeded new bids, and many plots still listed as occupied were actually idle. Moreover, officials observed, many cotton buyers were bidding on plots with no intention of

4 Compiled from the Tanganyika Gazette, 1919-33, but may well be incomplete.

5 Mwanza District Report, 1927. TNA Acc.246 PC1/30:19

6 Mwanza District Annual Report, 1927. TNA Acc.246 PC1/30:25

meeting their lease terms; they simply needed a plot for a reduced 100/- trading license. They paid the ground rent, but when the building requirements fell due, the plot was surrendered.⁷

7.2 The Official View Takes Shape

Down at the local level in Mwanza town and Province, officials viewed the collapse of 1927-30 as a crisis in colonial capitalism. Most identified the immediate problem as a decrease in rural production and buying power, resulting from adverse weather and low commodity prices.⁸ Many were convinced, however, that underlying it were "irrational" or "uneconomic" business practices; in particular, the dealings of urban and rural Asian wholesalers, buyers and shopkeepers. These suspicions stemmed from repeated contests with Asian commercial organizations over local policy, as well as from the negative lobbying efforts of European firms.

Many local officials blamed the failure of government auction schemes, both for commodities and property, on the intransigence or conspiracies of Asian merchants. Repeated small buyer resistance had destroyed the cotton auction

⁷ Mwanza District Annual Report, 1927. TNA Acc.246
PC1/30:25

⁸ Mwanza District Annual Report, 1927. Acc.246
PC1/30:17

scheme in 1923/4.⁹ Moreover, on numerous occasions Asian bidders had refused to come forward for Trade Center or Mwanza town commercial plot auctions, since they had been collectively dissatisfied with the terms.¹⁰ Administration suspicions of Asian traders reached paranoic levels over the issue of "rings." Successive ADOs and DOs who supervised plot auctions were convinced that secret combinations of Asian merchants were subverting the auction process: either bidding on plots under aliases, or to block rivals from occupying plots or ginneries.¹¹

In 1927 the Mwanza District Officer also believed that local bankruptcies were ultimately the result of an irrational credit system. He reported to his superiors that "the number of Bankruptcies has been considerable but not surprising having in view the business methods of the Mwanza Asiatic Trader who hampers himself with a 90 days credit system."¹² He went on to characterize rural shopkeepers as "driven by the devil," involved in sharp price competition and taking "10 day credit from Wholesalers."¹³

9 Refer to section 5.3

10 Hassanali Dhalla, Sec., Mwanza Chamber of Commerce to C. Sec., DSM, 31.5.37. TNA 10933:112

11 Stiebel, PC Mwanza to Director of Agriculture, DSM, 17.9.28. TNA Acc.246 PC20/7:71

12 Mwanza District Annual Report, 1927. TNA Acc.246 PC1/30:17

13 Mwanza District Annual Report, 1927. TNA Acc.246 PC1/30:19

The official hostility toward Asian traders, however, stemmed largely from continuous complaints by European firms. European rice millers, cotton ginnerers and agricultural experts frequently petitioned or informed the administration that Asian buyers were adulterating or misgrading produce, underpaying cultivators or violating marketing rules with "touts" or private deals with colonial chiefs. They did so, obviously, in the hope of gaining concessions for their firms. Nevertheless, the unequal social and political access of European businessmen often enabled them to influence particular officials.

Alone such concerns over Asian buyers or "middlemen" were simply myopic or misguided. None of these complaints were new, but simply resurfaced under the stress of the Depression. In combination with administrators' anxieties about bankruptcies and abandoned plots, they comprised an official explanation for the downturn: irrational or inefficient trading practices by predominantly Asian merchants. And these views were expressed by the Provincial Commissioners in conference and correspondence, and thus filtered to Dar es Salaam.

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7.3 State Intervention

Policymakers responded to this crisis in colonial capitalism by further regulating the rural economy.¹⁴ In short order the government confined commodity buying to specific locations and time periods, often stipulating supervised auctions. It also dramatically raised licensing fees for rural buyers. Further, it restricted private commercial transport wherever it was thought to be in competition with state railways or steamer service.

The official internal explanation for this new regulation was "rationalization." Measures were designed to decrease competition, while increasing state revenue and economic efficiency. By restricting middlemen and supervising transactions, the administration sought to improve produce quality and producer prices. Moreover, by eliminating competition in transport and processing, the

14 D. M. P. McCarthy, in Colonial Bureaucracy and Creating Underdevelopment: Tanganyika, 1919-1940 (1982), has argued that regulation of the colonial economy was a long-term process, driven by internal bureaucratic imperatives for stability and revenue. McCarthy maintained that bureaucrats first sought to standardize and unify the political order while integrating local elites. Moreover, from the early 1920's onward, the leadership in DSM sought to regulate the economy, balancing trade-offs between revenue efficiency and socio-political stability.

For Mwanza, McCarthy's approach overvalues the independent role of the state and underestimates the impact of economic forces and the lobbying efforts of colonial and merchant capital. Clearly, there was a connection between the Great Depression and the increased scope and intensity of economic regulation. Moreover, large firms and local merchants battled each other and lobbied officials, each influencing policies or forcing local compromise.

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more highly capitalized sectors of the colonial economy, it was thought that resources would be more efficiently distributed to "open up" the territory.

The governor explained new regulations to the colonial office in the following manner:

...if the trade of the Lake Province was to be saved from collapse, measures must be taken which would secure to the native producer ready cash for his produce, and a market price which was fair in relation to world prices and the position of the place of production in relation to communications. It was also highly desirable to organize marketing so that some standardization of quality should be possible and produce might be dealt within bulk without fear of adulteration in a multitude of small bush shops.¹⁵

In broader policy statements the official "objects and reasons" for these measures were described in terms of improving the condition of African producers, protecting them from unfair exchanges. As one memo put it:

...owing to the depressed trading conditions and the fall in prices of native produce, the practice of barter has suddenly assumed large dimensions in parts of Tanganyika, where the natives are refusing money for their produce. The effects of this are that the native is in a still worse position to judge whether he is receiving proper value for his produce, while the circulation of money in the Territory is gravely affected, rendering it difficult to maintain the ordinary current of business and in particular the collection of government revenue.¹⁶

¹⁵ MacMichael to CO, 15.3.34. CO691/138:19 File 25139/34

¹⁶ ibid

In reality, however, the administration had interests more closely tied to its own survival. Officials were primarily concerned with the high Depression era tax default rate, and consequent revenue shortages. Policymakers believed the solution was to increase the number and frequency of cash transactions, thereby placing more cash in the hands of rural taxpayers. Thus the focus on buying schemes, the animus towards barter, and the insistence on grading was to establish more clearly defined and monitorable price scales.

Finally, the rationalization policies brought the administration more closely in line with the long-standing positions of large, colonial corporations. Ginners, shippers and bulk commodity buyers had long advocated restrictive policies giving them concessionary privileges. The administration did not advocate monopoly, but was willing to allow concessions to those it believed would be more efficient.

7.4 Market control

In 1931-2 Dar es Salaam embarked on a program of reforming marketing legislation. The goal was to rationalize rural trading by limiting commerce to specified, periodic trade centers; and by reducing the number and type of buyers able to attend. Such reorganization, from the

perspective of the authorities, would increase oversight, compel cash transactions, and consequently improve both producer prices and tax collection. The principal legislation behind this policy was the Trades License Ordinance of 1932 and the Markets Ordinance of 1930. The former was aimed at limiting access to commodity buying. Retail peddling was permitted, but more expensive licenses were necessary for commodity buying. The fees were high, often 600/- for a general license and 100/- for a specific location. Moreover, separate licenses were required for each commodity purchased, and each trade site. Finally, amendments to the ordinance required all buyers to pay only cash for produce.

The Markets Ordinance of 1930 was designed to control the time and location of commodity buying. It laid the groundwork for new seasonal, commodity-specific, "grass-markets" to be supervised by the local administration and the Native Authorities. In Mwanza Province, between 1931 and 1933, groundnuts, rice and cotton were brought under these new regulations, and a concerted effort was made to prevent them from being traded outside the sanctioned markets or times.¹⁷

¹⁷ Secretariat Memo, DSM, 4.4.32. CO691/122:39 File 31088/32

For larger Mwanza-based merchants and wholesalers, the commodity buying reforms were an added burden. For smaller traders and rural Trade Centre shopkeepers, however, they were a catastrophe. Operating on credit and stuck with large inventories, shopkeepers found barter was preferable to cash buying, but no longer legal. Further, limiting the buying season strained transport arrangements and disrupted pre-existing credit cycles. And, many simply could not afford the extensive and expensive new licenses.

Some smaller traders perceived the new regulations as a conspiracy on the part of government and the large firms to drive them from the market, in effect, creating buying monopolies. The president of the DSM Indian Association protested:

The objection of the Indian Community is largely confined to the creation of monopolies, and the Indian Community have not the slightest objection to the native being paid in cash for produce purchased by them. I should like to point out that in the first instance all native produce of this Territory passes through the hands of the Indian merchants who have small shops in the most isolated districts. Against the purchase price of the said produce the native is supplied with trade goods.¹⁸

He went on to add:

The Indian Association also feel that any application of this Ordinance by grant of monopolies and special licenses, is bound to adversely affect a large number of Indian Traders,

18 A. A. Adamjee, President, Indian Association, DSM to Gov't. of India, New Delhi, 18.2.32. CO691/122:81 File 31082

and the Indian Association have knowledge that there is a strenuous scramble for monopolies on behalf of various trading corporations.¹⁹

Perhaps the greatest threat to all, however, was the relocation of rice, groundnut and cotton markets. Previously, shopkeepers had bought most commodities on their doorstep. The only exception was cotton, but under the ginnery rules most cotton markets and major Trade Centres overlapped. Following the Markets Ordinance, however, all this vital traffic passed elsewhere, separating commodity buying from retail trade. The result was the further decline of many Trade Centres, already hurt by the railway, and the depreciation or loss of capital invested in rights of occupancy, shops and licenses.

The Mwanza Indian Association protested the measures and sought to remind the administration of their investments. They wrote:

Indians as pioneers of trade in that Province [Mwanza] have settled there since the last 50 years... A network of trading settlements had been set up by the trading community. There were about 60 settlements served by nearly 1,000 shops. Indians had sunk their fortune in the settlements which has been estimated at Shgs. 2,500,000. ...The purchase of cotton came to be regulated since long, groundnuts came under the Government sway since the last year and this year saw paddy brought under control. New grass markets have been erected to the entire exclusion of the

19 *ibid*, p.83

trading centres. The trade is thus passing away from the hands of the settled community.²⁰

The administration was sympathetic to many specific complaints, but unresponsive overall. As to the decline of the Trade Centres, they viewed it as part of a longer process. The governor countered:

Before any of the recent alterations were introduced in the method of selling local produce, there had already been a decrease in the value of sites in a number of trading centres in the Lake Province which were situated at a distance from the alignment adopted for the railway from Tabora to Mwanza. At the same time the value of sites generally has been reduced as a result of the fall in the price of commodities which had restricted the purchasing power of the natives; and the trading conditions in 1930 and the low tonnage of production in 1931 had eliminated a number of traders, and many small shops had been closed.²¹

7.5 Limiting local capital: motor transport

In the transportation sphere, colonial officials combined regulation with advancing the interests of state institutions; for example, restricting local truck and dhow owners to the competitive advantage of Tanganyika Railways and the KUR Marine. While these policies were couched in the language of rationalization, the railway was a virtual state agency, and its revenues a matter of official

²⁰ excerpt from "Misfortunes of the Lake Province," Tanganyika Opinion, DSM, 7.7.33. CO691/129:15-6 File 5067/33

²¹ MacMichael to CO, 15.3.34. CO691/138:18 File 25139/34

concern.²² Thus, local entrepreneurs who competed with the railway, however efficiently, were to be displaced.

The Depression may have triggered the railway crisis, but its underlying causes lay in technological change and the greater competitive adaptiveness of merchant capital. At the crux of the problem were shipping rates. The railway could not raise its rates so high as to overprice Tanganyika exports, or make KUR rates more attractive to Mwanza shippers. Yet, with declining freight traffic the railway had to cover debts and operating costs. To complicate matters further, local transport was not simply collecting produce or distributing trade goods, but was making long-distance runs in direct competition with the railway.

Consequently, under pressure from the Colonial Office and Treasury, the administration and the railway sought to legislate transport competition to the Tanganyika line's advantage. As the Secretariat rationalized their position:

Owing to the serious diminuation of railway revenue on certain sections due to the marked increase in competition by motor transport, it is necessary to devise some means of reducing this competition. In an undeveloped country such as Tanganyika with its insufficient transport facilities, a great waste results if energy and capital are absorbed in competition with the railway instead of being applied to the greater

advantage of the Territory in opening up tracts of country not served by the railway...²³

In 1930 the legislative council enacted the Control of Carriage of Goods by Motor Ordinance, which imposed heavy license fees on motor vehicles competing with the railway. The schedule for Mwanza was:

Between Mwanza and	30 cwt.	2 tons	3 tons
Dar es Salaam	Shs 5,400/-	Shs 8,000/-	Shs 10,800/-
Ruvu Ferry	1,400/-	2,100/-	2,800/-
Dodoma	1,000/-	1,500/-	2,000/-
Manyoni	800/-	1,200/-	1,600/-
Tabora	800/-	1,200/-	1,600/-
Shinyanga	400/-	600/-	800/-
Tanga	5,400/-	8,100/-	10,800/-
Karogwe	3,400/-	5,100/-	6,800/-

Opposition came in the form of a petition and lobbying campaign by Mwanza's Asian commercial associations. They argued that the 1930 ordinance was poor policy to revive the railway, since "crushing license fees" damaged the region's trade in the process. Instead, Mwanza merchants were critical of the railway's rate structure, contending the obvious solution was to lower fares, freight rates and tariffs.²⁵ Their efforts were primarily on behalf of the lorry owners who, the association stated, were also in difficulty and had turned to long-distance runs to survive

²³ "Objects and Reasons," statement on 1930 Transport Ord. CO691/119:17 File 30229

²⁴ Rate Schedule. CO691/119:12 File 30229

²⁵ S. D. Patel, Sec. Mwanza Indian Association to PC, Mwanza, 19.11.31. TNA Acc.215/620:9

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the trade downturn. Thus, in the Mwanza associations' view the legislation threatened to unemploy many and "financially ruin" the owners.²⁶

As onerous as these fees may have been, however, they did not solve the railway's financial problems. Thus, the ordinance was amended in 1934, and again in 1938, to impose route restrictions on truck transport. Several major routes were closed to truck traffic altogether, including the Mwanza-Tabora Road. Elsewhere, rural T.C. merchants were required to transport commodities directly to the nearest railway station to ship them on to Mwanza or Dar es Salaam. Conversely, trade goods from Mwanza were to be railed down to the nearest station and then driven to the trade centers.

Whereas opposition to the 1930 ordinance had primarily come from truck owners and Mwanza wholesalers, the later amendments were resisted by all elements in the duka network. The prohibition of traffic on a number of routes, and rail requirements struck at the heart of Mwanza's trade network. It reduced the town's role as a wholesale and bulking center, disorganized rural transport, and disrupted credit arrangements. The dislocation disturbed Mwanza's merchants, and it moved the rural shopkeeper too.

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Rural shopkeepers and buyers made a number of deputations to district officers in 1934 and again in 1938. For example, in 1939 the Kwimba DO received a delegation of 16 traders from Mabuki and Runere who informed him "that the additional cost of running their very small businesses, in which all the merchants in these settlements are employed, resulting from this recent development would almost make it impossible for them to carry on."²⁷

Even petitions from the Mwanza Chamber of Commerce in 1934 and 1938 were addressed from the perspective of the small, rural shopkeeper or buyer. For example, a lengthy 1939 letter laid out the case of the merchants of Mabuki, carefully detailing their transport costs under the new legislation. For their usual one day round trip to Mwanza, bringing in produce and returning with commodities, the cost was 60/-. However, the Chamber argued that after route restrictions and rail requirements, the time period was expanded to several days, and costs for the same load rose to 204/- dealing with Mwanza, or 210/- with Dar es Salaam.²⁸

The restrictions, they argued, forced trucks to make unprofitable one way hauls, often back and forth from the

27 Thronley, Act. DO, Kwimba to PC, Lake Province, 8.2.39. TNA Acc.215/620:105

28 Secretary, Mwanza Chamber of Commerce to C. Sec., DSM, 26.1.39. TNA Acc.215/620:96-101

rail stations. The key to the transport business was to always run full. After bringing out trade goods, truck operators made wide circuits picking up passengers and produce headed to town. Rural shopkeepers often rode with their produce, and after delivering it to a middleman or shipping agent, would visit Mwanza wholesalers selecting trade goods, arranging credit or settling accounts.

The fate of the rural shopkeeper was not, however, the central concern of the Mwanza Chamber of Commerce. It feared the decline of the town as a wholesale distribution center. In particular, the chamber's members feared the legislation would encourage individual shopkeepers to deal directly with Dar es Salaam importers, bypassing Mwanza altogether. The chamber's secretary went on to write in the Mabuki example:

The restriction on the traders of Mabuki unable to carry back the trade goods with them from Mwanza will discourage them from coming to Mwanza or in any way dealing with Mwanza. The same reasons apply to other trading centres and in some cases there will be greater hardship and expenses. The traders of the interior will be discouraged from dealing with merchants of Mwanza and will try to get the trade goods from the coast.²⁹

Finally, and most importantly, they feared the potential breakup of credit relationships. The 1939 letter finished by stating:

²⁹ Secretary, Mwanza Chamber of Commerce to C. Sec., DSM, 26.1.39. TNA Acc.215/620:100

The traders of the interior buy their goods on credit and it would be very difficult for them to establish fresh trade connections with Dar-es-Salaam or to get goods on credit from the coast. In trade it is absolutely essential that the trader must be able to get credit. This custom is part of economic system, and therefore universal. Dar-es-Salaam merchants would prefer to supply trade goods in bulk to the merchants of Mwanza whom they know, whose financial position they can verify from time to time, on whom they can draw bills of exchange, and whose bills of exchange they can negotiate in banks.³⁰

Local administrators sided mostly with the Mwanza merchants, writing reports in their favor to Dar es Salaam and requesting modifications or local exemptions. In their view, the transport regulations were difficult to enforce, often vague, and harmful to the region's trade and tax revenue. When the initial license fee scheme was under consideration in 1929, Provincial Commissioner Buckley had written his superior that in his opinion "motor transport does not compete with the Railway in any way in haulage of imported goods or in that of produce for export from Mwanza."³¹ He argued trucks were an important feeder service for the railway, and vital to the expansion of cash crop agriculture locally. Thus he told DSM "no action will be taken to control motor transport in Mwanza Province."³²

30 ibid

31 Buckley, Act. PC, Mwanza to C. Sec., DSM, 3.9.29.
TNA Acc.215/620:1

32 ibid, pg.2

Subsequent to the 1930 Ordinance, local officials conducted extensive research on motor transport. They were able to precisely calculate the costs and profit margins for various long-distance truck runs and identify trade items and commodities over which long-haul operators held a competitive advantage. Nevertheless, the Mwanza, Kwimba and Maswa DOs too called for limited regulation, citing the necessity of motor transport in area commerce.³³

The 1934 and 1938 amendments only made these concerns more acute. The DOs and police did not want to expend manpower monitoring roads, yet evasion cases were flagrant.³⁴ Local officials were also often unsure how to interpret the regulations. For example, a local soap manufacturer wished an exemption or permit to distribute his product along the Mwanza-Shinyanga route. Soap was neither an import nor an export, and did not deprive the railway of traffic; however, DSM pressured them not to grant an exemption for fear of further applications.³⁵

33 Scupham, DO Mwanza to PC, Mwanza, 25.3.31. TNA Acc.215/620:4; Huggins, DO Kwimba to PC, Mwanza, 26.3.31. TNA Acc.215/620:5; and O. Guise Williams, DO Maswa to PC, Mwanza, 27.2.31. TNA Acc.215/620:6

34 Huggins, DO Kwimba to PC, 26.3.31. TNA Acc.215/620:5; Lamb, DO Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 1.6.34. TNA Acc.215/620:34; and J. Jenkinson, Acting Superintendent of Police, Lake Province to the Commissioner of Police, DSM, 20.6.35. TNA Acc.215/620:42

35 N. D. Desai, Mwanza Soap and Toilet Works to PC, Lake Province, 20.3.38. TNA Acc.215/620:122

Beyond implementation problems, there was also concern over the impact of the transport restrictions on local commerce. And, these official anxieties were largely fueled by the lobbying efforts of Mwanza commercial organizations. For example, in 1934 J. E. S. Lamb, the Mwanza DO, produced an extensive memo on motor transport critical of the recent amendment. In it, he repeated the arguments of both the Mwanza Indian Association and Chamber of Commerce. His stressed that a literal interpretation of the regulations would "strike a blow at Mwanza's importance as a distributing centre."³⁶ To make his case he outlined the previous flow of goods and commodities between Mwanza and the TCs, and then provided a case study, complete with diagrammatic sketch, of the impact of the amendment:

Under the new Ordinance such action [round-trip hauling] would appear to be illegal. To carry the argument to its logical conclusion, the owner of a lorry trading at F may bring a full load of groundnuts to Mwanza(A) but may not carry back a case of soap for his shop. Since he purchases the soap at A for resale in his shop at F the conveyance thereof would, by Section 5(1) of the Ordinance, constitute a conveyance for reward. He should, therefore, purchase his soap at A, rail it to D, return with his empty lorry to F(27 miles) and then do the return journey of 36 miles form F to pick up his soap at D. I have purposely, of course, taken an extreme case for argument's sake.³⁷

³⁶ J. E. S. Lamb, DO Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 1.6.34. TNA Acc.215/620:33

³⁷ *ibid*, pg.32

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Officials in Dar es Salaam countered that Lamb "misunderstood" the amendment, in that it did not apply to traffic on feeder roads nor to agricultural produce.³⁸ Given this leeway, a local compromise ensued, under which Mwanza officials proposed to restrict only traffic flowing into Mwanza, not outgoing.³⁹ The Mabuki and Runere traders were eventually allowed free movement westward from the rail line to Mwanza, but were not allowed to cross it moving eastward.⁴⁰ The Mwanza administration also overlooked route closures, keeping the Mwanza-Nassa-Musoma Road open to trucks until the 1938 amendment. Finally, a series of "special instance" permits were granted, easing, but not ending, the difficulties faced by local wholesalers and manufacturers.⁴¹

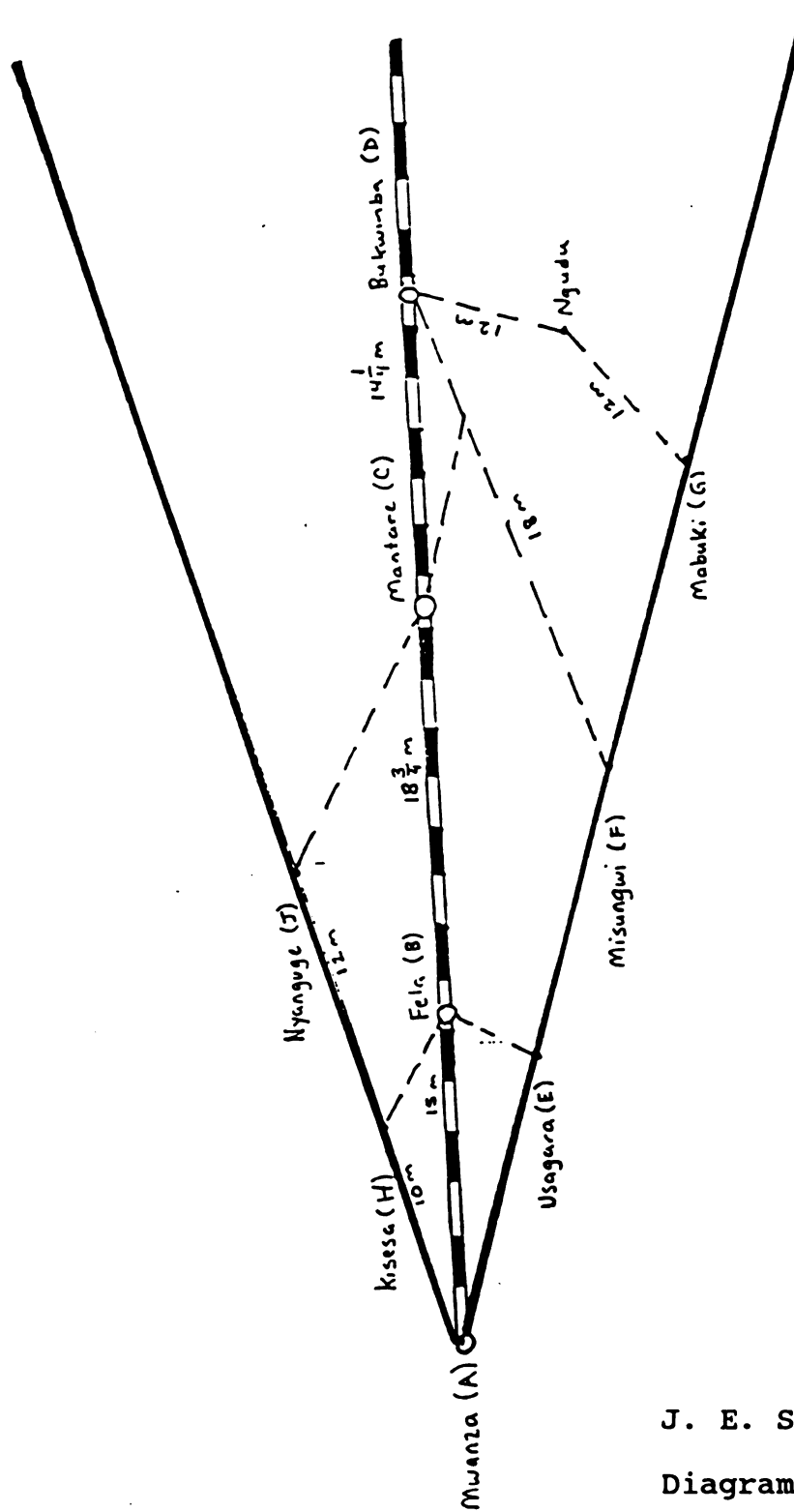
Regulation of motor transport began as an effort to revive rail traffic, but soon took on a legal life of its own. Because of unclear legal language, and the Mwanza administration's reluctance in enforcement, transport policy

38 C. Sec., DSM to PC, Lake Province, 19.6.34. TNA Acc.215/620:37

39 Sec., Mwanza Chamber of Commerce to C. Sec., DSM, 26.1.39. TNA Acc.215/620:102

40 G. F. Webster, PC, Lake Province to DO, Mwanza, 3.3.39. TNA Acc.2315/620:118

41 C. E. D. Stiebel, Acting DO, Mwanza to Habib & Bhatia, 1.2.38. TNA Acc.215.620:70



J. E. S. Lamb's
Diagrammatic Sketch

c.1934

source: TNA Acc.215/620:34

developed into a rather uneven struggle between local merchants and supporters of the railway in Dar es Salaam. Eventually, a local compromise was reached, but from the perspective of the Mwanza merchants, this was nevertheless another blow to their "duka network."

7.6 Limiting local capital: dhow transport

The second challenge to Mwanza's commercial transport network threatened local lake shipping. Throughout the Depression years, the KUR Marine lobbied the East African Board, as well as the Kenyan, Ugandan and Tanganyikan administrations for licensing and route restrictions on private lakecraft, primarily dhow traffic. However, Mwanza's dhow owners and their commercial dependents, like the lorry owners of the mainland "duka network," made their case through local business and ethnic associations.

Dhow shipping had been an important link in Mwanza's "duka network" since the early 1890's. The arrival of the KUR steamers in 1903 had not decreased dhow traffic, but rather expanded it as a feeder service. After the war the KUR steamers: the S.S. Usoga and S.S. Rusinga made weekly runs through Mwanza from Kisumu, then on to Bukoba and Entebbe. Mwanza dhows collected produce on the nearby lake islands and shoreline, and brought it on to Mwanza godowns, or distributed trade goods from Mwanza wholesalers to

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dependent lake area shopkeepers. In either case this was cargo which entered or left the region on the KUR steamers.

The dhows belonged almost exclusively to Mwanza commodity buyers and processors, not to shippers. For example, when registered in the late-1930's, there were approximately 64 dhows operating out of Mwanza port, belonging to some 32 merchants, the largest having a fleet of eight.⁴² They were constructed, up to 50 tons, at Kirumba near Mwanza, and sold for between Shs.18,000/- in 1919 to 15,500/- in 1933.⁴³ An ideal investment for a merchant capitalist, these dhows not only carried cargo, but were also readily mortgageable and exchangeable as well.⁴⁴

The relationship between the KUR Marine and the Mwanza dhow owners did not become strained until the late-1920's. The completion of the rail spur from Tabora transformed the port into a "competitive point," and the KUR feared the leakage of potential freight southward on Tanganyika Railways. The collapse of the cotton market and trade slowdown of the Depression only exacerbated the situation. Lake dhows, once viewed as by the KUR as a low-cost feeder

42 Dhow Registry. Acting PC, Lake Province to C. Sec., DSM, 3.11.38. TNA 26385:1-6

43 J. S. Sharp. "A Report on the Registration of Native Vessels, Lake Victoria," no date. CO691/132:14 File 5193/33

44 *ibid*, p.15

service, were transformed into cut-rate competition, collecting or distributing goods shipped by a rival rail line.

Dhow traffic was in fact expanding, but not necessarily at the expense of existing railway business, as officials contended.⁴⁵ By the late-1920's, however, lake area merchants were using dhows to distribute locally manufactured or processed items like rice from Mwanza, sugar from Jinja, or soap from Kisumu. Thus, they were important not only in commodity buying, but also in local merchants' attempts to transfer their profits to productive enterprises, by distributing locally manufactured or processed goods.

To gain greater leverage on lake region traffic the KUR Marine extended service to Musoma and the Ukerewe Island port of Nansio, attempting to pull them into the Kenyan economic orbit. Moreover, they offered decidedly lower cotton rates, and quickly captured much of the crop.⁴⁶ These had been the primary routes for Mwanza dhow shippers,

45 The KUR Marine argued that dhow transport had dramatically expanded since the early-1920's, capturing its routes, commodities and imported freight. It also claimed that dhows were used to evade intercolonial duties and tariffs. These arguments were largely reiterated by V. C. R. Ford in The Trade of Lake Victoria (1955).

46 A. C. Davey, DO, Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 25.9.33. TNA 12775:261

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and thus they were thrown into direct competition with the steam line. Even in Mwanza Town the KUR did well, offering a special lighter service for the Nakasero Co. ginnery, and getting its exclusive business - some £ 4,000 worth of annual freight.⁴⁷

In such a local contest, the Mwanza dhow owners' advantages should have been clear-cut. They had a well-established network of customers and had catered to their needs. The dhows operated on a flexible schedule, mixed cargoes so they could take many small consignments, could make credit arrangements through their owners, and had no difficult forms of fees for rural customers. Further, the dhows could land or load much nearer to small, coastal markets, decreasing overland transport costs.

The higher rate structure of the Tanganyika rail line, to which the dhows were tied as a feeder service, was a major impediment. With considerably lower fares down to the coast, the KUR Marine was began to capture the southeastern lake traffic in cotton and groundnuts. For example, out of the port of Mwanza itself, in 1932-3 exports broke down as follows:

47 *ibid*

Year	Item	from Mwanza(via TR)	ex via KUR Marine
1932	ginned cotton	573 tons	23 tons
1933	" "	490	257
1932	groundnuts	305	401
1932	rice	829	192 48

Dhow owners still carried a share of those commodities brought into Mwanza to be processed and reshipped via the KUR, but nevertheless lost considerably more potential traffic.

The local administration was particularly upset over the KUR's perceived incursion. The Mwanza DO wrote his superiors:

The Kenya and Uganda Railways Steam Tug 'Buganda' having collected all the 'plums' in the District, left the 'stones' on the beach for the Railway Administration, have now seriously embarrassed me in the Administration of the District. ⁴⁹

His concerns, of course, revolved around the viability of the new rail spur and also the ability to monitor produce leaving the island and lake coast. In administration rhetoric, the plight of the dhow owners was only important as long as it was attached to the success or failure of the railway.

48 S. Maxwell, GM TR to C. Sec., DSM, 19.10.33. TNA 12775/271

49 A. C. Davey, DO Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 25.9.33. TNA 12775/262

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Also pressuring the Tanganyikan Administration to act were importers and wholesalers in Dar es Salaam. They wished to capture a larger flow of Lake Victoria commodity exports from their competitors in Mombasa or Nairobi. The petitioned that:

...a number of lighters tapping the trade of Tanganyika shores of lake Victoria carry the whole trade to Kenya Uganda Railways....thereby depriving Tanganyika of its legitimate trade which should be concentrated at Mwanza. ...it is incumbent upon the Government to take necessary steps for the immediate restoration and protection of that trade.⁵⁰

Habib Jamal, formerly of Mwanza, and now an unofficial member of the Legislative Council, also repeatedly pressed the administration to protect the lake dhow industry.⁵¹

The Tanganyika political and railway administration were not simply slow to act; but had over time essentially abandoned lake trade outside Mwanza Town to the KUR Marine. S. Maxwell, general manager of Tanganyika Railways, responded to his critics that the government did not favor "interference in parts outside Mwanza over cheaper rates via KUR Marine."⁵² Later he was to contend that the dhow owners had "wrested" traffic from the KUR over "the past 10-12

50 Extract from the proceedings of the Indian Merchants Chamber Conference, DSM, 29-31.10.33. TNA 12775:287

51 Habib Jamal's questions, Legislative Council Debate, 17.10.33. Extract in GM's, Tanganyika Railways correspondence. TNA 12775:267

52 S. Maxwell, GM, TR to C. Sec., DSM, 19.10.33. TNA 12775:272

years," implying there was no KUR rate war at all. Moreover, the Tanganyika administration actually undermined the dhow owners by raising wharfage fees at Mwanza so high that they often amounted to 5-10% of the cargo's actual value.⁵³

Finally, the Tanganyika administration yielded to lobbying by the KUR and Kenya administration and imposed registration and inspection requirements on the lake dhow owners. In 1930, the 1921 Orders in Council covering lake transport were amended to impose new, higher registration, title change and survey fees, and annual inspections of each craft. While this legislation did not appear highly oppressive, under the stress of the Depression, however it did impose added costs. Moreover, the government inspector was to be a KUR Marine engineer, bringing charges of favoritism and fears of conspiracy.

In Mwanza, merchants organized the Dhow Owners Association, and petitioned the administration for repeal of the registration and inspection rules in 1933. They laid out their version of the history of lake traffic and emphasized their local role in promoting trade and employment, countering the KUR's claim they were

⁵³ Habib Jamal's questions, Legislative Council Debate, 17.10.33. Extract in GM's Tanganyika Railways correspondence. TNA 12775:267

interlopers. The dhow owners then disputed the need for inspections, citing their safety record, insurance practices, and pointing out the necessary beachings were expensive and risked damage to the dhows. Most perceptively, the Mwanza dhow owners attached themselves to the local administration's cause, by stressing their feeder role for the Tanganyika line. They concluded that the actual intent of the legislation was to run them out of business:

The real reason why the Kenya and Uganda Railways are anxious to put an end to the dhow traffic on Lake Victoria is, not the alleged competition of the dhows with the steamers on the lake, but the fact that the dhows carry to Mwanza most of the produce from the various ports on the lake, which otherwise would be carried away by the steamers of the Kenya and Uganda Railways to Kisumu and eventually on to Mombasa instead of same being carried by the railways of this Territory to Dar-es-Salaam as is done at present. In fact it would not be incorrect to state that most of the produce booked at Mwanza is carried from the various trading centres on the lake to Mwanza by the dhows. These dhows act as feeders to the Tanganyika Railways and are indispensable...⁵⁴

Dar es Salaam's response was rather indifferent, anxious to gather information, but loath to act. The dhow owners claims were checked and reported from the Mwanza district office all way to the Colonial Office in London. The costs involved were carefully assessed, and officials in both DSM and London expressed doubts about the KUR's

⁵⁴ Ladha Meghji, President, Mwanza Dhow Owners Association to C. Sec, DSM, 7.4.33. CO691/132:23-7 File 5193/33

intentions. However, the inspections pressed ahead. In 1932 they had to be cancelled after dhow owner resistance, but by 1934 about three-quarters of the dhows were registered and inspected.⁵⁵

In subsequent negotiations over East African railway rates, the lake traffic question reemerged. In 1934, the KUR Marine essentially demanded the Musoma traffic. Later, in 1938, it sought a prohibition on all non-local dhow routes. Despite compromise offers from the Mwanza Dhow Owners' Association, the Tanganyika administration abandoned their cause, closing all routes outside territorial waters and restricting the Mwanza-Musoma route.⁵⁶

Unlike the motor transport operators, the dhow owners' case did not end in a local compromise, but rather a stinging defeat for a number of Mwanza's most prominent merchants. While produce shipments and local traffic continued along the lakeshore and to the islands, more profitable long-hauls were eliminated. Large wholesalers and regional manufacturers lost their ability to market products, and Mwanza merchants lost an important avenue of investment. Moreover, another important link in duka network, lake transport, was weakened.

55 File Notes, DSM Secretariat. CO691/123:16

56 Legislative Council debate over the Transport Bill, 18.10.37. CO691/159:3-53, File 42267/37; and Secretariat File Minutes, 12.2.36. CO691/148:4, File 42029/5/36

8 Urban Cattle Marketing, 1919-1933

Livestock buying was the most profitable avenue of rural commerce open to Mwanza's African entrepreneurs. Until the mid-1920's Mwanza buyers and shippers dominated the lake region trade, but like their local counterparts in cotton buying or transport, they too faced both corporate and government challenges. During the early depression years, a government sponsored firm, Meat Rations Limited, sought to monopolize cattle buying, and drive Mwanza traders from the scene.

Unlike other Mwanza merchants, however, these African livestock buyers were able to prevail in the marketplace, both economically and politically. These local cattle traders excelled in knowledge of herds, in raising capital and exploiting regional transport; while their European, corporate competition was simply too inefficient to merit continued governmental support. Despite their rural victory, however, Mwanza cattle traders were repeatedly assailed in town by remaining European businessmen and their supporters in the administration.

8.1 The "Bukoba" Traders

Mwanza Province was one of the largest cattle herding regions in Tanganyika. Colonial authorities estimated the cattle population at between 1 and 1.5 million head, but it was difficult to market livestock over great distances southward or eastward.¹ The weekly KUR steamer, which began in 1904, did open up the lake port markets. Soon, a weekly trade developed between Mwanza livestock buyers and Bukoba and Kampala butchers.

The two most prominent livestock traders in Mwanza town were Abdallah bin Ali and Sadala bin Saadi. Abdallah, an Arab, began in the Bukoba trade in 1915. By the 1920's he was in business with his four sons and had diversified his capital into urban properties.² Sadala, a Manyema, was also long established in the cattle trade. He held numerous Mwanza and surrounding trade center properties, and eventually became a town elder. The overall number of Mwanza-based cattle traders is difficult to estimate, since they comprised experienced merchants in the lake trade as well as some involved in the town meat market. Twenty-five men, identifying themselves as cattle traders, did petition

¹ Die Deutschen Schutzgebiete in Afrika und der Südsee, 1912/1913 (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried und Sohn, 1914), Tabellen B II 3, 91; and The Sub-committee on Soil Erosion for Tabora-Mwanza Provinces cited the 1930 cattle census for Mwanza Province at 1,310,731. 3.9.31. TNA 20770:80

² Lamb to Land Office, DSM, 3.4.34. TNA Acc.215/497 Vol.2:339-40

the administration in 1932, though it is doubtful all were permanent residents of the area.

There were also a number of non-cattle, food and livestock traders using lake transport, and obviously there were African and Arab traders who dabbled in both. Dried fish, goats and rice were also important commodities in the lake steamer trade. And, with the advent of the railway in 1926, dried fish became a major southbound export. Perhaps the largest dried fish and goat trader in Mwanza was Feruzi bin Ruheya, originally from Usambara, who arrived in the early 1890's, traded goats and then branched into dried fish in 1918.³

Whatever commodities they bought and shipped, the African and Arab traders' strategies were quite similar: use local knowledge of livestock purchase and regional knowledge of urban food markets to buy items in demand and sell them at a rather high rate of return. The profits might then be rechanneled through mortgageable rental properties, moneylending or other commodity buying until the next cycle of livestock marketing.

The Bukoba traders' rural buying strategy in particular was to pay top prices for quality cattle - preferably

³ Davey, ADO Mwanza , Memo 7.6.32 and 8.6.32. TNA Acc.41/121/26:5-6

bullocks. Once purchased the cattle were held upcountry while lake passage was arranged. Then they were driven or trucked to Mwanza, and loaded on a lighter behind the weekly steamer to Bukoba. There, the cattle were auctioned to itinerant butchers who took them into the coffee growing hinterland for slaughter and sale.

A second strategy, opted for by many smaller traders, was to auction cattle at the daily Mwanza town market. Purchases were for consumption; few were exported, the bidders being local butchers. Sales volume varied greatly, from as few as four or five to as many as 30 head per day.⁴ During the Depression years about 200 cattle were sold there per month, at an average price of 30/-.⁵ It was a largely unregulated market, situated outside the township in Mwanza South, and apparently without Native Authority supervision.⁶

The Mwanza cattle merchants, however, faced a number of impediments outside of local auctions. The KUR steamer service was not geared towards the needs of smaller-scale, African entrepreneurs. At the Mwanza dock customs officials harassed the mostly illiterate Bukoba traders with forms and

4 Vet Officer, Lake Province to PC Lake Province, 24.3.39. TNA Acc.215/489/I:375

5 W. G. G. Pevie, Vet Officer, Lake Province to Director of Veterinary Services, Mpwapwa, 26.6.39. TNA Acc.215/489/I:413-4

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additional fees. Moreover, the dockers demanded additional Saturday pay, and the KUR required a considerable cash advance for booking a lighter.⁷

The colonial state too, made seemingly excessive demands. During the early depression years, administration policies increasingly restricted the traders' movements and transactions. First, the regional authorities limited all commercial cattle transactions to specified government markets and auctions. Further, lorry licensing requirements kept Mwanza buyers from distant markets; and veterinary quarantines often closed large buying areas altogether.

Veterinary officials in particular were hostile to the activities of the Bukoba traders. Senior officials viewed them as "itinerants" and feared their cattle might spread disease.⁸ Quarantines were frequently enforced, either on particular lots of cattle or whole regions, which cattle buyers sought to avoid. They worried their cattle might actually become diseased in quarantine areas too close to the lake. Moreover, they could not afford to have their capital tied up in cattle held for 14 days after sale - their profit was in rapid turnover. In one instance in

7 Acting DO Schupman to PC, Mwanza Province, 5.5.30. TNA Acc.215 PC50/3:3; and Buckley, Acting PC, Mwanza Province to C. Sec., DSM, 6.5.30. TNA Acc.215 PC50/3:4

8 Acting Director of Veterinary Services to C. Sec., DSM, 15.1.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:B2

1929, when the DO from Maswa inquired why Mwanza traders had not turned out well for recent sales, he was told that their funds had unexpectedly been tied up in a quarantine after a sale in Nassa, and it would be several weeks before they could return.⁹

To deal with the increased demands of the colonial state and KUR Marine, the Bukoba traders pooled their resources, forming what the local administration referred to as a "syndicate." Sadala Saadi in Mwanza acted as agent for the group, representing their interests to the Mwanza authorities and handling group funds. The traders consulted a lawyer to draw up their agreement, and retained a clerk to deal with customs and KUR paperwork. For shipping costs, each member paid 10/- per beast into the pool, to cover feed and short term holding, dockers' wages, veterinary permits, customs forms, and the 2,800/- downpayment for a lighter booking.¹⁰ Also, by consigning more than 100 cattle per trip, the group earned a one-quarter freight rebate from the KUR Marine.

The Bukoba traders also maintained a united front in dealing with the administration. When confronted by new

⁹ Williams, DO Maswa to PC, Mwanza, 4.10.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:40

¹⁰ Buckley, Act. PC, Lake Province to DO Mwanza, 2.5.30. TNA Acc.215 PC 50/3:2

government rules, they opted for public compliance and co-operation. While sometimes accused of making presale agreements with herdsmen outside the authorized rural buying markets, as a group they regularly appeared at administration supervised sales. At one point twenty-five "Arab and Swahili cattle merchants of Mwanza" actually petitioned the Veterinary Office to open additional sanctioned cattle buying markets in Musoma District.¹¹ Moreover, they appealed veterinary restrictions, and make known any problems caused by licensing or fees.

Together, the Bukoba traders possessed considerable local and regional political influence. Mwanza cattle traders were merchant capitalists, like their European or Asian counterparts dealing in other commodities. They raised their capital through profits from cattle sales in Bukoba town, and through property transactions - mortgages and rents - from houses and plots in Mwanza town and in the Trade Centers. Thus, their property holding and trade activities gave them some standing in local "legitimate" politics. Moreover, their regular support of government auctions and infusions of cash into the rural economy earned them the gratitude of many local officials.

¹¹ Sadala bin Sadi, headman. Petition of Cattle Merchant of Mwanza to Senior Veterinary Officer, Mwanza, 19.12.32. TNA Acc.489 Vol.I:51-2

8.2 Meat Rations Ltd.

Mwanza's African cattle traders, however, faced a more severe challenge than local administrative regulation. The principal state sponsored industry in Mwanza Province was a firm known as Meat Rations Ltd. Founded by a former veterinary official and backed by influential Kenyan settlers, the company gained subsidies and cooperation, first from the secretariat in Dar es Salaam, then the Colonial Office, and finally from members of the local administration in Mwanza. The firm's objective was to process canned and dried meat at Mwanza and then exploit the new rail system by shipping their product to the plantations and estates of Kenya and Tanganyika and the mine compounds of Zaire.

For the colonial state, Meat Rations Ltd. was the realization of a dream. Since the turn of the century German officials had written wishfully of exploiting the vast cattle herds of northwestern Tanganyika. Moreover, for British officials, it was not merely a means of generating wealth and exports, but also a vehicle for incorporating pastoralists into the colonial economy. They also hoped that the firm's buying efforts might reduce herd size and thereby the perceived problem of overgrazing, place cash into the hands of rural taxpayers, and rationalize the murky business of itinerant cattle buying.

The Meat Rations scheme was devised by Eustace Montgomery, a veteran of nearly twenty years as a veterinary officer and researcher in Eastern and Southern Africa. He enjoyed the confidence of the Kenyan settler population having come out in 1909, first as a veterinary pathologist, then as an advisor and military officer. Moreover, he was very much in the colonial administration's favor, since he had acted as a veterinary consultant to the East Africa governors, eventually rising as high as Advisor on Animal Health to the Secretary of State for Colonies.¹²

Meat Rations Ltd. was first formed as a syndicate in Nairobi, in March 1926. Montgomery was to be director, and a group of wealthy Kenyan settlers lent their names to attract subscribers. The firm was incorporated in Dar es Salaam more than a year later, still with Montgomery in charge, and Lord Delamere, C. Harrison, a Nairobi solicitor, H. Show, the Nairobi manager of Standard Bank of South Africa, and G. Colville, a Nairobi landholder, as directors. It was initially capitalized at £ 30,000, with an Australian firm, Houlder Bros. & Co. holding the controlling interest.¹³

¹² "Obituary for Mr. Eustace Montgomery," East Africa Today, (16.6.32), 1026

¹³ Capt. Grazenbok. "A Conspectus of the activities, past and present and the financial situation of Meat Rations Ltd." CO 691/121:111

The key to the deal, however, was not private investment. Instead, the directors had negotiated a series of very favorable state loans and concessions from the Colonial Office in London and the Secretariat in Dar es Salaam. The firm was regarded as a controlled agency by the administration under article seven of the mandate.¹⁴ It was guaranteed profits up to 10% of its initial capital for up to five years, and granted a "monopoly" on cattle buying in Mwanza and Tabora Provinces for ten years under the Native Livestock Ordinance no.15 of 1928.¹⁵ The corporation was finally granted a 99 year lease on a factory site in Mwanza South, and a promise of 5,000 acres for a holding area upcountry at Maliyanguru in Maswa District, near the rail line.

The firm was popular among officials since it was presented as a scheme well integrated with rural policy objectives. Not only did MRLtd buyers propose to put cash in herdsmen's hands, but the management repeatedly stressed the positive role they might play in reducing herd size and thereby alleviating overstocking. In company correspondence with the administration, Maj. Montgomery made every effort to assert his expert view that Mwanza Province was 25 to 50% overstocked, and that only a modern, industrial marketing

14 File Note. CO691.96:4

15 File Note. CO691/96:10

and processing scheme like his could provide a large enough market mechanism to stabilize herd size.¹⁶

The MRLtd position was both drawn from correspondence from veterinary officials and administrators. Vet reports from Kenya and northern Tanganyika during the late 1920's all emphasized a perceived ecological crisis in terms of overgrazing and erosion in pastoralist savannah lands. In Mwanza Province the problem was thought to be immediate. In 1927, the Veterinary Dept. estimated that approximately 180,000 cattle died there from drought, disease and poor grazing.¹⁷ Moreover, officials believed the cattle population to be increasing out of control. The PC wrote in 1928 that:

The cattle population of this Province alone is estimated at approximately 1 and 1/4 million, which, at a conservative estimate of 20%, should provide an increase of a quarter million per annum. Local requirements of beef and export cattle cannot absorb more than 50,000.¹⁸

Meat Rations Ltd. was seen as the needed new outlet for relieving overstocking. One local veterinary officer wrote: "...much could be done by inducing the natives to turn their old and unproductive stock into cash. The establishing of

¹⁶ Montgomery to C. Sec, DSM, 12.12.28. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:A

¹⁷ Montgomery to C. Sec., DSM, 12.12.28. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:A

¹⁸ Extract of comments by PC Mwanza to East Africa, 4,15(7.2.28):54, in CO691/96:20-1 File 29090:28

the Meat Factory in Mwanza and the demands of local traders, give the natives every facility for getting rid of their surplus stock..."¹⁹

Maj. Montgomery's plan was to purchase "surplus" cattle at markets throughout Mwanza Province and then slaughter them at a canning/dessication plant in town. The firm would produce a variety of meat and cattle byproducts like dried or canned beef, bone meal, fertilizer and tallow. Taking advantage of Mwanza's transport links, these items would be shipped by steamer or rail to beef scarce markets in Uganda, Zaire, and Kenyan and Tanganyikan farms and plantations. Since these were inferior products, and customers were cash poor, the project hinged on low buying prices and low capital equipment overhead.

In the early company prospectus, Maj. Montgomery wrote that his firm would soon have the capacity to process 50 head per day, but went on to add:

It is fully appreciated that to prove of real service to the Provinces of Mwanza and Tabora, we should handle more than ten times this daily number: it is the desire of the company to expand to this capacity so fast as arrangements can be made for by and delivery of live-stock.²⁰

¹⁹ Mahorn, Acting Senior Vet. Officer, Mwanza. 1928 Annual Report, 11.1.29. TNA Acc.246 PC28/10:1

²⁰ Eustace Montgomery, Managing Director, MRLtd to C. Sec., DSM, 12.12.28. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:A

Thus, while the firm apparently had the facilities to handle approximately 17 to 18,000 head per year, Maj. Montgomery implied to eager officials that in time his plant might absorb as many as 200,000 head per year.²¹

In 1927/8 Maj. Montgomery and his staff purchased an initial 4,000 cattle and began processing and marketing tests, from a plant site in Mwanza South. First, they attempted to produce smoked meat, but the reduction ratio was 4 lbs. of raw meat per pound of product. Shortly, they settled on sun-dried beef soaked in salt brine, with a reduction ratio of 3 to 1.²² In the first year byproducts were wasted; however, over the next two years Montgomery's men experimented with bone, meat and bloodmeal, dripping, tallow, manure, fertilizers, and thin hides.²³ By 1930 a rudimentary plant was operating in Mwanza South, with 70 factory and field employees, and turning out MRLtd's main product - beef "extract."²⁴

21 These are simply extrapolations of the daily numbers given by Montgomery. Of course, the machinery could not operate everyday. More importantly, as MRLtd was to later learn, climatic, feeding and disease conditions compressed the buying and slaughtering season into the September to December period, and thereby strained the plant.

22 Extract from report by PC, Mwanza, 7.2.28. CO691/96:20-1 File 29090:28

23 "An Interview with Mr. Eustace Montgomery," East Africa. 4, 196(June 25, 1928):1333; and R. W. Taylor, Treasurer to C. Sec., DSM, 11.8.31. TNA 20770:10a

24 Annual Report, 1930. CO691/117:64 File 30117:31

MEAT RATIONS LTD.

(Registered in Tanganyika Territory).

Manufacturers of all Meat Products:

Beef, Pure Beef Dripping,
Feeding Meals (Meat and Bone),
Fertilisers, Marrow Fat.

Pickled, Preserved, Chilled and Frozen Beef
for dispatch by rail and steamer to
KENYA, TANGANYIKA, UGANDA, ZANZIBAR,
and the BELGIAN CONGO.



Meat Rations and Cooking Fat for Native
Labour on Mines, Estates and Institutions
at very reduced rates.

Full particulars from

MEAT RATIONS, LTD., P.O. Box 8, Mwanza, Tanganyika.

At first, MRLtd. received support from local and regional officials. DOs in Bukoba and Usambara assisted in market testing of MRLtd's extract experiments for human consumption. These local administrators passed out literature and samples to local employers and their own government staffs. Moreover, the Chief Secretary in DSM directed Mwanza authorities to embark on "propaganda and education" campaigns aimed at pastoralists. In correspondence with MRLtd, he assured Montgomery that they would "make sure that pressure is applied to the right persons."²⁵ Consequently, in Mwanza Province the PC urged rural officials to meet with colonial chiefs and elders, and encourage them to participate in government cattle markets and specifically sell to MRLtd.²⁶ Finally, the governor himself spoke publicly on behalf of MRLtd, first when he and his wife personally opened the plant, and then in his 1928 baraza with the Mwanza Province colonial chiefs.²⁷

Meat Rations Ltd's actual commercial cattle buying started slowly. By 1929 purchases were averaging about 150 head per month, 50 to 80 short of what Maj. Montgomery had

25 SBBM, Act. C. Sec, DSM to Mr. Director, MRLtd, 22.5.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:8A

26 Buckley, PC to C. Sec., DSM, 7.6.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:8B

27 Meyer, Acting C. Sec., DSM to PC, Mwanza, 10.8.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:19

projected as a break even level.²⁸ Local officials soon began to complain to the PC that the MRLtd buyers were skipping market days and thereby undermining government efforts to encourage or enforce cash sales.²⁹ The PC, Buckley, and Senior Veterinary Officer, Mahorn, met with Montgomery on several occasions, but found his explanations unsatisfactory. Montgomery complained about the terms of the sales, especially the high bids by African buyers. He also admitted problems with his own buying staff.³⁰ The real problem for MRLtd, however, was a cash shortage. As a Vet official noted in 1931, "owing to lack of ultimate markets for their products, the buying power of the factory is obviously limited."³¹ Not surprisingly then, the firm was suffering losses:

up to 31.2.28	£ 1,716	
1.4.28 - 10.6.29	2,278	
11.6.29 - 10.6.30	5,815	
11.6.30 - 11.6.31	2,254	32

28 Edgar Messervy, Act. Senior Vet. Officer to PC, Lake Province, 29.8.29. TNA Acc.246 PC 52/1:29

29 Mahorn, Act. Senior Vet Officer, Mwanza to PC, Mwanza, 29.10.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:43; and Page, DO Kwimba to PC, Mwanza, 27.10.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:44

30 D. B. Mahorn, Act. Senior Vet. Officer, Mwanza to PC, Mwanza, 29.10.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52.1:43

31 J. D. Tremlett, Senior Vet Officer, Mwanza to J. F. Green. Private letter entered in CO Minutes. CO691/119:2 File 30216

32 Capt. Grazenbrook. "A Conspectus of the activities..." CO691/119:113

Montgomery and his backers were not prepared to sustain extended start-up costs. Much of the initial £ 30,000 in shareholder capital had been spent in England, and thus there was little left to expand the plant or cattle buying.³³ At the time, Maj. Montgomery confided to a colonial office official that he "found the establishment of his business a slower and more expensive process than he expected and is [was] beginning to be alarmed at the amount of capital which has already gone into the business without appreciable return."³⁴

The firm was encountering difficulties in every aspect of the cattle business, except perhaps in political lobbying. Clearly, MRLtd was undercapitalized. In 1930 it could not even scrape together £ 250 for some used by-product processing machinery. Further, at two points, in 1930 and 1932, the plant shut down altogether. Cash was short because expected sales of by-products were slow to develop, the only exception being bonemeal sales in Kenya. Productivity in the plant was also quite low. Despite earlier experiments, the firm was only getting 4 lbs. of extract from a 220 lb. live weight cow.³⁵ And most

33 "Memorandum on Matter relating to Loan of 16,000." CO691/121:41

34 P. E. Mitchell, Sec. for Native Affairs to Gov. Cameron, DSM, 19.3.30. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:97A

35 Taylor, Treasurer to C. Sec., DSM, 11.8.31. TNA 20770:10b

importantly for colonial officials, the long promised expansion and improvements to the plant never took place. The mechanical capacity was only 50 head per day for the life of the firm.

The root cause of this difficulty though, was that MRLtd simply sold a poor product. The dried meat was pressed in a brick and wrapped in burlap. Colonial officials noted it smelled bad, and consumers in early tests found it had to be soaked in water for several days before cooking. It was also widely observed that Muslim workers would not eat either the dried meat or extract if it were offered in their ration.³⁶ Even the government hospitals found it unacceptable to serve.³⁷ Obviously, this was not a product which could compete with better quality fresh meat or cheaper dried fish.

The firm repeatedly complained to the local administration that the marketing scheme and prevailing prices were was the source of its difficulties. Maj. Montgomery repeatedly pressed to have the firm's buying monopoly enforced. He objected to the high prices paid at

36 F. A. Brett, DO Bukoba to Maj. Montgomery, 21.6.26.
TNA Acc.215/31:no page

37 *ibid*

auction and wished exclusive government markets for the firm.³⁸

The local administration, however, was unwilling to further intervene on MRLtd's behalf. The local administration all along had been unwilling to enforce the 1928 ordinance giving MRLtd a buying monopoly.³⁹ And now, the PC was neither willing to relinquish control over markets, nor actively control prices, since MRLtd was clearly faltering and rural cattle transactions were deemed necessary in order to maintain tax collections. At the Secretariat level, officials were concerned that the problems be addressed in gradual steps. Dar es Salaam wanted colonial officials, including chiefs to persuade herdsmen to come forward and sell their cattle for lower prices. Later, DOs delivered veiled threats of forced sales or tax confiscations.⁴⁰

In response to the firm's difficulties, Montgomery and the directors stepped aside in 1930 and 1931. A new managing director was appointed, Capt. William Grazenbrook, a long time veteran of colonial commercial politics. A

³⁸ Montgomery to PC Mwanza, 11.4.28. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:2

³⁹ SBBM, Acting C. Sec, DSM to Montgomery, 22.5.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:8A

⁴⁰ *ibid*

merchant and big game hunter, Grazenbrook had bounced around East Africa as a military officer and agency manager. He was a founding member of the DSM chamber of commerce, chair of the Zanzibar chamber, and a clove industry advocate with the Agriculture Department. He was also a favorite of the commercial newspaper East Africa, and had even authored a book, The Clove of Commerce.⁴¹ Grazenbrook was joined on the board by R. W. Taylor, representing the administration's interest, R. Robson, representing the principal shareholder Holder Bros., and J. R. Leslie, the new secretary and solicitor. Only Grazenbrook and Taylor resided in Tanganyika, and the firm's management now concentrated almost exclusively on lobbying in DSM and London.

During the reorganization the upper echelon of the administration and colonial office stood by MRLtd. Gov. Cameron wrote his superiors that, "if the factory were not in existence the Government would ... have to consider the question of building one."⁴² The Secretariat and Senior Veterinary Officer also backed MRLtd, on the grounds that relieving overstocking and providing cash to pastoralists for tax purposes, were vital policy measures. As a consequence of this support, MRLtd. received a £ 16,000 loan

⁴¹ East Africa, (2.9.26)

⁴² Gov. Cameron to I.C.D.F., memo, 24.4.30.
C0691/111:29

to continue operations from the Imperial Colonial Development Fund in London.

8.3 Economic and Political Competition

One factor the firm's backers and distant colonial officials had not anticipated, however, was the complexity and resilience of indigenous cattle trading networks. African merchant capitalists, operating from Mwanza town, dominated the market. What they lacked in technology, local traders made up for in experience and reputation. Moreover, they were as adept at manipulating the local administration as Meat Rations backers were the Secretariat or the Colonial Office.

Price levels were at the heart of the competition between MRLtd and the Bukoba traders. Montgomery and Grazenbrook both repeatedly stressed the need to pay "world" prices for cattle, in order to assure the profitability of the Mwanza plant. Unfortunately, their reading of the international market and calculations of the firm's break even point were constantly in flux. At first, they had planned on stable market at 15/- per head. Under the stress of the depression and their own cash crunch they lowered the figure to 7/- per head. However, after the I.D.C. loan, they began to talk of 25/- per head as an economic price.⁴³

⁴³ R. W. Taylor, Treasurer to C. Sec., DSM, 11.8.31. TNA 2770:10b; and Mr. Grazenbrook's Rept., within R. W. Taylor, Treasurer to C. Sec., DSM, 15.7.30. TNA 12452/II:2

Mwanza's cattle merchants, on the other hand, regularly paid from 30 to 45/- per head for prime cattle. The Depression decreased the purchasing power of Bukoba coffee growers and, by the early-1930's, had driven Mwanza Province cattle prices down to about 25/-. Nevertheless, operating in fresh meat at the high end of the market, the merchants profited from more of the live weight and had a much quicker turnover. Their concerns centered more around management and shipping costs, than Mwanza purchase prices.

Meat Rations Ltd., however, was convinced that the Bukoba traders' high purchase prices inflated the whole market, and thus discouraged pastoralists from trading lesser quality cattle at "world" prices. As Maj. Montgomery wrote Gov. Cameron:

Cattle traders to distant ports and retail butchers who well know the maxim that 'the customer pays' do pay prices far above the world's value for equivalent stock. Coming into competition with each other on this never losing maxim, have inflated the already fictitious value to the owner who is at any time devoid of a desire to sell, and who is still less disposed to on what he regards as a rising market.⁴⁴

He went on to add that:

It is our ambition to stabilise the price of cattle for the lasting benefit [sic] of both the breeder and the consumer: to achieve this it is

⁴⁴ Montgomery, Mg. Director MRLtd to C. Sec., DSM, 12.12.28. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:A

desirable first to control the transitory and speculative trade with the outside of these Provinces...⁴⁵

After repeated bidding loses to the Bukoba traders in 1929 and 1930, The administration's representative on the MRLtd's board, Territorial Treasurer R. W. Taylor, put the matter more bluntly:

The native seeing these purchases at prices ranging up to Shs.32/- refused to sell any cattle to the Company's buyer whose limit was about Shs.7/- per head.⁴⁶

In response to this "uneconomic" competition, MRLtd attempted to undermine local cattle traders on several fronts. In 1927 Veterinary officials and the KUR Marine launched an investigation into charges of cruelty to animals against cattle traders loading at the Mwanza dock. It was not clear who levelled the allegations, but Maj. Montgomery was a consultant on the matter to the PC, Stiebel.⁴⁷ Apparently, cattle loading days, Friday and Saturday, were rather hectic with occasional bolting oxen in the streets; but veterinary officials agreed that all that was required was a new lighter.⁴⁸ The Bukoba traders also improved their

45 ibid

46 R. W. Taylor, Treasurer to C. Sec., DSM, 11.8.31. TNA 20770:10b

47 Stiebel, PC Mwanza Province to Dist. Veterinary Officer, Mwanza, 22.2.27. TNA 10025:10

48 W. A. Burns, DVO, Mwanza to Chief Vet Officer, DSM, 9.2.27. TNA 10025:13

position by independently raising 100 for new pens and a loading chute on the dock.⁴⁹

The next year the KUR Marine began another inquiry into the Mwanza cattle trade, this time after receiving unspecified information that a group of African traders were running a corrupt shipping ring.⁵⁰ KUR officials alleged that "Sadala & Co." had given other traders the impression that they had an exclusive agreement for lighters, and all would have to pay them 5/- per head over the standard KUR rate.⁵¹ However, the Acting Provincial Commissioner, Buckley, came strongly to the Bukoba traders' defense, explaining their syndicate and in turn pointing out abuses by Customs and local Railway officials against African shippers. In the end, the Bukoba traders were exonerated, and the Mwanza Customs clerks were reprimanded by DSM.⁵²

49 Acting GM, KUR to C. Sec., DSM, 6.6.27. TNA 10025:25; and S. A. Larret, Asst. Engineer, Mwanza to Acting Dir. PWD, DSM, 1.7.27. TNA 10025:28

50 It is not clear with whom these allegations began. The Bukoba traders did have a series of run-ins with the Vet Officer in Musoma over cattle shipping from his district. There was, in fact, a similar dispute in 1933 in which he backed down. Nevertheless, given their pattern of business behavior and government connections, MRLtd. may well have also played a role.

51 District Traffic Manager, Kisumu to PC Mwanza, 16.4.30. TNA Acc.215 PC50/3:1

52 Ernest Adams, Controller of Customs, DSM to Superintendent of Customs, Mwanza, 21.5.30. TNA Acc.215 PC50/3:5

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Meat Rations Ltd. continued its lobbying animus, as already noted, by pressing for enforcement of its cattle buying monopoly under the Native Livestock Ordinance, no.15 of 1928. Colonial officials, however, continued to resist. Unable to exclude African competitors from the government auctions, MRLtd officials then sought to overthrow the auction system altogether, lobbying for private, direct sales.⁵³ This effort was disallowed as well. Finally, in desperation the firm sunk to circulating rumors of veterinary quarantines in Bukoba to discourage Mwanza buyers from attending markets.⁵⁴

Meat Rations Ltd. also embarked on a buying scheme to reduce regional cattle prices through the marketplace. They too shipped live cattle to an agent in Bukoba, dumping them on the market for the purpose of lowering both the Mwanza cattle traders' prices and profits.⁵⁵ Mr. Grazenbrook reported in 1930 that:

Hitherto the Bukoba demand for cattle has given the African trader a most lucrative market because of his ability to purchase stock at a comparatively low price in Mwanza district and sell to the Bukoba market at a handsome profit. When the Company came into the market the

53 Acting DO Kwimba to Senior Veterinary Officer, Mwanza, 23.7.32. TNA Acc.215/489/I:15; and Montgomery to C. Sec., DSM, 7.10.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:40A

54 Marine Superintendent, KUR Kisumu to Senior Vet Officer, Mwanza, 2.11.29. TNA Acc.246 PC52/1:52

55 Mr. Grazenbrook's Rept., within R. W. Taylor, Treasurer to C. Sec., DSM, 15.7.30. TNA 12452/II:265A-2

existence of so wide a margin of profit permitted the dealer to increase his price at Mwanza and thereby forced the Company to pay uneconomic prices. To counteract this it became necessary for the Company to purchase cattle for resale as meat in Bukoba. This is done through an agent there with the necessary organisation. The repercussion appears to have so reduced the margin of profit that dealers have become less and prices in Mwanza have receded from 42/- per head to an average of about 27/- per head... The price which the Company considers an economic one is 25/- per head. It is evident that it will be necessary to continue this practice of trading in cattle with Bukoba, and therefore a sufficient quantity of cattle must be available.⁵⁶

Whether this tactic succeeded to lower Bukoba prices, or it was the impact of the Depression, is unclear. At any rate, these expenditures certainly placed an added strain on MRLtd's already limited buying funds.

Finally, in 1931 MRLtd became involved in an aborted administration effort to confiscate cattle. In the throws of the Great Depression local officials planned a cattle "tax," contingent upon MRLtd's ability to absorb the stock and remunerate either the administration or the pastoralists in cash. Essentially, these were the long threatened, forced sales. The scheme was derailed, however, not by resistance from Dar es Salaam, but instead by MRLtd's poor financial position. Mr. Bancroft, the firm's factory manager, could only promise 5/- per head and would not even guarantee a sufficient uptake. Moreover, to get the scheme

56 ibid

rolling he maintained the firm needed yet another loan.⁵⁷ Thus, by 1931, MRLtd was too feeble even to take advantage of the forced markets and guaranteed low prices it had always advocated.

8.4 Collapse of MRLtd

Despite all their efforts: reorganization, loans, political lobbying and marketplace pressure tactics, MRLtd slowly collapsed after the 1930 season. Its cattle buying was only sporadic in 1931, but picked up only for 1933-4. Through this period the firm was kept alive only by a single lucrative Congo mining company contract. Thus, despite administration efforts to continue their plant and push their products, the canned beef and byproduct markets could not support the firm.

In 1932, the administration sent M. H. French, a Veterinary Department biochemist, to survey the plant and assess their interest. He reported that the plant was capable of processing 50 head per day, but that it was only receiving 50 per week. Moreover, there were large stockpiles of unsold products. He argued that there were too many European managers and " the machinery itself is, to

⁵⁷ Minutes of Meeting on proposed cattle Tax, 10.9.31.
TNA 20770:34

a very large extent, out of date and considerably behind the plants used in modern meat preserving factories."⁵⁸

The financial prognosis was just as poor. In 1934 R. W. Taylor informed the governor:

An examination of the accounts shows that the Company have been losing steadily all the time and that by June 1933 the accumulated loss amounted to nearly £ 20,000. Even this figure does indicate the true position since most of the assets have but a small realisable value. Should we decide to foreclose I am afraid that we should obtain very little.⁵⁹

Meat Rations Ltd. had no ready cash for cattle buying, and had made only one payment of £ 715.5.8d on its £ 16,000 CDAC loan.⁶⁰

The final decision to foreclose came in late 1935, as the liability for the CDAC loan fell to the Tanganyikan treasury.⁶¹ The Treasury took control of the plant in the summer of 1936, but as predicted received little.⁶² In the late 1930's, repeated attempts by the administration to

58 Rept. on Products and Activities of Meat Rations Limited, Mwanza by M. H. French, biochemist, Vet. Dept., April 1932. TNA 12452/III:1

59 R. W. Taylor, Treasurer. Minute to Governor, 15.7.34. TNA 12452/III:592

60 J. A. Calder to Sec. Treasury, Downing St., 18.6.36. TNA 23664:7

61 *ibid*

62 File Note. CO691/149 File 42083/36

attract a larger meat packing firm to Mwanza were unsuccessful.

8.5 Revenue Crisis and Local Compromise

The administration's interest in the Mwanza region cattle industry had revolved around two issues: perceived overstocking and cash for the rural economy. Colonial Office and Secretariat decision makers worried about overstocking reports, but also about financial expenditures and the concession for MRLtd. Local officials wanted to meet tax quotas, and cattle sales put cash in African hands. Both were initially drawn to MRLtd as the answer to their problems, but especially at the local level, were not wedded to the firm.

By 1931/2 it was evident that MRLtd was an ill-conceived, ill-run enterprise. Gov. McMichael attempted to rationalize the administration's interest to the Treasury in London as a "valuable experiment."⁶³ Others in the Colonial Office viewed "the Company" as a necessary one:

...a market for the cattle of Mwanza and Surrounding Districts is essential, and that, unless some outlet for the surplus stock is maintained, vast stretches of country, which are already heavily over-stocked and are even now almost stripped of pasture, will rapidly degenerate into a sandy waste. It may be added that, so long as the Company [MRLtd] continues working, much of the money paid out for the

63 Gov. MacMichael, Memo to Colonial Office, 2.1.35.
CO691/139:25 File 25185/34

purchase of cattle returns to Government in the form of hut and poll tax, and that, if the market were closed, a number of natives who now have the means of finding cash from the sale of their stock would be unable to pay.⁶⁴

Local officials were less enamored of MRLtd and its influence. There was immediate resistance from the PC, Buckley, to a monopoly on cattle buying, or to attempts by the firm to alter the terms of government sales. Moreover, as early as 1929 the DOs and Veterinary Officers in the outlying districts complained about the firm's poor showing at auctions. The revenue crisis of 1930-2 further exacerbated local anxieties about MRLtd. Tax default rates in some areas approached 60%.⁶⁵ Consequently, MRLtd's failure to attend auctions or to meet uptake promises led many at the local level to discount the firm's requests and support the more reliable African buyers.

The Bukoba traders, on the other hand, excelled in all the facets of cattle trading in which MRLtd failed: knowledge of the market, ability to raise capital, and even access to local officials. While the Bukoba traders experienced problems with price levels at the onset of the Depression they rebounded strongly after 1931. Moreover, in that year the administration forced large turnouts at cattle

⁶⁴ Symes to Cunliffe-Lister, 26.5.32. CO691/121:107
File 31008/32

⁶⁵ E. C. Richards, PC Lake Province to Senior Vet Officer, 13.9.32. TNA Acc.215/489/I:19

auctions in Missungwi and Mabuki, and 6,000 to 8,000 head were offered. MRLtd failed to attend and complained of high prices, but the Bukoba traders purchased more than 600 head at each.⁶⁶ From that point on local officials viewed them as the only viable option for their revenue problems. As the DO for Kwimba put it in 1932, "Meat Rations requirements, though welcome, are negligible; it is the Bukoba trade that we want."⁶⁷ The mathematics of the conversion are revealed in following cattle purchase numbers from the Veterinary Department:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MRLtd</u>	<u>BUKوبا</u>	<u>OUTSIDE</u>
1929	2,746	10,194	
1931	7,194	5,704	3,000 approx.
1934	6,665	23,933	

68

The result was a political victory for the Bukoba traders. As early as 1930 the PC had been campaigning for lower KUR Marine lighter rates on their behalf.⁶⁹ With added pressure from the outlying DOs between 1931 and 1933 the civil administration placed pressure on the Veterinary Department to lift quarantines and remove restrictions on

⁶⁶ R. W. Taylor, Treasurer to C. Sec., DSM, 11.8.31.
TNA 20770:10b

⁶⁷ Acting DO Kwimba to Senior Vet Officer, Mwanza, 23.7.32. TNA Acc.215/489/I:15

⁶⁸ Compiled from: Vet Dept. Annual Rept., 1934.
CO691/146:23 File 42178

⁶⁹ Buckley, PC Mwanza Province to C. Sec., DSM, 6.5.30.
TNA 18965:1

itinerant trading. The DO of Mwanza even offered to assist Mwanza cattle traders in reducing their lorry permit fees.⁷⁰ Thus, the Bukoba traders became virtually the only group of local merchant capitalists to resist the incursion of a colonial corporation and gain support from the administration.

⁷⁰ Davey, DO Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 28.2.33. TNA
Acc.215/489/I:69

Part III: Struggle for a District Town

9 Reproducing the Town 1920-45

Reproducing the town - recruiting and maintaining its labor force - was a complex matter. Manuel Castells, in The Urban Question (1975), argued that urban structure was essentially the articulation of an economic system in space. Thus, the elements of urban structure: production, consumption, exchange and ideology all had a spatial component. The reproduction of the town, or more specifically the reproduction of labor power, revolved around the conditions of work, the means of subsistence, and access to residential space.¹

Administration and commerce in Mwanza town required a cheap indigenous workforce, yet, in the 1920's, none was immediately forthcoming. Urban migration to this predominantly mercantile town was a slow process, and throughout the colonial period it remained relatively small. While merchants could attract permanent employees through higher wages, the administration opted to rely upon compulsion.

¹ Castells, Manuel, The Urban Question (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1975), 145

Permanent labor resided in the immediate vicinity of town, while casual labor was drawn from the prison or forced from the countryside. Housing was short, and workers lived in the most cramped conditions. The town was, nevertheless, well supplied with food. The lake region produced a wide variety of foodstuffs: fish, rice, grains, plantain, groundnuts, cattle and goats. Local, intensive market gardening also produced fruits and vegetables. However, as the region was drawn further into the world economy, the town and the countryside became increasingly dependent on high caloric imports: maize, beans, and cassava.

9.1 The population

Throughout the period from 1900 to 1945 Mwanza remained a small town. In 1905 a German official estimated the town's population at 4,000, residing in roughly 700 houses.² In 1927 it was put at 6,800, and remained at approximately this level until the early 1940's.³ In ordinal size, Mwanza was either the fourth or fifth urban center in Tanganyika, though by the late 1920's it was the principal town in the northwest.

2 "Die Entwicklung der Handels und Wirtschaftsverhältnisse am Viktoria Nyansa," DKB, 8(15.4.05):236-8

3 Report by Sparks & Partners. CO691/98:98

Despite its limited size, Mwanza's population was remarkably heterogeneous. As a trade center and transportation hub, Mwanza attracted merchants and workers from across East Africa. Europeans - administrators, merchants, and missionaries - comprised only a small fraction of the town's residents. The 1928 census listed only 106.⁴ Of these, the great majority were male and British. Asians, were the fastest growing ethnic group within the town. In 1921, there were 1,018 Asians in Mwanza district.⁵ By 1928 there were 1,500 residing in Mwanza town alone.⁶ The majority were Khoja Ismailis, though also included by census takers were Arabs, Hindus, Sikhs, Goans and Baluchis.

The African population was even more diverse. A review of the 1928 ethnic census listed below reveals that more than 200 ethnic groups were represented.⁷ Roughly half the population came from groups within the southern lake region. Wasukuma totaled one quarter, Wazinza ten percent, and

4 ibid

5 Non-Native Census, 1921. CO691/48:303

6 CO691/98:98

7 It should be noted that this census was conducted province wide to provide background information for Gov. Cameron's reform of indirect rule. Whereas in the countryside this effort aimed to delineate or invent ethnic boundaries and political jurisdictions, in the town it served to reinforce the existing Liwali/headman system. Its emphasis on diversity served to set the town apart, outside the claims and influence of local "Native" Authorities.

Wakerewe, Wahaya, Wajita, and Wanyamwezi five percent each. Other large groups included Wamanyema from the western lakes region, comprising about twelve percent, and eleven percent comprised a collection of groups the administration termed "coastal."

1928 Amended Census Figures

Mwanza Town

Division	"Tribe"	Male	Female	Total
(a) Rufiji	Sukuma	234	146	380
	Nyamwezi	28	35	63
	Kara	37	7	44
	Manyema	44	93	137
	Wazaramo	30	7	37
	Rufiji	24	10	34
	Wahaya	15	37	52
	Wanyeramba	27	7	34
	Wemba	14	13	27
	Wapagani	12	6	18
	Sumbwa	9	5	14
	Fipa	17	5	23
	Yao & Wangoni	18	13	31
	Waganda	30	45	75
	Wajita	52	56	108
	Kavirondo	1	1	2
	Tusi	-	5	5
	Wagunya	4	1	5
	Zinza	34	44	78
	Nubi	8	7	15
	Masai	2	1	3
	Bende	1	2	3
	"Coastal"	29	13	42
	Central African	38	15	53
	Usambara	<u>7</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>22</u>
		715	589	1304
(b) Makongoro	Sukuma	128	153	281
	Zinza	85	181	266
	Kerewe	66	108	174
	Jita	37	56	93
	Ruri	42	15	57
	Waganda	75	33	108
	Wahaya	35	70	105
	Manyema	25	27	52
	Nyamwezi	27	32	59

	Wazaramo	13	1	14
	Nandi	11	1	12
	Nubi	3	7	10
	Wangoni	4	2	6
	Fipa	2	-	2
	Wagindo	5	5	10
	Warufiji	4	1	5
	Sumbwa	4	4	8
	Zigura	3	-	3
	Tusi	1	-	1
	Kavirondo	5	5	10
	Wemba	2	3	5
	Digo	4	-	4
	Nyassa	3	5	8
	Various, 10	<u>148</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>193</u>
		772	749	1471
(c)Tabora Rd	Sukuma	163	252	415
	Nyamwezi	43	61	104
	Zinza	31	53	84
	Manyema	126	219	345
	Wahaya	29	26	55
	Waganda	25	18	43
	Wemba	15	4	19
	Zaramu	13	8	21
	Kerewe	13	25	38
	"Coastal"	<u>211</u>	<u>212</u>	<u>423</u>
		669	878	1547 8

Racial and ethnic diversity, while an indicator of considerable migration over time, did not necessarily imply an impermanent or transitory general population. Certainly, most colonial bureaucrats remained only for limited tours. Merchants - European, Asian, Arab, or Swahili - often returned to their homelands upon retirement from trade, though this trend was often influenced by business reverses rather than by any long-term individual strategy.

Residence among the African commercial and working population was more or less permanent. There was relatively little seasonal work that would attract migrants beyond processing. Further, the town's slow rate of growth, as shown below for African residents, would not indicate any rapid influx of people.

Mwanza Town - African Population		
1905	4,000	
1921	4,554	
1924	3,452	
1931	4,278	
1948	8,858	9 *

Finally, the relatively even overall sex ratios indicated in the ethnic census, and high marriage rates in the poll tax material below, would indicate a stable population.¹⁰

9 Compiled from: "Die Entwicklung der Handels," DKB 8(15.4.05):236-8; and Mwanza District Book, Vol.1, population section, sheets 1-4.

* The actual rate of population increase is complicated by the repeated redrawing of the town boundary. The area surrounding the legally gazetted town was densely populated, thus any extensions would add to the population total. During the 1920's the boundary was measured very roughly at a one and one-half mile radius from the Boma. In 1932 this line was extended to include much of the original villages of Bugalika and Nyakabungo. Finally, after the Second World War, Mwanza South was incorporated into the town, significantly increasing the census count, though perhaps more accurately reflecting the overall working population.

10 Anthropological studies of cities in Southern Africa in particular have often cited uneven sex ratios, the presence of a large single male workforce, as a characteristic of an urban economy dependent on migrant labor. Refer to: Issac Schapera, Migrant Labour and Tribal Life(London, 1947); Godfrey and Monica Wilson, The Analysis of Social Change(London, 1945), 17-8; and Arnold Epstein, Politics in an Urban African Community (Manchester, 1958), 11.

1930/1 Township Expansion Data

from Poll Tax Lists

	<u>Tabora</u>	<u>Bugalika</u>	<u>Mission</u>	<u>Nyakabungo</u>	<u>Makongoro</u>
	<u>Rd</u>				<u>Rd</u>
households	19	113	103	168	23
total pop.	46	294	291	420	88
avg. household	2.4	2.6	2.8	2.5	3.8
male adults	18	111	100	153	22
married(%)	14(78%)	102(92%)	87(87%)	132(83%)	16(73%)
polygamous	1	6	1	2	2
single(%)	4(22%)	9(8%)	13(13%)	21(17%)	6(27%)
female adults	16	109	93	159	21
head of house(%)	1(5%)	11(10%)	3(3%)	15(9%)	1(4%)
adult sex ratio	100:89	100:98	100:93	100:104	100:95
families	14	102	87	132	16
single mothers	1	1	1	5	0
single fathers	0	1	3	1	3
households					
w/children	9	43	32	51	14
only 1 child	6	23	8	28	4
2 to 3 children	3	15	16	18	4
4 or more "	0	5	8	5	6
couples w/o					
children(%)	6(43%)	51(50%)	59(68%)	87(66%)	5(31%)
total children	12	68	88	94	45
male	9	43	45	41	23
female	3	25	43	53	22
tenants	0	6	0	14	5
taxable homes	4	46	4	38	11
households w/(%)	4(21%)	46(41%)	4(4%)	38(23%)	11(48%)
households w/o(%)	15(79%)	69(59%)	99(96%)	130(76%)	12(52%)

11 These figures were compiled from a surviving set of poll tax lists for a wide arc of land immediately surrounding the town, added in 1931. Thus, the settlement patterns here may vary from those closer to the town center. List enclosed within Davies, DO Mwanza to PC, Mwanza, 12.4.31. TNA Acc.215/25/13:34-41

Sex ratios from the overall census data, however, do indicate an increasingly male, and therefore newcomer, job-seeking population during the 1930's and especially the 1940's.

Sex Ratios (Male:Female) - African Census Data

1921	100:105	
1931	100:78	
1948	100:72	12

9.2 Workers

The composition of the town's working population was quite obviously shaped by the functions it performed: commercial, administrative, and agricultural/maintenance. The administration provided a legal framework for employment, yet during this period shrank from regulating labor. Instead, merchant capital was the primary agent in recruiting workers, establishing workplaces, and setting wage levels.

The sectors merchant capital created and controlled were certainly the largest in town: wholesale, retail and commodity buying, transport, and processing. Jobs in these activities were also clearly the most sought after, as a government clerk in the nearby lake town of Bukoba wrote in 1926:

We are mostly laughed at by these traders who say that Government is giving a very insufficient money to us and that we should be better work for the Indians who are giving Shs.200/- to 300/- to

12 Calculated from census figures in the Mwanza District Book, Vol.1, population section, sheets 1-4.

their drivers and sewers and Shs.60/- to 100/-
per mensem to their employees at their shops.¹³

Shop or buying station workers were the largest contingent. In town these predominantly African workers mostly served as clerks, shop assistants and tailors. Others periodically travelled out to the countryside to act as agents or shop assistants during the harvest or buying seasons. Within the bazaar and commercial district, as well as the Trade Centres, domestic servants were also in demand, with cooks earning 35 to 60/-, housekeepers 35 to 50/-, and water carriers 8 to 15/- per month.¹⁴

Merchant capitalists also controlled much of the employment in transport - bulking and hauling commodities to town, and distributing trade goods to rural shops. By the mid-1920's, there were nearly 200 trucks in the district, plying routes with Mwanza as their hub and often home for their crews too.¹⁵ In Mwanza mechanics, for example, could earn as much as 600/- per month.¹⁶ Along the lakeshore, dhows also hauled freight and commodities to and from Mwanza town. More than fifty dhows operated from Mwanza, and their crews resided near town.

¹³ Letter from six African clerks, Bukoba to DO Bukoba, 4.6.26. TNA Acc.215/176:39

¹⁴ PC Annual Report, 1925. TNA Acc.246 PC1/17:19

¹⁵ Joelson, F. S. Eastern Africa Today. London: East Africa, 1928. p.80

¹⁶ *ibid*

Finally, local entrepreneurs and agency managers provided employment at several rice mills, a soap factory, an ice and soda plant, and a meat cannery in Mwanza town, and several nearby cotton ginneries. Most operations had only seasonal output, processing after harvest season. The employees lived both in town and the surrounding villages.

Government also employed a wide variety of urban residents. Professionals like clerks, teachers and nurses; quasi-military police and messengers; skilled artisans and construction workers; and less skilled labor for public works. By the early 1940's the district employed 978 African men, of which 524 were full time.¹⁷ Most of the professionals and artisans resided in Mwanza town or its environs.

Clerks were relatively few in number. During the 1920's and 1930's the district administration employed no more than eight to ten clerks, and other departments: agriculture, veterinary, public works, etc. even fewer. Their responsibilities, however, were quite broad, ranging from typing and filing, to translating and advising. Early in the British administration some had even been called upon to act as indirect rule officials in rural chiefdoms. A

17 Act. DC, Mwanza. Memo, 13.2.42. TNA Acc.215/1775:88

review of the district staff lists from the 1920's reveals that the majority of clerks came from the Mwanza area.¹⁸ Most were the products of mission or government schools, and several were the sons of indirect rule sultans and headmen. They ranged in age from 20 to 55, with younger clerks generally excelling in English and office skills and older clerks noted for their knowledge of indigenous languages and local politics. There were four grades of clerks with salaries ranging from 35/- to 100/- per month.¹⁹ Housing was eventually provided in either the former military quarters referred to in Anglo-Indian jargon as "the lines," or in newer bungalows.

Government artisans and manual laborers were also relatively few in number and paid less than those in private employ. Most were on a temporary basis, such as masons, painters carpenters or blacksmiths, and received a daily wage which worked out to between 20 to 50/- per month. Laborers, nightwatchmen or water carriers were less well off, making between 8 to 12/- per month, and full time janitors and sweepers made as little as 10/-. A number of Native Authority workers, policemen, drivers and clerks also

18 Data compiled from: TNA Acc.215/PC 48/1/Vol.1
Staff:African

19 ibid

lived in town, though their wages were little better, ranging from 20 to 45/- per month.²⁰

The station hands, later called the public works crew, were the men who actually kept Mwanza town operating. A 1927 review listed 55 full time men: 3 headmen, 3 rat catchers, 6 mosquito finders, 14 for general duty, 5 ox-cart drivers and handlers, 3 incinerator operators, 3 for office, yard, and stores clean-up, and 18 latrine sweepers.²¹ Wages were low here too, and recruitment was difficult.

Rather than raising wages to attract or retain permanent workers, the local administration resorted to coercion to meet its labor requirements. Professionals had a high turnover rate. Literate individuals often used clerical positions as a stepping stone to more lucrative commercial employment. Artisans or laborers, however, were reluctant to sign on at all. Many reported for work irregularly, and found greater benefit in housing or clothing allowances than in the pay. Unskilled shortfalls were usually filled out with tax and fine laborers, as well

20 Division Engineer, Public Works Department, Lake Province to Director of Public Works, DSM, 7.6.43. TNA Acc.215/1775:123

21 Mostret, Sanitation Officer, Mwanza to Dir. of Sanitation Services, DSM, 5.11.27. TNA 11478:4

as by convicts from the nearby prison. For example, in 1938 21 tax laborers put in 840 days labor for -/40 per day.²²

9.3 The problem of wages

One of the principal characteristics of the colonial economy was low wages. So low, in fact, they might be termed "over-exploitive," since they often fell below the amount necessary to sustain an individual, let alone a family.²³ The immediate result was crowded housing, a poor diet, multiple employment, and a shortage of willing workers for the least paying, government employment. The long-term result was a realization by workers that financial security would have to be found outside wage labor in commercial strategies.

22 James Cheyne, DO Mwanza. Annual Rept. 1938. TNA Acc.41/L1/8:14

23 In Maidens, Meal and Money (1975) Claude Miellissoux identified the over-exploitive wage as that which paid below subsistence, or bare reproduction cost. He theorized that urban workers depended on the rural, domestic community for their upbringing and retirement, and periodically returned during middle adulthood. Both commercial employers and the state institutionalized this condition, utilizing extra-market forces: the courts, police, and deceptive or forceful recruitment.

In Mwanza town, however, such conditions did not necessarily result from, nor were they resolved by a migratory situation. Instead, workers relied on peri-urban gardening or entrepreneurial activities to supplement wages or accumulate savings.

Colonial administrators were baffled by this problem.

One member of the Secretariat commented:

....a considerable number of the lowly paid Africans in the town [DSM] - both Govt. employees, and, still more so, those not in Govt. service, are somehow or other accomplishing the seemingly impossible. They are living and supporting their families and have been doing so for a long time now, on an income considerably below what is regarded as the bare 'minimum living wage.' 24

He went on to speculate that evidence from Dar es Salaam indicated this feat was accomplished by "underfeeding and perpetual indebtedness," combined with little expenditure on new clothing.²⁵

It was not until the late-1930's, in the wake of dockworker strikes in Mombasa and Dar es Salaam, however, that bureaucrats actually surveyed the problem. On the following page is an official recommended household budget for African clerks produced for Mwanza in 1939:

24 J. E. S. Lamb, File Note, 22.10.42. TNA 30598:9-10

25 ibid

Africans Township (Mwanza Dist.)

Monthly Minimum Budget on Austere Standard of Living

Details	Single	Married	Married w/child	Married w/3
children				
1. food				
a) staple	3/-	2/50	4/50	7/-
b) meat & fish	2/50	/75	2/-	4/-
c) other	/50	/50	1/-	6/-
2. rent	-	2/-	4/-	-
3. fuel, light, and water	3/-	-	4/-	5/-
4. clothing				
a) man	3/-	-	4/-	3/-
b) woman	-	1/-	3/-	4/-
5. education	-	-	3/-	3/-
6. other	3/-	4/-	4/-	6/-
7. tax	<u>1/-</u>	<u>1/-</u>	<u>1/-</u>	<u>1/-</u>
total p.m.	16/-	11/75	30/50	39/-
total p.yr.	192/-	141/-	366/-	468/-
8. receipts				
a) wages	17/-	12/-	35/-	45/-
b) uniform	/50	/50	-	1/-
c) rations	-	-	-	-
d) rent	-	-	-	-
e) shamba	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7/-</u>	<u>-</u>
total p.m.	17/50	12/50	42/-	46/-
total p.y.	210/-	150/-	504/-	554/-

26

Clearly this budget presumed residence in government housing, which was often unavailable or unsuitable. Further, it implies a reliance on work provided clothing, and food from a family garden. Yet, nearly half the government workers were only part time, and thus did not receive the full budget wage. Many more, particularly those new to town, did not have access to a garden plot.²⁷ At any

26 Cost of Living Memo. TNA Acc.215/1775:35

27 Refer to the government diet data in section 9.5

rate, it was evident that no colonial observer and certainly no employee expected to survive on one set of wages alone.

Wages in the commercial sector also varied widely. Shop assistants, Asian and African, have often been cited as examples of exploited labor. They worked long hours, slept on shop floors, and often saved or possessed little. Many rural buyers and agents avoided the problem of wages altogether by taking their pay in trade goods which they might resell. Transport workers had opportunities to augment their wages by taking passengers or personal cargo.

9.4 Housing and neighborhoods

In Mwanza town housing was always in short supply. Owing to limited materials, low wages, problems of legal tenure, rental strategies, and the ill-timing of boom and bust cycles during the 1920's and 1930's, there were simply not enough permanent structures. Moreover, as the town grew, the interaction of merchant capital and colonial policy created a housing market skewed toward speculative commercial properties at one end, and unimproved, often impermanent housing at the other.

The most immediate housing difficulty was the availability of construction materials. While many merchants and newly arrived workers initially lived in local mud brick and thatch structures, they proved too difficult

to maintain in a crowded town. Concrete, treated lumber, nails and especially corrugated iron were the preferred materials, but were all imported by rail and steamer and therefore expensive. Moreover, imported construction materials were never at an equilibrium of supply and demand within the colonial economy. During the boom period of the 1920's they were in short supply, whereas, during the bust of the 1930's, they were not in demand. Wartime restriction further limited their availability such that there was not another building boom in Mwanza until the late 1940's.

The depression caused a twofold collapse in the housing market, not simply decreasing the demand on the part of landlords for new construction, but also causing the abandonment of dilapidated existing structures. Also, twice, in the late 1920's and late 1930's, the local administration sought to demolish older buildings, further threatening the housing supply.²⁸

Perhaps the greatest difficulty in urban housing, however, was the extent to which merchant capital skewed the availability of rentals. By the early 1940's, a local official had noted:

...Those with sufficient capital, build new houses but for renting to non-Africans who are willing to pay rents far beyond anything an African tenant could afford. Others owning but one house, frequently move into one room or out-houses so

28 Refer to Section 11.6

that non-African tenants may be taken. The number of African landlords in the Town is already considerable and steadily increasing, in view of this rich return brought by the non-African tenants, and mostly reducing the living conditions of the landlord to a pitiful level.²⁹

The returns from renting to non-African merchants, as opposed to African workers, obviously motivated landlords to seek higher paying tenants. During the period from 1927 to 1931 there were at least 40 applications by African landlords to let to non-Africans.³⁰

Finally, given the low wage/high cost of living problems experienced by many urban workers, it was difficult for them to generate effective demand for housing. A rather high percentage obviously did rent. The poll tax data cited earlier indicates that on the town's edge at least, most did not own a taxable residence. In a long established area like Makongolo Road, nearly half were householders, although, in the newer Tabora Road area some four-fifths had some other living arrangement.³¹

Many workers simply rented rooms. An impromptu survey of a "typical" Mwanza neighborhood, plots 35-48 Kijifichini St., by the Mwanza Township Authority in 1944 revealed:

29 Exec. Officer, MTA to PC, Lake Province, 23.5.47.
TNA Acc.215/1937:73

30 Refer to section 10.5

31 Refer to poll tax data in Section 9.1

	240	
no. of houses:	13	
avg. size:	30.5' X 34"	
no. of latrines	11	
no. of kitchens	7	
avg. no. of rooms	4	
avg. size of rooms	10' X 11"	
avg. no. of persons		
per house: adults	12	
children	8	
avg. no. of persons		
per room: adults	3	
children	2	32

9.5 Food supply and marketing

Unlike housing, food was rarely in short supply. Throughout the colonial period, a great variety of foodstuffs were available in the Mwanza "native" market. Beneath this general observation, however, there were two emerging trends. One, that local food production was being influenced by merchant capital. Access to gardens was still available for peri-urban cultivators and some workers, but businessmen from town were obtaining an increasing share of agricultural plots. Two, that workers' consumption patterns were gradually shifting towards imported, starchy foodstuffs. Urban wage levels did not permit equitable distribution or consumption of local food production.

Mwanza town's geographic location gave it access to several distinct ecological, food producing zones. As was discussed in chapter one, during the nineteenth century the

immediate coast and islands specialized in rice production and fishing, while the hinterland beyond the forest produced groundnuts, grain crops, and livestock, and the more distant savannah and plains - cattle. The coastal merchants and settlers who arrived at the turn of the century introduced new fruits and vegetables. As the town grew, their groves and gardens in the Kayenze area and surrounding Mwanza became commercial market gardens. Finally, the rail and steamboat transport links developed in the early twentieth century facilitated the importation of foodstuffs from greater distances. In particular, Mwanza residents and cultivators in its hinterland consumed increased quantities of high calorie, starches: maize, cassava, and bean flour and meal from Kenya.

Many town residents maintained their own gardens, either on land they occupied by local custom, or as the tenants of property owners. The government diet survey tables give some indication of the role of gardening. Roughly one-fourth of the married workers in the district grew their own food in part.³³ Moreover, in the government household budget figures, it was clearly expected that household members maintain a garden.

33 DC, Mwanza. Cost of Living Memo, 13.2.43. TNA
Acc.1775:42

Most workers, however, relied upon the marketplace for part or all of their subsistence. Food marketing was also linked to extensive networks outside the town which harvested and marketed crops, fish and livestock. For people living near the lake fish had always been an important source of protein. When Mwanza emerged as a trade center, it became a distribution point for the dried fish trade, via the town market, rural peddlers and the railways. Cattle and goats were marketed through the town abattoir. All other produce was available at the town market, supervised by the township authorities. There were daily stall fees and sales fees for petty traders and rural vendors. Overhead here was quite low, and thus few merchants in town attempted to compete in immediate retail produce or meat sales.

Many local merchants, however, gained access to large plots of land in and about the town, employed tenant farmers, and then marketed a share of the produce. The first to do so were the coastal immigrants, who transformed their turn of the century settlements into commercial farms, planting rice, fruit trees, sugar cane and grains.³⁴ During the conversion of kiwanja tenure properties in 1927/8, it was discovered that Asian merchants from town held extensive commercial gardens in and around town. Sixteen had some

34 Refer to section 2.4

nineteen plots.³⁵ Most had been acquired during or immediately after the war, though nearly half dated to the turn of the century. Nearly all had valued houses on them, and obviously tenants as well.

The plots in town were rather small, and later gave way to building. Those just outside the township boundary, however, were often quite large. One two miles from town in the Kirumba area was 75 to 100 acres. It had few fruit trees, but the primary crops were cotton and millet. There were eight tenant homes, and the cultivators paid 20 to 40% of their crop in rent to the merchant's "caretaker."³⁶

European merchants were also involved in the trade. In 1934, one Mwanza labor agent and hotel owner was found to have been operating a garden plot at Pansiansi for at least five years without legal clearance. It was large enough to employ four tenants. The European townsman contended that he had an arrangement with neighbors in the Pansiansi area, apparently buying their crops as well.³⁷

35 Applications for Right of Occupancy. Agricultural plots - Mwanza Township. TNA 10158/165

36 Scupham, DO Mwanza to Land Office, DSM, 6.5.31. TNA 10082 Vol.III/subfile 16/4

37 TNA 10071 Vol.III/subfile 85

Simply because such a variety of food was produced and marketed, however, did not mean that all workers could afford it. The government cost of living tables cited below give some indication of workers' diets:

African Gov't Employees, Mwanza Dist. 1943

wages	total employees	single	married	access to shamba	a	b	c	d	e
0-15/-	217	60	157	47	96	38	40	1	142
15-25/-	158	30	128	22	26	27	34	6	65
25-40/-	138	21	117	30	21	14	55	-	48
40-60/-	72	8	64	19	8	8	30	2	24

a:millet, b:maize, c:rice, d:bananas, e:cassava

Health Office, Mwanza 1943

wages	total employees	single	married	access to shamba	a+e	a+b	c+e	b+c	c+d
0-15/-	47	15	32	7	43	1	3	-	-
15-25/-	39	9	30	21	23	1	13	1	1
25-40/-	2	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	-
40-60/-	3	-	3	-	1	-	2	-	-

Mwanza Hospital 1943

wages	total employees	single	married	access to shamba	a	b	c	d	e
0-15/-	28	7	21	8	7	-	11	1	9
15-25/-	13	5	8	2	2	-	6	1	4
25-40/-	7	1	6	1	3	-	4	-	-
40-60/-	3	-	3	1	1	-	2	-	-

38

This nutritional data may be interpreted in two ways. Clearly there was an ethnic or cultural context. Preference for a plantain staple diet was most pronounced among people from the northwestern lake region, Wahaya or Baganda. Likewise, rice might be preferred by Waswahili or people from the Lake Victoria shoreline. There was, however, a distinguishable correlation between diet and income. Among those in the lower brackets there was an inclination toward less expensive millet and cassava. For those in the upper bracket, a greater reliance on rice. Unfortunately, no figures were available on the consumption of meat, though the 3/- per month allotted within the government household budget would not have gone far.

9.6 Summary

Reproducing the town - recruiting and maintaining its labor force - was not only a complex matter, but a contradictory one. While merchant capitalists and the administration needed workers and generated employment, both often paid low, even below subsistence wages. The pay scales of local businesses were determined by occupation, with skilled or trusted employees doing quite well, whereas others had little opportunity or mobility. The administration responded to this low wage environment, not by raising government pay, but instead by reinforcing it, making up recruitment shortfalls with compulsory work gangs.

The long term result of these contradictions was an urban workforce not entirely alienated from the means of production, or more accurately their reproduction: perturbing agriculture and petty entrepreneurship. This was not a form of resistance to some urban process of primitive accumulation or alienation, but necessary strategies to survive in town.

10 Urban Indirect Rule

During the 1920's and 1930's the British fostered a dual system of urban capitalism and indirect rule in Mwanza town. Urban officials, like their counterparts in the countryside, wrestled with the contradictions between capitalism and colonial authority. They sought to both mediate struggles between capital and workers, and to blunt the process of class formation. Their efforts, however, were complicated by the slow process of translating colonial policy into the political and economic realities of a district town.

The models for urban policy were primate cities, white settler communities, and mining or industrial centers. Such places were dominated by colonial bureaucracy or metropolitan capital. They had political constituencies for racial segregation, and economic interest in harsh worker discipline. Mwanza town, on the other hand, was dominated by merchant capital and had relatively weak pressure groups for segregation, and a lesser need for extensive social control. Moreover, the scope and reach of the local administration, vis-a-vis the resources and organization of

business associations, the town elders, or established neighborhoods, placed town officials in a relatively weak position.

Therefore, in order to govern Mwanza's African residents, the administration tempered general policies like indirect rule, influx control and rigid segregation, opting in the end for mediation and local compromise over direct action. Above all, Mwanza officials constructed collaborative structures to maintain order, employing the liwali, jumbes and the Liwali's Court to enforce the Township Rules.

10.1 Urban Policy and African Workers

Over time, colonial policymakers developed several approaches for governing an urban African population. In industrial settings, particularly in Southern Africa, a compound system was employed. In the Central African copperbelt this was augmented by urban indirect rule through colonial chiefs and elders. In settler centers such as Nairobi, rigid segregation and influx control had the support of the settler population. Officials in Mwanza, however, were in a quandary. In a mercantile district town these options were without substantial political support or funding. Yet, colonial thinking necessitated some system of "traditional," racially separate administration. The answer for the British lay in the reintroduction and modification

of the nineteenth century Zanzibari institution of the liwali.

Under the Germans, the ntemi of Mwanza, retitled the sultan, had exercised authority over the town's African residents. After a violent falling out with Ntemi Makongolo in 1906, the sultan's role was de-emphasized. Once the British took control, Mwanza was gazetted a township, or area of direct administration. Thus, rural "chiefs" had no legal means to exert authority over Africans within town boundaries.

In political terms, Mwanza township was an island of direct administration in an ocean of rural indirect rule chiefdoms or Native Authorities. Indirect rule, or the retention of, and delegation of limited autonomy to, indigenous leaders, was both a German and British policy in Tanganyika. While such African leaders were often imposed by force and their traditions often invented, indirect rule provided colonial authorities with a degree of legitimacy. Moreover, it spared the colonial regime the costs of direct intervention, while providing African leaders and institutions which could be manipulated as avenues of mediation. Finally, and most reassuring to the colonial mind, indirect rule divided rural Africans into convenient, if not contrived, ethnic sub-groupings, creating an illusion of classless, tribal order.

Between 1926 and 1928, moreover, Mwanza Province was a test area for a major reformulation of indirect rule policy instigated by Gov. Cameron. The sultanates were reincorporated as Native Authorities, with expanded responsibilities and formal budgets. Colonial anthropologists and district officials collected official histories, codified customary law and redrew rural boundaries along what they conceived to be ethnic lines. H. C. Stiebel, the Mwanza PC, and a former South African Native Commissioner, was so enthusiastic about the policy he considered himself to be creating "tribal nations."¹

Legally, Mwanza Province officials could not directly transfer their rural policy efforts to governing in town. Moreover, the rural model had to be discarded, since the town presented unique challenges. Mwanza had a mercantile character, and required a "non-traditional" legal system to protect property and regulate worker behavior. Local officials were very concerned with the problem of the "floating population in towns" - persons labelled "detrribalised" Africans or "alien natives."² Mwanza

¹ For the most extensive overview of indirect rule policy in Mwanza Province, refer to Ralph Austen's Northwest Tanzania, chapter 11. In particular, the reference to Stiebel was given in pages 182 through 185.

² Memo. Sec. for Native Affairs to F. W. Brett, 16.7.29. TNA 13723:2

administrators, among others, also raised concerns of housing shortages, limited recreations and crime; and stressed the need to encourage "local government" and "traditional" neighborhood authorities.³ The structure of rural chieftaincy was clearly ill-suited to these needs.

Ethnicity and the legitimacy of an urban colonial chief were also problematic. Wasukuma townspeople were the most numerous, but their majority status was in dispute. As colonial census takers were quick to establish, the population of Mwanza was very heterogeneous.⁴ Placing a variety of minority groups under the jurisdiction of a Sukuma authority would have been bureaucratically difficult. Furthermore, no British official wished to empower an urban African leader with broad rural ethnic ties. The political consequences of regional ethnic consciousness might unbalance the alignment of rural Native Authorities.

The solution for the British evolved out of earlier German administrative practice. They excluded the chief of Mwanza from town affairs, but greatly enhanced the role of the liwali; thereby retaining a cadre of coastal merchants and bureaucrats to oversee African affairs in the town. Under this bureaucratic framework the administration was

3 *ibid.* TNA 13723:7-8

4 Refer to section 9.1

able to remove rural authorities from town politics, accommodate commercial interests, and maintain an ethnic/racial ideology; while at the same time, asserting direct control over policy decisions and the judicial system.

As has been discussed in earlier chapters, the office of liwali dated to Zanzibari administration of nineteenth century caravan routes, and had later been used by the Germans to oversee the urban Muslim and merchant communities.⁵ Under the British, however, this office was rapidly absorbed into the civil service and its powers over the African population expanded. Initially termed town headman, the British opted for the more familiar term of liwali in 1938.⁶

Under the authority of the liwali were his assistants, the jumbes. Generally there were three, one for each division of the town. Their duties included mediating local disputes, collecting taxes, and gathering information. Like the liwali, they were often not originally from Mwanza; however, they were usually involved in local commerce. For example, Jumbe Said Abdulkhar, Sudanese and a long time Mwanza resident, was educated at the German school, and previously employed by the Usagara Co. in 1914 and by the

5 Refer to section 2.3

6 Revington to PC, 5.3.38. TNA Acc.215 1478:3

British Cotton Growing Association from 1932 onwards.⁷ The liwali's administration was small, with only three clerks and three messengers, or policemen, beyond himself and his Jumbes.⁸ Thus, his powers were still primarily persuasive, the authority behind his decisions was that of the administration.

The principal means by which the liwali asserted his authority was through the collection of poll and house taxes, and by presiding over the Liwali's Court. Herein, too, his role was proscribed by the administration since tax rates and exemptions were decided upon by the District Officer in conference with the Secretariat in DSM. Further, urban laws, regulations and ordinances in effect within the Liwali's Court were established or amended by the Mwanza Township Authority or the Legislative Council.⁹ Thus, the liwali operated in framework of rather thinly veiled direct administration.

10.2 Legitimacy and the Town Elders

The balance between administrative control and the appearance of indirect rule was never an easy one.

⁷ Personnel File - Said Abdulkhar. TNA Acc.246 S2/ii/7:43A

⁸ Revington to PC, 7.3.38. TNA Acc.215 1478:no page

⁹ For a description of the Mwanza Township Authority, refer to section 12.1.

Difficulties between the Liwali and the District Officer came to a head in 1936 when Liwali Hassan bin Abdullah was accused of "peculation" and removed from office.¹⁰ The subsequent search for his successor laid bare the contradictions within the liwali's administration.

In 1938 the administration opted for Said bin Ali, a young 25 year old court clerk from Tanga. A secondary school graduate and "a good office man," he was the professional bureaucrat the colonial regime increasingly desired.¹¹ His sponsor, the DO from Tanga, remarked, "he is a bit on the young side, but should be satisfactory if kept under supervision."¹² While the administration clearly preferred a young man, a professional bureaucrat, from outside the region, African community leaders did not. By weakening the office, stripping it of any "traditional" ethnic or commercial legitimacy, the administration had contradicted its own indirect rule ideology and left itself vulnerable to attack.

The revolt of the town elders against the new Liwali began with a series of petitions and protests in early 1943.

¹⁰ Baker, Acting DO Mwanza to DO Tanga, 31.1.38. TNA Acc.246 S2/ii/6:no page

¹¹ DO Tanga to DO Mwanza, 10.2.38. TNA Acc.246 S2/ii/6:5

¹² *ibid*

The first was directed by Sadala bin Saadi, a venerable Bukoba cattle trader. He and his co-signers objected to the selection of three new Jumbes, all from outside the township.¹³ The elders, or prominent men of the town, further resented not having been consulted on the appointments, and requested an audience with the Provincial Commissioner to discuss their grievances.¹⁴

The second petition, nearly one year later, was signed by ninety-two residents and aimed directly against the office of the liwali itself. It objected vehemently against "rule by foreigners" and stated the hope that local administrative posts would go to fellow townsmen. In their subsequent argument the petitioners cited former Gov. Cameron's policy of "local" rule, and pointed out that Said Ali, legally an Arab, and from Tanga, did not fit indirect rule criteria. They also cited the removal during the early 1920's of several clerks from rural indirect rule posts on similar grounds. Finally, the petitioners asserted that the liwali had yet to meet with the elders since his arrival, and he and the jumbes received excessive fees from their legal and notary functions.¹⁵

13 Petition of Town Elders, 14.1.43. TNA Acc.215 1478:60

14 *ibid*

15 Petition, 10.12.43. TNA Acc.215 1478:64-7

Several later petitions also challenged the wisdom or validity of appointing non-residents to local posts. Finally, before a scheduled visit by the Governor in 1944, the elders wrote to Dar es Salaam to complain about the "Liwali from Tanga," this time to accuse the Acting Provisional Commissioner of bringing "his friend" from an earlier posting at Tanga. They went on to say that the Provisional Commissioner had treated them poorly, being abrupt and forcing them to stand during their meeting. They concluded that he and the administration had discriminated against the elders because they were not literate Muslims.¹⁶

The administration's response to this challenge was forceful on the surface, but internally divided. In public the Provincial Commissioner, G. F. Webster, responded in no uncertain terms that Mwanza Township was not part of Sukumaland, and that therefore Wasukuma would not receive preference in appointments.¹⁷ In private, however, he conceded the town liwali's jurisdiction was a problem. In his correspondence to Dar es Salaam Webster suggested the need to make the liwali a "Native Authority." However, he also noted the difficulty, that "he [the liwali] is an official paid by the government to control the native people of an area of direct administration," and that this "might

¹⁶ Benedicto Ikuru to Gov. Sir Wilfred Jackson, 12.11.44. TNA Acc.215 1478:75-6

¹⁷ Meeting note. TNA Acc.215 1478:68

be regarded as a departure from the spirit of the Native Authority Ordinance which is the legal sanction for the policy of indirect rule."¹⁸

Yet, the contradictions within this system of indirect urban rule went much deeper than colonial officials appeared to realize. Clearly, there was an emerging local consciousness expressed by the petitioners; but, it did not seem purely an ethnic, Sukuma one as alleged. Several of the elders, and many of the petitioners, were not Wasukuma. Moreover, they stressed locality and familiarity, and never directly ethnicity. To a certain extent, the elders argued for a more traditional Liwali, a successful local trader, who could work in concert with local interests. Many of the petitioners were in commerce, for them a broader bond than ethnicity, and sought local leadership which would advocate their position.

10.3 Laboring classes and dangerous classes

For the majority of Mwanza town's African residents, the intrusion of the liwali's office was relatively limited. They did not join in opposition with the elders, since being workers, not traders or landlords, they were not motivated by a mercantile ideology. Further, the elements of social control practiced by the liwali - tax collection and the

¹⁸ G. F. Webster, PC Mwanza to C. Sec. DSM, 27.1.41.
TNA Acc.215/883/I:469

court - though sometimes onerous, were not particularly aggressive towards them. For people on the margin of urban life, however, colonial authority took more direct forms and was deliberately disruptive of their lives. Town regulations and ordinances were clearly designed to control the behavior of certain Africans, specifically peri-urban cultivators and migrants, the dubious "shifting or floating population."

In larger cities and towns, and within official colonial policy, "influx control" was the preferred method to limit entry and residence by "undesirable" Africans. Essentially a euphemism for pass laws, Masters and Servants ordinances, or repatriation, such a course of action was impractical in a smaller district town without a large police force, means of returning unwanted migrants, or even a significant vagrant population.

Colonial officials always feared that railroad travel would generate an urban crime wave in Mwanza. The PC, Stiebel, wrote in 1927, "it is to be feared that with the advent of the Railway Mwanza will be invaded by numbers of bad characters male and female who have made the towns of the Central Railway too hot to hold them."¹⁹.

19 Mwanza District Rept. 1927. TNA Acc.246 PC1/30:41

To meet the challenge of keeping order, the administration maintained a combined district police force of over 100, the majority stationed in Mwanza.²⁰ The expected crime wave never materialized, however, and most serious crimes were limited to housebreaking. The only truly disturbing point for colonial authorities was the ability of suspected lawbreakers to hide beyond the township boundaries.

Despite fiscal and manpower limitations many local officials still favored more extensive measures. One Mwanza DC wrote:

In my opinion no native should be allowed to live in a town unless he has a fixed income or is able to support himself by regular employment, otherwise he becomes a vagrant, a parasite, and a menace to social order. In his own home under tribal influence he has a chance of becoming a useful member of the community. Mwanza, like many other towns, is full of detribalized natives unable or unwilling to obtain regular employment. The results are failure to pay tax, increase in crime, and a mass of untidy and insanitary native dwellings. Mwanza, being a port and a railway terminus, is liable more than other townships, to become the focus of itinerant natives who have failed to find work.²¹

In 1944, a Removal of Undesirable Natives Ordinance was enacted, primarily to deal with "irresponsible agitators" during the labor strikes of the 1940's.²² For the first two

²⁰ Mwanza Province Annual Report, 1930. TNA Acc.246 PC1/67:41

²¹ Gilbert, DC Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 1.5.41. TNA Acc.215 1873:2

years under the ordinance, however, only 35 people were deported from Mwanza.²³ It was not vigorously enforced until the early 1950's, and then it was primarily used against prostitutes and suspected criminals from outside the Territory.²⁴ Thus, influx control was never focused upon the bulk of marginally or illicitly employed people residing in or around town.

The courts remained the principal vehicle for maintaining work discipline or colonial order in the town. The Resident Magistrate, or district court heard all cases involving crimes against persons and property, and well as civil commercial cases. The Liwali's Court presided over tax and township rules cases involving African parties. The bulk of the cases heard by the liwali involved infractions of the Township Rules and Ordinances. While in part rewritten locally, these laws essentially covered standard urban points of conflict between the administration and African residents: cultivating crops and keeping livestock in town, noise, dances, parties and liquor. There were also more "crime prevention" oriented rules such as requirements that Africans carry lanterns at night.

22 PC, Lake Province to C. Sec., DSM, 27.9.47. TNA Acc.215 1873:42-3

23 Allsebroth for DC, Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 31.7.46. TNA Acc. 215 1873/19

24 J. D. Turner, Acting PC, Lake Province to Hon. Member, Local Gov't., DSM, 5.3.52. TNA 21616 Vol.1:no page

The Liwali's Court, moreover, was not a confrontational means of social control. Rather, it discouraged those deemed marginal or undesirable and contained problems. Rules cases often resulted in fines and confiscation of illicit property. Tax cases, appeals or non-payment, were generally resolved with compulsory tax-default labor on public works.

10.4 Alcohol and Public Order

The administration did attempt to regulate worker behavior on one issue, however, alcohol. At first, local officials used direct methods to prevent the beer and liquor sales to workers in town, but their irregular police sweeps hardly made a dent in the large-scale brewing industry. Over time, a compromise evolved, with officials enforcing alcohol sale rules within a narrow jurisdiction, employing the Liwali's Court to punish offenders, and sanctioning beer markets to contain drinking activity.

No single activity ran more afoul of the administration and the Liwali's Court than beer brewing. A staple in the lake and savannah region diet, beer was both nutritious, and an effective method of food preservation. Moreover, for the poor, and for female heads of households in particular, peri-urban beer brewing and beer parties were an important

source of income. Yet, these "disturbances" were a practical and philosophical anathema to officials.

As a first line of argument, officials determined beer brewing to be a misallocation of grain stores, and an inducement to shortage.²⁵ Beyond this point, some, like the PC Stiebel in the 1920's, argued that alcohol would "destroy the morality" of the African, and that it was "one of the greatest tragedies which can befall a native country."²⁶ More to the heart of the matter, in the end, most officials linked alcohol production and sale to public disorder and crime. As one district officer estimated, "more than half the serious cases of crime are found to emanate from beer parties."²⁷

Mwanza officials repeatedly attempted to crack down on illegal brewing, but they lacked the manpower and jurisdiction for such a large enterprise. At irregular intervals during the 1920's through the early 1930's, successive administrators tackled the problem with force. Each, however, found the brewers and beer sellers too well organized. Some illicit gangs ferried hard liquor in all the

²⁵ Acting PC, Lake Province to C. Sec., DSM, 11.2.35. TNA Acc.215/742:30-1

²⁶ Stiebel, PC, Mwanza Province to C. Sec., DSM, 9.8.27. TNA Acc.246 PC3/14:4

²⁷ PC, Lake Province to C. Sec, DSM, 11.2.35. TNA Acc.215/ 742/I:30-1

way from Ukerewe Island.²⁸ Most brewers, however, used the cover of nearby villages. As one district officer wrote:

...Mwanza South, this is a suburb of Mwanza Town which has long been the resort of detribalized natives who wish to evade the application of the Township Rules. Much illicit brewing of liquor is carried on there, and the control of the neighborhood is really beyond the capacity of the local Native Authority.²⁹

Outside town, many headmen were reported to turn a blind eye to brewing and the beer trade since those employed in it were often women in need of cash for taxes or other obligations.³⁰

In response, township police successively sought liquor jurisdiction over areas within an expanding five to ten mile radius of Mwanza.³¹ Failing in this, and their attempts to prod the Chief of Mwanza to action, they opted for wider opportunities of regulated sale, and stronger action within the Liwali's Court against those convicted of illegal brewing. If they could decide the issue by force, the

28 A. W. Evers, Asst. Superintendent of Police to Acting Superintendent of Police, Lake Province, 12.7.46. TNA Acc.215/742/I:214; and J. E. S. Lamb to PC, Lake Province, 6.7.34. TNA Acc.215/742/I:17.

29 DO Mwanza to PC Mwanza, 11.5.31. TNA Acc.246 PC3/14:28

30 Acting PC, Lake Province to C. Sec., DSM, 11.2.35. TNA Acc.215/742/I:30

31 Acting C. Sec, DSM to PC Stiebel, Mwanza, 4.5.26. TNA Acc.246 PC3/14:1; J. E. S. Lamb to PC, Lake Province, 6.7.34. TNA Acc.215/742/I:17; Lamb to PC, Lake Province, 22.8.34. TNA Acc.215/742/I:22; and Acting PC, Lake Province to C. Sec., DSM, 25.8.34. TNA Acc.215/742/I:23.

authorities accepted the compromise of revenue enhancement and subjective punishment.

Generally, brewing for non-commercial purposes was overlooked.³² Illegal sale was met with simple confiscation for small offenders, but in the case of larger organizations penalties were higher. For those caught with hard liquor or stills, fines ranged from 60 to 200/- and sentences from between town to six months at hard labor.³³ Officials considered the fines ineffective since the trade was so profitable, but the sentences were deemed "exemplary."³⁴

The local administration also tried to contain alcohol sales by expanding the town pombe market. As early as 1924 the Senior Commissioner and the Territorial Police Superintendent agreed that "reform of the liquor trade.... can only be properly achieved when the manufacture and sale of native beer is undertaken by Government, as has been done with success in Durban and Nairobi."³⁵

32 Circular by Provincial Commissioner Buckley, 30.9.29. TNA Acc.215 PC3/14:12

33 Case list attached to file. Liquor cases, Mwanza Township, Jan.-Mar. 1942. TNA Acc.215/742/I:134

34 Steibel, PC to C. Sec., DSM, 9.8.27. TNA Acc.246 PC3/14:4

35 Report of the Administration of Police and Prisons, T.T., 1924. CO691/78:375

Mwanza though, lacked the resources of Durban or Nairobi. The administration could never supply enough bottled beer for a beer hall system, and certainly not at prices workers could regularly afford. Therefore, in the market under the supervision of a Mwanza Township Authority employee, bottled beer or authorized local brew was sold by up to nine licensed vendors.³⁶ It was hoped that to some degree supply and price could be controlled, and drunken activity limited to a particular area of town.

10.5 Summary

Governing Africans in an urban setting was problematic for colonial officials. In particular, a smaller, district town like Mwanza lacked the political constituency and financial resources for the elaborate pass law and segregation policies pursued in large, primate cities, and prescribed by colonial law and experience. Hence, officials relied upon collaborative structures, modeled on previous German and Zanzibari practice, and on rural indirect rule policy.

Disciplining labor was of limited concern to officials, and there was little discernable pressure from the commercial community for them to do so. Instead, they focused their efforts on people working on the margins of

the mercantile economy: unlicensed vendors, brewers and so forth. While successive administrators attempted to control activities in town aggressively, sooner or later each worked out some local compromise.

11 Urban Property, Credit and Accumulation 1926-40

Merchant capital in the Mwanza region circulated in cycles by season, commodity or geography. Merchants, traders and buyers poured cash and credit into the rural areas during harvest periods, and extracted it the year round through the sale of imported goods. The central focus of production and trade in the region was agriculture; and consequently the principal means of accumulation for traders and buyers were unequal exchanges of cash and imported goods for rural produce.¹

In Mwanza town, at the urban end of this cycle, the profits of rural exchange could be reinvested in trade goods or diversified into other ventures such as transport, rental properties or market gardening. However, in order to extend the limit of their credit, most merchants acquired the ownership or rights to mortgageable, income earning properties in and around town. Hence, the commodification of urban property, and supporting title process, were

¹ For definitions of the terms: merchant capital, unequal exchange, or accumulation refer to the introduction.

beneficial to Mwanza merchants and their wider, rural duka network.

The cooperation of the colonial state in defining commercial land tenure was vital to this process. Not only were merchant capitalists dependent on the colonial regime to regulate production and discipline labor, but also to provide an undergirding legal framework for the circulation and accumulation of capital.² Administrators, however, had other interests to consider. Wide scale land alienation from African cultivators, whether by decree or by purchase, was politically unacceptable.³ Even in town, capitalist property relations for Africans were unsettling to the authorities, though Africans were the majority landholders there as well. Thus, officials designed a land policy which partly advanced the interests of merchants, granting titles and leases, but only within narrowly drawn parameters.

2 Geoffrey Kay, in Development and Underdevelopment (London, 1975), 93-4, argued that merchant capitalists were dependent on the ruling class or state to organize production. In the colonial context, however, "organization" took the form of coercion, or later regulation.

3 In an agricultural society land alienation is essentially primitive accumulation. It separates the producer, in this case the cultivator, from the means of production, land. Whether by force or purchase it also involves the transfer of value from one mode of production to another.

11.1 Kiwanja tenure, German titles, and Arab freehold claims

In the early years of the British administration, urban land tenure was an eclectic mixture of local conventions, early claims, German titles and Anglo-Indian legal terminology. During the late 1920's and early 1930's, however, colonial officials sought to develop a unified urban land tenure policy which promoted the interests of local merchant capital, and yet maintained indirect rule provisions for indigenous property rights.

After the war, the majority of town residents occupied their homes and gardens under what the administration termed kiwanja tenure.⁴ Despite this Kiswahili terminology, this tenure had no basis in precolonial Basukuma land use or later colonial customary law. In reality, kiwanja tenure was a 1905 German tax policy, and all it had originally stipulated was that townspeople residing on public land should pay an additional rent fixed at one-half of their poll and/or hut tax.⁵ It did, however, place individuals on tax rolls by plot, and was, moreover, a tacit recognition of occupation. During the early British military rule this tenure had simply been retained as a matter of bureaucratic convenience.

4 The term kiwanja is Kiswahili for a plot of land.

5 Gov. Cameron to Amery, 24.5.26. CO 691/84:29

For European and Asian immigrants then, kiwanja plots were all those which had never been formally alienated. From the perspective of many original or long term African residents, however, kiwanja tenure was merely an additional tax category. Actual rights to occupation, cultivation, division or inheritance of such plots could be adjudicated within a myriad of legal systems depending on the religion, ethnicity or legal status of the parties involved.

At the end of German rule, there were approximately 45 titles registered.⁶ Many buildings and lots were confiscated by the British military as enemy property and administered by a custodian in Dar es Salaam. Most were temporarily leased to European firms who enjoyed immediate access to the administration. Other plots were vacated following a string of post-war bankruptcies. Some were held by the court, though many were transferred by permission of the military commander.

A 1928 survey of town plots revealed the following pattern of titles or lease dates:

pre-1905	10
1906-10	14
1911-5	20
1916-9	28
1920	14
1921	8
1922	12

6 1928 Valuation List. TNA 10158/111-5

1923	6	
1924	11	
1925	6	
1926	6	
1927	5	
1928	<u>14*</u>	7
	154	

During the German period roughly 55 plots had been purchased or expropriated for non-African residential or commercial use. Under the British military occupation another 28 were built upon, and finally, before leaseholds were granted under the civil administration, 57 more had been acquired.⁸

On the fringes of town, legal tenure was even less certain. African cultivators occupied the outskirts along Ikoma and Tabora Roads. Moreover, Mwanza town adjoined the villages of Nyakabungo and Bugalika, both under rural, Native Authority jurisdiction and land law. Several Swahili and Arab entrepreneurs resided on large holdings on Tabora Road, and more in Kirumba and up the coast towards Kayenze. Many of these properties had been developed into commercial market gardens worked by tenants. Most "coastal" landlords lacked written title, though they considered their claims freehold.

11.2 Merchant Pressure for Expanded Property Rights

After the war, urban and rural trade center properties were in extreme demand. Urban traders and buyers returned

7 Valuation List. TNA 10158/111-5

* Resold plots with earlier occupation dates.

8 *ibid*

to the countryside reestablishing and expanding markets for cash crop agriculture. Moreover, new would-be merchants streamed into Tanganyikan towns. This increase in the commercial population gave rise to demands for new housing and business facilities in towns, and required the legal establishment of new trade center plots in the hinterlands.

In Mwanza town the mercantile population grew rapidly. At war's end there were approximately 1,000 non-Africans, and by 1928, nearly 1,750.⁹ Local merchants first petitioned the administration for wider urban property rights in 1925. Through an attorney, seventy-five Indian merchants complained that "present rents have been extremely increased by House owners" and therefore a further auction of leased township plots was necessary to reduce overcrowding and facilitate business.¹⁰

Beyond the obvious overcrowding and need for further commercial plots, however, there were a myriad of legal, economic and political issues. None of the title and leaseholders dating from the German period were certain of their rights in the new British court. Moreover, British record keeping since the war had not been consistent, and

9 Non-Native Census, 1921. CO 691/48:303; and Rept. by Sparks & Partners, 1926. CO 691/98:98.

10 M. N. Patel to Senior Commissioner, Mwanza 23.12.25. TNA Acc.41 121/OF/38/7

the only survey dated from 1911. Many held confiscated enemy plots on temporary lease from the administration, and others went on acquiring kiwanja plots by "permission." Thus, there was no clear urban land policy.

The economic consequence was the inability to mortgage property. At the peak of the cotton boom in the mid-1920's many traders residing in town were anxious to mortgage their homes, rentals or market gardens to acquire rural trading plots, or simply purchase more cotton. Large merchants and wholesalers also worked to expand their networks of rural clients, but without additional capital against their urban holdings, or collateral in the form trade center leaseholds for dependent shopkeepers, they were constrained. Credit was after all the lifeblood of the duka network, and the need for it impelled merchants to demand a more certain title or lease policy. Therefore, the Mwanza Indian Association complained to the governor during his 1926 visit that "the business community are experiencing too much hardships as they cannot raise any capital on their landed estate in time of needdue to want of titles."¹¹

Under pressure from similar commercial interests throughout the territory, in late 1926 the Governor produced two documents, Gov't. Notice no.8 and Circular no.31 of

¹¹ Memo on meeting between the Indian Association and Gov. Cameron, 1928. TNA 10158:40

1926, revising urban land tenure. While the wording of both was rather vague, in practice they were viewed as revoking kiwanja tenure for all non-African residents. They were also later re-interpreted to cover all Africans leasing to non-Africans. Most importantly, no.8 laid out the parameters for a new leasehold category, the right of occupancy.

Conversely, rural residence or property ownership by non-Africans was at the same time restricted. In Mwanza Province estate owners were forced to demonstrate freehold title or apply for a lease, and were often denied and evicted in the process. German era, European estate claims were limited, and by the 1920's few plantations were active. Instead, they became the object of title transfer schemes by Mwanza merchants seeking to obtain cotton ginnery licenses.

The overwhelming interest of merchants in the countryside, however, were trade center plots. After several years of commercial lobbying, in 1926 the administration revoked kiwanja in the trade centers, and imposed right of occupancy terms. Officials also gazetted additional trade centers, creating new plots to accommodate the post-war rush of cotton buyers.¹²

12 Refer to section 6.3

11.3 Conversion to rights of occupancy

With the abolition of Kiwanja tenure for non-Africans, all commercial properties had to have rights of occupancy negotiated. Existing properties were assessed, and additional lots in town were auctioned. Construction and improvement terms along with tax assessments were contracted and all plots were to be surveyed. The actual implementation of the new land policy, however, was repeatedly delayed, and eventually took place long after the land boom of the mid-1920's had waned.

Rights of occupancy were thirty-three-year leases obtained from the administration for rural estates or trade center and township plots. Occupiers of existing plots were assessed an economic ground rent by the Assistant District Officer, who was charged with overseeing land matters. New plots were auctioned, the groundrent set by the auction bid. Minimum bids on urban properties were determined by the administration at a rate of two and one-half cents per square foot, or about 250/- for a typical 10,000 square foot plot. Stipulations were also attached to the lease concerning the type and value of the proposed structure, as well as time limits for its construction.

The process was to have begun in 1926, however, staff shortages in the administration and local disputes over existing properties, new lot sites, and the conduct of the

auctions caused repeated hold ups. At one point, the European Chamber of Commerce opposed the right of occupancy scheme altogether, convinced, among other things, that "rings" of Asian merchants would rig the auctions.¹³ In a similar vein, the administration was unhappy with the "layout" of many areas of Mwanza town, and did not wish to extend leases to many kiwanja tenure occupants, preferring to evict them instead.¹⁴ Thus, unable to come to an agreement over which plots in town were to be leased, officials focused on rural trade center auctions instead, postponing Mwanza auctions until 1928.

Another stumbling block to standardized tenure, was the survey itself. No government surveyor was immediately available in 1926. The PC, Turnball complained to DSM that these delays cost another building season and worsened the housing shortage. The local merchants continued to pressure him, but he could only relay their frustration, "that the business community has learnt with much concern that plots cannot be surveyed for some months and cannot understand this lack of attention to their interests."¹⁵ Survey and title fees were collected for existing plots in 1928, and

13 D. G. Rance, Mwanza Chamber of Commerce to C. Sec, DSM, 15.2.26. TNA 10158:149-50.

14 Refer to section 11.7 for an analysis of administration relay layout plans.

15 Turnball, PC Lake Province to C. Sec. DSM, 13.2.26. TNA Acc.41/121/OF/38/18

some survey work was done then, though many plots were converted without a plan. Many of these remained unsurveyed until the late-1930's and were a source of acrimony between merchants and the administration, since many residents felt their ground rent had been estimated too high.

Once the new plot, bankruptcy and enemy property auctions finally got underway in 1928, bidding interest was limited. Ironically, by the time the administration had responded to the boom of the early 1920's, a depression had begun. At first the downturn was thought to be the result of the new railway, with traffic shifting away from the Mwanza and the KUR steamer route. One local lawyer argued the new rail spur had caused property values to decline by 40-50%.¹⁶

As the depression deepened, however, bankruptcies and slack business actually led many traders to surrender their leases or simply abandon rural, trade center plots. In 1930 merchants once again pressed the administration over rights of occupancy, but this time attempting to lower ground rents. Arguing a decrease in trade, the Chambers of Commerce pressed for a reduction in the rate from 2.5c to 1.2c per square foot.¹⁷ Mwanza officials countered that

16 LO to C. Sec. DSM, 23.9.30. TNA 10158/128

17 S. D. Patel, Sec. Mwanza Chamber of Commerce to DO, Mwanza, 29.10.30. TNA 10158:136

they had been receiving bids above the upset formula at recent auctions, an argument supported by the land office.¹⁸ After much protest, the European and Asian chambers of commerce each forwarded a member to an administration sponsored rent commission which compromised on a 2c rate.¹⁹

11.4 Making Way for Colonial Tenure: Arab Freehold Cases

As the survey slowly began, and plot and tax lists were reestablished, numerous cases of lost or disputed titles, squatting, and prior claims came to light. Local officials had anticipated that some non-African residents would attempt to slip by unnoticed under kiwanja tenure. What officials had not expected, however, were the large number of freehold claims by Waswahili and Arabs dating to the early German occupation.

Officials seemed genuinely unaware of the number of "coastal" residents in town and district. Their political and economic clout had certainly declined, perhaps contributing to their invisibility. In commerce, improvements in transport and the expansion of production and trade, had led to the economic displacement of coastal traders by larger firms several decades earlier. Their

18 T. C. Buckley, Act. PC, Lake Province to Land Office, DSM, 28.6.30. TNA 10158:130

19 W. E. H. Scupham, Act. DO Mwanza to Indian and European Chambers of Commerce, 24.10.30. TNA 10158:135

political power had lessened too, as the more privileged Asian and European communities dominated unofficial seats on advisory boards and the Township Authority.

The revocation of kiwanja policy placed the coastal immigrants in a severe economic and legal bind. Under the German administration, Arab agreements or transactions to obtain land were not documented by officials since they often did not legally distinguish such new immigrants from the indigenous population. But under British colonial law, Arab was a separate racial/legal status, and as such they could not reside in town under kiwanja tenure, nor in the countryside outside the Trade Centres. Their only escape from this predicament was a grant of freehold, but without documents the local administration was unwilling to approve any case.

By the late-1920's most coastal immigrant properties were held by descendents, or had been sold to second parties. In 1928 there were twenty-two Arab appeals for freehold in the district, nine of which concerned plots in the township. Of these local cases, eight concerned gardens, and several, rental houses and shops. There were also numerous holdings by Mwanza Arab residents outside the town: a number of plots in the trade centers of Kayenzi and Nyakato, and several large farms, 30-40 acres in size.²⁰

In that same year, the local Arab Association took the landholders' case to the governor during his tour of Mwanza. Eight members petitioned Sir Donald Cameron for freehold on their claims.²¹ Within a month the Mwanza Arab Association was assured that the Chief Land Officer would handle their cases personally, and a commission would be appointed to gather testimony. The administration further decided to hold to a standard of written or substantial oral evidence of thirty years or more continuous occupation to qualify for freehold. Similar claims had been made in Ujiji and Tanga, and Mwanza was now to be a test case.

Testimonies were collected beginning in late-1928. There was a subsequent visit by the Land Officer, and considerable correspondence with the Assistant District Officer. Decisions were not reached, however, until mid-1932, and in a few unsuccessful cases dragged on until 1936. Many claims in town were granted, and those which failed were offered right of occupancy terms. Claims outside town fared badly.

Eventually, the 30-year occupation rule was not rigidly enforced. Most successful claims hinged on lack of demand

20 Composite of Schedule of Arab Claims Cases, 1928.
TNA 10158:76-81

21 Application of Arab Association to Sir Donald Cameron, Gov., 20.7.28.

for the property, or the persistence of local lawyers in marshalling witnesses and writing letters. Also, those claims which had fallen into the hands of Mwanza trading firms, though their current owners were not "Arab," fared quiet well.

11.5 African Landlords

African residents faced a somewhat different set of problems under the new conversion policy. Most were able to remain under kiwanja, which had be redefined as an urban, African-only tenure. For some time, African landlords had rented rooms and buildings to African workers and Asian merchants, tradesmen and clerks. Under the new conversion policy, however, all Africans renting to non-Africans were required to obtain a right of occupancy for their property. Further, the administration required all mortgages on African property in town to be approved and registered by the Assistant District Officer.

Not surprisingly a number of Africans sought to convert their properties in order to lease, or continue to lease, to non-African tenants. Between 1926 and 1931 there were roughly 40 applications by 28 individuals.²² While not a

22 A precise count of all African landlords is impossible. Most rented to African tenants and thus were not required to document their properties outside of kiwanja taxes. Right of occupancy applications too, are probably incomplete, given the scattered record keeping. These numbers were gleaned from files: TNA Acc.41/121/OF:38,

seemingly large number, when one considers there were only 154 non-African plots slated for conversion in 1928, it is clear that African landlords controlled a significant amount of local non-African commercial property and housing.

The most common rental strategy involving non-African tenants usually involved the construction of a large concrete structure on a kiwanja plot, and then a legal petition for conversion once a tenant had been found. For example, in early 1931 a dried fish exporter applied for right of occupancy on five township plots, three with houses and two with buildings under construction. All were moderate rentals valued between 2,000 and 5,000/-.²³ African landlords also competed on the upper end of the rental market, one letting out the "most substantial" residence in town, valued at Shs.12,000/-.²⁴

Most of the landlords who sought non-African tenants were themselves successful merchant capitalists. One was government clerk, who left the administration in the 1930's to pursue a commercial career. Others were rural traders. Many of the "Bukoba" cattle traders had rental properties. One had several houses and market gardens in Mwanza, as well

Acc.41/121:23, 25-6, Acc.215/497/II-III, Acc.215/920/I, and 10071/I-III.

23 TNA 10071 Vol.2/Sub-file 67/1

24 TNA 10071 Vol.2/Sub-file 33/3

as a groundnut buying plot and house in Nyanguge. Each season he mortgaged or transferred these properties to obtain additional cash for rural buying.

Not all African landlords were thriving entrepreneurs, however. Some wished to convert tenure simply to sell outright to a non-African buyer. Often these transactions were court forced sales to meet trading debts, and it was argued that Asian bidders usually made higher offers than other African traders or rentiers. A few landlords were simply destitute, and sought the higher rents charged non-African tenants. Such applications usually failed though, since the ADO could require expensive improvements.

The depression, unfortunately, affected African landlords most severely. As the number of merchants in town dwindled, buildings stood empty and many rentiers could not meet their obligations or lease payments. Between 1932 and 1936 most African landlords had applied to surrender rights of occupancy and revert to kiwanja tenure, thereby avoiding ground rent and higher taxes. The high end of the housing market did not improve again until the eve of the Second World War.

11.6 Credit, investment and accumulation

For merchants and landlords property was an important vehicle for the circulation of capital. It served a twofold

purpose, both generating revenues through rent and providing security for loans or mortgages. Such funds could then be rechanneled into trade good stocks or produce buying, the tap root of unequal exchange and thereby accumulation.

There were several patterns for the local circulation of merchant capital, all having in common their use of commercial property to augment income or obtain credit. Most Mwanza merchants simply branched out, diversifying into wholesale trade, rural credit, and house renting. Larger agencies and ginners also rented out trade center plots and extended credit against property to rural traders. Finally, more successful buyers both rented and mortgaged township and rural plots in order to raise funds for seasonal markets.

The mid-1930's bankruptcy case of a medium sized Market Street wholesaler illustrates the first pattern quite well. When his assets were evaluated by the court broker, they totaled some Shs. 92,127/14.²⁵ Shs. 29,127/68, or roughly one-third, was in trade good inventory, primarily bolt cloth, readymade clothing, mosquito netting, tools and toiletries, the basic items of rural commerce.²⁶ Shs. 27,435/01, roughly another third, was in properties: five

25 TNA Acc.246 110/5 III/no date, no page

26 ibid. 13pg. appended list

houses in Mwanza and one in Kayenzi, four of these occupied rentals.²⁷ This wholesaler also held promissory notes from five fellow merchants, and had a long series of small loans or advances to rural buyers and shopkeepers in Kayenzi and Bukumbi.²⁸

While most of the bankrupt wholesaler's holdings and advances were small, Mwanza based agencies, shippers and ginners, controlled numerous trade center plots and lent large amounts to rural clients. For example, one Mwanza-based cotton ginning firm had right of occupancy terms on 42 urban and trade center plots.²⁹ Ladha Meghji, one of Mwanza more successful local merchants, not only leased a rice mill and cotton ginnery, but also had a network of lakeshore rice market plots and at least 28 cotton stores.³⁰ Such plots were either run by agents, or sublet to middlemen who purchased produce on commission. Moreover, large holdings were often heavily mortgaged to Kampala or Mombasa ginning corporations or shipping agents.

27 *ibid.* No date, no number

28 *ibid*

29 Senior Agricultural Officer to Director of Agriculture, DSM, 4.3.40. TNA Acc.215/772/I:254

30 C. E. D. Stiebel, Acting DO, Mwanza to Lands and Mines Office, DSM, 7.7.38. TNA Acc.215/508/VI:1448; and Acting Land Officer to DO, Mwanza, 14.10.38. TNA Acc.215/508/VI:1478.

Mwanza merchants, in fact, exercised considerable control over rural, trade center properties and traders. For example, the Kampala General Agency, a cotton ginning and shipping concern, had mortgages extended in virtually every trade center. In Missungwi they only had right of occupancy to one plot, but through mortgages they actually controlled twelve, almost one-third of the commercial properties in that settlement.³¹ In another case in 1931, traders in Usagara petitioned to move to a new trade center at Fela, four and one-half miles away on the rail line. The Fela plot auction in 1932 was temporarily blocked, however, by the Mwanza Chamber of Commerce. Mwanza firms either owned rental properties, or held mortgages over every active shop in Usagara, and feared the move would destroy their investments.³²

In the final pattern of capital circulation, many town based buyers and petty traders held plots and houses, both in Mwanza and the trading centers, which they leased and mortgaged to raise funds for rural buying. For example, over a six year period, one Bukoba trader was involved in at least five mortgages.³³ Most Asians traders borrowed from

31 Flacks, ADO, Mwanza. Memo - Missungwi Relayout, 27.5.32. TNA Acc.41/121/18/II:59

32 TNA 10071 Vol.3/Sub-file 78

33 From TNA Acc.215/920/I, "Charges, Transfers and Conveyances, African - Non-African."

ginnerers or Mwanza wholesalers. African and Arab traders, however, dealt more frequently with moneylenders. Even though under right of occupancy legislation, property transactions between African and non-Africans were to be supervised by the administration, rates of interest in these transactions could be quite high. The ADO reported in one 1932 case:

1. The mortgager fully understood the transaction and the rate of interest he would be required to pay. He stated he required capital to extend his dried fish and small stock business between Mwanza and Bukoba and Uganda.

2. Before consenting to the transaction I consulted bank managers and Mr. Willis, and I was informed, quite independently of each other, that money in the bazaar was tight and that lenders would not consider less than from 20 to 30 per cent per annum for their money. ³⁴

Despite such terms, African traders continued to lease and mortgage properties, even during the depression years.

11.7 Summary

Property formed the legal linchpin in the regional circulation of capital, acting as collateral for the extension of credit within the duka network. Hence, in the mid-1920's merchants lobbied for wider property rights and more secure tenure, in order to sustain or increase their rural trading activities. The colonial authorities responded slowly, introducing a long-term lease policy, but extending it only to non-Africans and a limited number of

34 A. C. Davey, ADO, Memo, 7.6.32. TNA Acc.41/121/26:5

African traders, and geographically limiting this tenure to estates and gazetted townships and trade centers.

In Mwanza town, at the hub of the duka network, profits accumulated in rural exchange were reinvested in trade goods, or diversified in other ventures. Urban properties and leases, however, became the most important form of investment. They became necessary collateral for credit, and therefore a passport for entrance into rural commerce and the duka network.

12 Urban Politics and Struggles over Space, 1926-46

Whereas Cooper maintained the colonial administration's primary role in urban politics was to mediate struggles between capital and labor over the work regime, and in particular over the allotment of urban space; this was not the case in Mwanza town between the wars. Instead, the Mwanza Town government was frequently called upon to resolve conflict between factions of local, merchant capital. Disputes generated in the countryside: competition over markets, frustration over debt, and lobbying for monopolistic privileges, were often expressed in terms of ethnic animosity, and boiled over into urban struggles between merchants for influence in local decision making and residential segregation.¹

At first, the administration waded into these contests aggressively, dominating local government and instigating

¹ This analysis is modeled on a related thesis posited for colonial Durban by Maynard Swanson in, "The Asiatic Menace: Creating Segregation in Durban, 1870-1900," IJAHS 16,3(1983):401-21. In brief, he argued racial anxiety, political rivalry and economic competition spurred white notables to press for more rigid residential segregation.

Mwanza, or the district town, produced a variant on this theme, with rural economic rivalries primarily fueling drives for "relayout," or segregation.

segregation debates. Almost invariably, however, official institutions and initiatives were influenced or altered by commercial pressure, leading to local compromise. Thus, by the late 1920's administrators sought to reinforce mediating bodies like as the Mwanza Township Authority, and moved very slowly on "sanitary" and zoning policy cases.

12.1 Agents of Mediation: Mwanza Township Authority

Actual decision making power in Mwanza town rested with the Mwanza Township Authority. Originally comprised of two official and two unofficial members, this board reviewed township rules and ordinances, outlined town layout plans, handled local finances, and coordinated day-to-day functions with the Public Works Department. Though seemingly a small and mundane organ of government, the MTA became the focus of contests among local interest groups for political influence; and later the arbiter in struggles over urban space.

The administration sought to maintain the upper hand through the two official members. The DO or ADO acted as the executive officer, and was assisted by the health officer. By controlling the leadership position, and for a time half the votes, the district and provincial establishment were able to set the agenda, while allowing limited opportunities for participation and debate by local factions of capital.

The DO or ADO was expected to carry out the responsibilities of executive officer in addition to his district-level requirements. He acted as chair and chief correspondent for the MTA, supervising building operations, roads, water drainage, anti-malarial measures, street cleaning and refuse collection, the fire brigade, open spaces, and town vehicles and equipment.² To do so, the executive officer oversaw the town foreman and station crew, as well as joining efforts with the district Public Works Department. The other official member, the health officer, played the role of resident expert on housing and sanitary measures. Though a nascent science in colonial Africa, urban planning had taken a decidedly medical focus. Thus, through reports and professional opinions the health officer could provide legitimating guidelines for the regulation of space.

The unofficial members were drawn one each from the European and Asian business communities. They were not popularly elected; instead, their nominations were forwarded by their respective commercial interest group, a chamber of commerce or business/ethnic association. Turnover was

² Memo, The Executive Officer - Township Authority, 1951. TNA 41589:20A; and MTA, Estimates 1946. TNA 34243/16.

frequent, and each time a replacement was made the question of participation was raised.

Local merchant capital was divided by both scale of operation and ethnicity. Smaller traders and shopkeepers distrusted large wholesalers and ginnerers. European businessmen fought what they felt was a rearguard action against "uneconomical" Asian competition. All factions, moreover, brought the anxieties and rivalries of sharp competition, and the boom and bust cycles of rural produce buying back to town with them. Thus, seats on the MTA were perceived as access to the administration for their peer group, and membership as an indication of official favor.

The European seat was tacitly controlled by the Mwanza Chamber of Commerce. Members during the 1920's included a local lawyer, a cotton ginnery representative, and hide buying firm manager, each an officer in the chamber.³ By the mid-1930's, the European and Asian chambers had merged, and control of the European seat was exchanged among local representatives of the Standard Bank of South Africa.⁴

3 List of Names of Unofficial Township Authority Members. TNA 22378:3

4 Lamb, DO Mwanza to PC, Lake Province, 9.5.36. TNA Acc.215/325/I:58; and Chas. Seymour Hall, Exec. MTA to PC, Lake Province, 2.7.37. TNA Acc.215/325/I:61

The initial Asian seat was under the control of the managing committee of the Mwanza Indian Association.⁵ It was held in succession by a lawyer, a ginnery representative, an import/export agent, several successful merchants, and the secretary of the Indian Association during the interwar years.⁶ Several, M. N. Patel and Habib Jamal, went on to greater prominence in colonial politics, both in the Indian Association and on the Legislative Council.

Asian businessmen were clearly the overwhelming majority of merchant capitalists in the region. They dwarfed the European agents and representatives in numbers and importance. And, in the early 1930's, they began to campaign for an additional seat; stressing their "numerical strength" and "vested interests."⁷ In 1936 they accomplished this aim, but still could be out voted by a combination of official and unofficial European members.⁸

5 J. T. Patel to C. Sec., DSM, 4.2.33. TNA Acc.215/325/I:18

6 List of Names of Unofficial Township Authority Members. TNA 22378:3; and Appointment of Township Authority Members. TNA Acc.215/325/I

7 Habib Jamal to DO Mwanza, 7.1.33. TNA Acc.215/325/I:14

8 Chas. Seymour Hall, Exec. MTA to PC, Lake Province, 2.7.37. TNA Acc.215/325/I:61

There were no African members until 1944, when the liwali and an interpreter from the Resident Magistrate's Court were appointed. The Liwali obviously strengthened the administration's hand. The interpreter, referred to by the DO as "a local native who has lived for many years in the town," might well have been an attempt to placate the town elders.⁹ He was later replaced by a retired police Asst. Sub-Inspector, also a long-time resident.¹⁰

12.2 Segregation: the interplay of class and race

The central issue before the MTA, was the regulation of urban space. As the town grew, the MTA was forced to mediate between the demands of the authorities in Dar es Salaam for order and development, the wishes of local merchants for additional commercial properties, and the needs of workers for residential accommodation. To this end, however, colonial guidelines were deliberately vague. Colonial racial thought, and practice elsewhere in the empire, favored segregation; but the terms of the League of Nations mandate prohibited such overt measures. Townships within the Territory then, were largely left to their own devices.

⁹ Exec. Officer MTA to PC, Lake Province, 19.9.44. TNA Acc.215/325/I:168

¹⁰ Exec. Officer, MTA to PC, Lake Province, 3.3.47. TNA Acc.215/325/I:229

The British authorities in Mwanza had no coherent segregation policy. Thus, in matters of race and housing, officials were motivated by their own prejudices, and pressured by local interest groups. When inclined or forced to act, the administration selectively enforced urban laws and building codes devised earlier in Dar es Salaam, turning them to local advantage.

Initially, policy was couched in medical language, an approach later characterized as the "sanitation syndrome."¹¹ From the first relayout plan in 1927, through the building demolitions of the late 1930's and early 1940's, terms like cluttered, overcrowded, overbuilt, and insanitary pervaded administrative discourse. Further, by placing the district health officer on the MTA, and requesting public health reports on contested neighborhoods, the administration acquired a degree of professional leverage and legitimacy for its decisions. Official concern over sanitary conditions, however, was focused almost exclusively on the

11 This term was coined by Maynard Swanson in an article entitled, "The Sanitation Syndrome: Bubonic Plague and Urban Native Policy in the Cape Colony, 1900-1909," *JAH*, 18,3(1977):387-410. He argued quite persuasively that infectious disease became a "social metaphor" for colonial officials, uniting public health practice and social/racial segregation policies. Whereas in Europe policymakers viewed infectious disease in an ethnic and class context, in colonial African the focus was exclusively racial. Therefore, in the colonial mind, the containment or treatment of disease was most effectively accomplished through sanitary cordons, influx control, and rigid residential segregation.

central commercial area along Market Street, which was a largely Asian district.

There were, of course, planning, sanitary and overcrowding problems in Mwanza town. Housing was in short supply, and existing structures were crowded. Lack of planning and the uncertainty of tenure had led to the repeated subdivision of plots. Further, many residents relied on the lake or streams for water, and drainage was accomplished by ditch, not by sewer.

These problems, however, were not unique to any one ethnic community or neighborhood in the township. Almost all residents lived in conditions more crowded than they would have preferred. Even the administration had difficulty housing its staff; placing Europeans in local hotels and non-European employees in temporary accommodations. The government lines were tick-infested and had to be destroyed. And administration clerks and government school teachers waged decades long letter writing and petition campaigns to get adequate housing.

Later, during the scramble to lease town plots, the administration took more direct action, devising and manipulating Township Building Rules so as to limit residence in particular neighborhoods. Such rules, usually initiated by the Central Town Planning and Building

Committee in Dar es Salaam, stipulated types of construction materials, the dimensions of structures, the ratio of building to lot, and required permits and fees.¹²

The rules were particularly hard on proposals for mud, daub or thatch structures. They specifically endorsed the use of brick, stone and corrugated iron or tile roofing. Poorer applicants were also intimidated by the requirements of a permit, often requiring blueprints, and a fee of 10 to 20/-.¹³

Enforcement of the Building Rules was selective. Kiwanja tenure properties, and thus most African residents were exempt. Moreover, the Director of Public Works was charged with inspection, but complained he lacked the time and was not compensated.¹⁴ Thus, the rules were reserved for specific building applications by non-African residents, and were not applied in general.

Building dimensions and lot size ratios, though, were a matter of repeated and serious contention. The rules limited construction to 50 to 60 percent of the lot, 70 percent on a corner.¹⁵ Since the administration already set

¹² Central Town Planning and Building Committee. Township Building Rules of 1930. TNA 19020:37

¹³ DC Mwanza to PC Lake Province, 28.11.45. TNA 19020:36

¹⁴ PC, Lake Province to C. Sec., DSM, 10.11.37. TNA 25403:1

lot sizes at auction, this measure enabled authorities to restrict large structures such as boarding houses, multi-family residences, or combined commercial and residential buildings. These measures were enforced on new structures, and led to much debate between merchants, landlords, the Indian Association and the administration.¹⁶

In addition to the Building Rules, the administration could regulate construction through right of occupancy lease terms. First, the ADO determined the ground rent, often at a level many landlords and merchants termed "uneconomical." Then, there was also the auction price. Finally, the lease stipulated the value of the proposed structure and a timetable for its construction. Thus, high rents and valuations could exclude many from particular neighborhoods. Failure to pay or comply resulted in revocation and heavy fines.

While building rules and right of occupancy conditions could exclude many by economic conditions, they could not deter those Africans and Asians with the financial wherewith-all to bid and build. By the late-1930's, therefore, methods of segregation had become even more sophisticated, relying upon local aesthetic standards. The Aesthetic

¹⁵ CTPBC. Township Building Rules of 1930. TNA 19020:37

¹⁶ Refer to the new marketplace plot auction in section 12.3

Building Regulations were worked out in Dar es Salaam by the Central Town Planning and Building Committee with the aim of allowing local officials to prevent the construction of buildings which "clashed."¹⁷ While these particular rules were not widely enforced in Mwanza, their terminology, especially their designation of European, Asian and African "type" structures, were.

12.3 Relayout Plans, 1924-9

As the town grew, struggles over space became more intense, and thus the MTA was forced to mediate. Underlying the official rhetoric of planning and relayout, however, were class based struggles over participation, space and behavior.¹⁸ The primary combatants during the 1920's were the European and Asian merchant communities. Workers, primarily African, were the losers in these struggles, as their neighborhoods were sacrificed to alleviate merchant pressure on the administration.

17 Minutes CTPBC, 12.12.35. TNA 25418:13

18 This argument has been made for South African urbanization by Maynard Swanson in, "The Asiatic Menace: Creating Segregation in Durban, 1870-1900," IJAHS, 16,3(1983):401-21. Specifically, he posited that, a crucial juncture in growth of Durban, racial anxieties, economic competition and political rivalries combined to cause "Whites to discuss the need for social control, public security and health, town planning, commercial arrangements and political aspiration in terms of racial or ethnic differences."

At the beginning of the British civil administration, local officials took stop-gap measures to relieve official and commercial housing shortages. It was hoped that simple alienation of African plots and the redistribution of confiscated enemy property could resolve problems. For example, in 1921 an unstated number of Africans were "ejected from their homes" to make room for the construction of the Residency and two government houses on Capri Point by Usagara Bay. At the time they were only compensated "one year's exemption from House Tax, to assist them in building new huts."¹⁹ A dispute soon developed over the remaining mango groves, some 200 trees in all. The displaced residents pressed for continued use or compensation. The administration responded that 166 trees no longer bore fruit; apparently they counted. Eventually, the Provincial Commissioner, whose house was at the center of the controversy, declared their claim "just" and awarded them 3000/-, since "it is not feasible that the natives retain ownership in the trees for several reasons, including the fact that they live too far away to guard them, and the continual difficulty of having natives wandering about gardens in a European quarter."²⁰

19 Act. DO to PC, 13.1.28. TNA Acc.215 PC43/4:1

20 Stiebel, PC to C. Sec., DSM, 7.2.28. TNA Acc.215 PC43/4:3

In the wake of this and similar squabbles, the MTA sought to develop a town plan. With demands by local merchants for wider property ownership, a more effective means of alienation was required. Moreover, since the non-African population had nearly doubled in the early-1920's, elements in the local administration and merchant community felt some residential segregation scheme was necessary. Discussions began as early as 1924, and the legal and political means to implement these soon emerged. The revocation of kiwanja tenure in 1926 allowed for the creation of new commercial plots. And, the arrival of the railway in that same year provided a pretext for redrawing the commercial district.

The initial aims were presented in vague form, and revolved around the railway's projected route through the town. The DO outlined them to railway officials as such:

- (a) A large area of ground unencumbered with offices, prisons or dwelling houses on which could be laid out the railway, post and customs offices, godowns, etc., and workshops at the back.
 - (b) No congested land entrance as at the existing pier.
 - (c) Greater health to the main European residential quarter.
 - (d) Considerable relief to a highly congested quarter of the township.
 - (e) The non-disturbance of the administrative and Police Offices, native court, Prison and several bungalows etc., and the Hospital also.
 - (f) The diversion of Godowns and Factories to a portion of the township most suitable for such buildings.²¹
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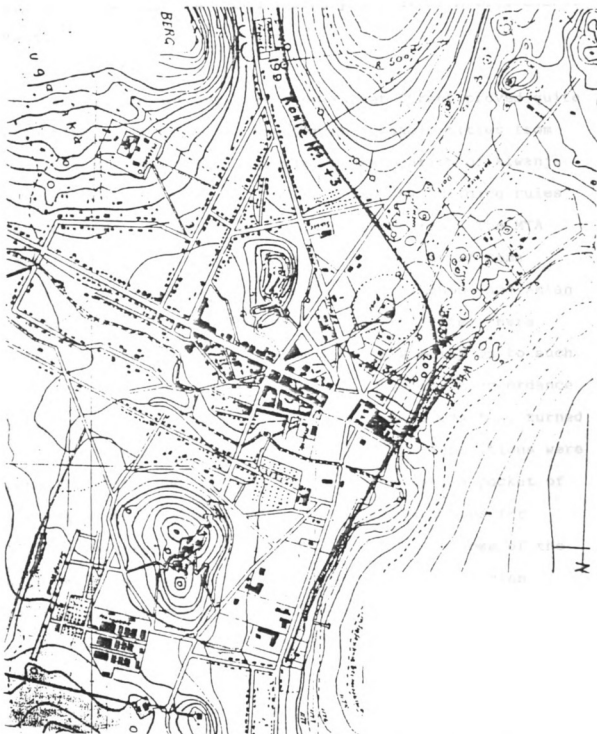
Despite such broad objectives, however, the relayout effort soon narrowed into a struggle over the principal "congested" area: a collection of largely Asian-owned shops and godowns along Market street just several blocks from the pier. The health officer wrote that "Market Street is the chief centre of trouble."²² He noted that most of the plots had been subdivided, and the subsequent "overbuilding" violated the new town Building Rules. The PC, Stiebel, felt the problem was that "residential and trading sites are inextricably mixed." He further offered the opinion that "Market Street area congested and insanitary state comparable only to an English city slum."²³

Much of the animus towards the bazaar neighborhood went beyond an official "sanitation syndrome." It emanated directly from the remaining European merchants. The European Chamber of Commerce called on the MTA for a "port replanning" to relieve "congestion," and in a note to the staff surveyor also complained, "to further increase the

21 Turnbull, DO to General Manager, TT Railways, 13.1.25. TNA Acc.215/18/1:15

22 Health Officer. "Health Problems in the congested area including a discussion of the New Scheme for the Relayout of Mwanza," unsigned and undated. TNA Acc.215 25/13:no page

23 Steibel, PC Lake Province to C. Sec. DSM, 27.5.27. TNA U3 10592:4



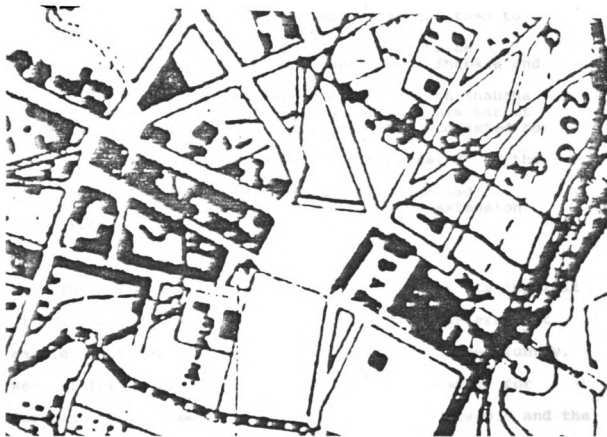
Rail Route into Mwanza
source: C0691/83:536

difficulties there has been a steady influx of Asiatics into Mwanza."²⁴

Asian merchant resistance on Market Street proved quite effective. All the plots had German freehold titles from the 1911 auction. Thus, eviction by revocation of kiwanja tenure could not be used. Further, the new building rules were difficult to adopt to existing structures. The MTA than alternatively focused on the area to east of Boma Square along Ikoma Road. Primarily smaller shops and Asian and African residences, the health officer wrote, "here plots have been divided and subdivided and built on to such an extent that there is scarcely any building in accordance with Township Regulations." Most of these plots too, turned out to be freehold. The only area in which demolitions were actually slated was along Kichafichini Street, a pocket of kiwanja plots. Largely rental and boarding houses for African workers, legal resistance was slight. Some of the affected Asian landlords complained through the Indian Association for delays and compensation.²⁵

²⁴ Chamber of Commerce to Staff Surveyor, Mwanza, 30.7.27. TNA Acc.215 25/13/10

²⁵ Petition of the Indian Association of Mwanza to PC, Mwanza, 5.8.27. TNA Acc.215 25/13:no page



Market Street neighborhood

source: C0691/83:536

Unable to remove the Asian merchants from their properties in "congested" areas, the MTA compromised. They opted for a second, more detailed plan:

- 1) Railway to Usagara Bay
- 2) new layout:
 - a) Residential sites Area to that S. & S.W. of the Boma to Capri Point. Other residential sites to N. of police lines and E. of Barracks Rd. to the junction of Barracks and Makongola Rds.
 - b) The better class commercial sites to occupy Ikoma Rd. as far as Shauri Moyo Road and then to extend towards station site.
 - c) Asiatic type of building sites to be allowed for on the eastern confines of Shabaha and Ikoma Roads.
 - d) Suggested new Market site to be on Shabaha Road. If the cost of drainage of this new market site be prohibitive an alternate site suggested to be selected on Tabora Road.
 - e) Area surrounding present hospital N. of the Boma to remain an open site.
 - f) The area W. of Makongola Road called Kirumba to be reserved for native town extension (room for a minimum of 300 plots).²⁶

The most salient feature of this plan was its implicit division of the town into ethnic or racial quarters. At earlier meetings the situation had been put quite bluntly. West of Fort Hill was to be a "Residential Quarter for European type houses, Kirumba for a Native village," and the fringe of the trading area for "Asiatic type houses."²⁷ Always expressed in building rules language - "type houses" - the intent was clear.

²⁶ Exec. Officer, MTA. Memo on MTA meeting, 16.4.27.
TNA Acc.215 25/13:1

²⁷ MTA memo. TNA U3 10592:4

The key to this division of the town was to relocate the planned railway approach to the east on Usagara Bay. Clearing the port area was important, not simply to speed the movement of goods, or to close down an "insanitary" bazaar, but to appropriate the waterfront for Europeans. As one MTA memo put it, to improve the "aesthetic and recreational uses of the lakeshore."²⁸

The second aim of the 1927 plan was to establish a new open or "native" market designed to draw traffic away from Market Street. When this project was undertaken it set in motion further struggles over space. Merchant Asian interests objected to the new market layout and right of occupancy terms. African residents in the affected site, just off Shabaha Rd., faced the destruction of their homes, gardens and neighborhood.

The MTA designed the open market and adjoining plots to favor African vendors and discourage Asians. The plot sizes were modeled on those in Dar es Salaam, 45 X 60'. In MTA discussions these were deemed "sufficient considering we do not expect traders to live in their shops around the market - it is a trading centre - not a residential quarter."²⁹ It

28 MTA memo. TNA U3 10592:4

29 HCB to PC, Lake Province, undated note. TNA Acc.215/25/3:7

was also intended that these plots be "more suitable for native traders," creating a division already achieved in other towns, segregating African produce trading from the Asian bazaar.³⁰

The Indian Association objected, meeting with the Commissioner Stiebel to make its case. Its leaders asked for 50 X 100' plots and pointed out that Indian, Arab and African traders all lived on their business premises.³¹ When such personal mediation failed, a mass meeting was called. At this juncture proposals were made for an alternate site on Mission Road, temporarily sabotaging the plan. Finally, when the plots were auctioned in 1929, only two were immediately sold, and no Asians bid.³²

The African market itself, did affect trade on Market Street. Bazaar merchants repeatedly complained over the African market rules. Ideally, sales were to be limited to African produce and "handicrafts," and the MTA employed a market master to keep watch. However, petty traders often sold cotton piece goods and other imported items from stalls. Unlike merchants on Market Street, they paid no

30 ibid

31 PC, Lake Province to Exec. Officer, MTA, 21.12.26. TNA Acc.215/25/3:8

32 Sec. Mwanza Indian Association to Exec. Officer, MTA, 20.1.28. TNA Acc.215/5/3:30; and DO Mwanza to Land Officer, DSM, 14.6.29. TNA Acc.215/25/3:56

taxes or rent, simply a 20 cent daily market fee.³³ Thus, there were frequent accusations of "uneconomical" competition, and subsequent reviews of market rules.

For the African residents of the market site, the situation was much more grim. Thirty-two houses were destroyed, 31 of them belonging to Africans.³⁴ Initially, these structures were valued by the neighborhood Jumbe Abdulrehman between Shs. 20 to 1000/-. When compensation was due, however, the properties were reestimated by the MTA based the "actual value and cost of moving" existing materials. Thus, they paid out only between Shs.15 and 700/-.³⁵ Doubtless there was opposition, but the MTA was determined. The land was held under Kiwanja tenure and could be alienated. Moreover, with reference to the plan, the European Chamber of Commerce urged, "it is not possible to consult the shifting population at large."³⁶ Clearly, there was to be little mediation with an African interest group.

33 D. E. Wilson, Exec. Officer, MTA to C. Sec., DSM, 10.10.28. TNA Acc.215/25/3:43

34 Jumbe's List, no date. TNA Acc.215/25/3:1

35 Medical Officer to Sec., Central Town Planning and Building Committee, DSM, 3.10.26. TNA Acc.215/25/3:3

36 Williams, DO Mwanza to PC Lake Province, 4.8.27. TNA Acc.215 25/13/10

Despite the controversy, the relayout plans of 1926 and 1927 slowly died for lack of funds. The railway did not wish to build a new pier on Usagara Bay. Moreover, the administration in DSM would not budget funds for large scale demolitions or relocations. They termed the plans too "drastic," and one Secretariat wag wrote, "Mr. Stiebel's hare has been allowed much too long a run."³⁷ In the end, what came of the matter was a second market area, and a discussed but as yet unused plan for segregation.

12.4 Sanitation Crisis, 1936-46

The second struggle to reshape the town came in 1936 with an effort spearheaded by the MTA once again to clear the old bazaar. It began as a simple dispute between the health officer and hide godown and tannery owners, but over time grew into another relayout plan. The issues were much the same: health, the separation of commercial and residential structures, and tacit segregation. What was altered, however, was the relative strength of various factions of local merchant capital involved in the struggle.

As early as 1927 the local representative of the British Cotton Growing Association had complained that the nearby Old East African Trading Co. tannery and godown on Tabora Road was a nuisance. The senior health officer later

37 File Minutes, no date. TNA U3 10592:56

concurred that, "the acrid smell is very pronounced and noticeable by all passers-by."³⁸ He further warned that it could draw rats and become a serious health hazard.³⁹

The hide trade had been booming in the 1910's; however, the depletion of game animals and related expansion of cotton cultivation during the 1920's, had limited the scale of operation. Cattle hides had become the main article of trade, and given relatively static herd size, intake had levelled off. Finally, the onset of the global depression in the late-1920's lessened international demand for leather exports.

Nevertheless, OEAT Co. was able to resist MTA efforts to force a clean up or to relocate for nearly a decade. Its managers made much of the downturn in business, arguing a move would ruin them. They were joined in this debate by other Mwanza hide firms who agreed that small buyers could not withstand additional costs transporting hides to new godown sites. This began a running dispute between the administration and hide buyers over local trade conditions.

An important OEAT Co. ploy was to emphasize locally and in Dar es Salaam that they were the "last European hide

38 SHO to PC Lake Province, 3.3.32. TNA U3 12441/66

39 *ibid*

buyer in Mwanza District."⁴⁰ An unnamed local correspondent for the Tanganyika Standard was provoked to write:

One thing we badly need in Mwanza is less restriction on trade from Government, for it is patent that Government cannot be so well informed on commercial matters as the community concerned: 'Cobbler stick to your last' is an expression applicable to Government up here just now.⁴¹

A further pressure point was an administrative fear of protest. OEAT Co. threatened to rally European merchants, but more unsettling was the possibility of Asian opposition as well. Most of the remaining firms were Asian owned and managed, and they too faced removal to the edge of town. The Secretariat made it clear to Mwanza officials that it wished them not to press, in 1928 and again in 1931.⁴² Finally, the OEAT Co. claimed its property was in fact a German freehold, and challenged the MTA's authority to enforce building rules there. While they never produced the actual title, the subsequent inquiry took several years.⁴³

40 Mgr., Old East African Trading Co., DSM to C. Sec., DSM, 20.11.30. TNA U3 12441:49

41 Extract from Tanganyika Standard, 18.4.32. TNA U3 12441:82

42 D. J. Jardine. File Minutes, 27.8.28. TNA U3 12441:34; and D. J. Jardine. File Minutes, 31.12.31. TNA U3 12441:57.

43 Betrovsky, Mgr. OEAT Co. Mwanza to C. Sec., DSM, 2.2.32. TNA U3 12441:59-60

The local administration dealt with the problem through "personal discussions" with the OEAT Co. management. The gave what they termed "sympathetic treatment," allowing repeated extensions to bring the property in line with the offensive factory site clause in the town building rules.⁴⁴

In 1937, however, there was an outbreak of bubonic plague in the township. The carrier rats were soon traded to stored hides and surrounding structures on Tabora Road. The health officer cancelled all hide storage permits and the OEAT Co. was ordered to close "without prejudice."⁴⁵ Within the same year, moreover, the MTA produced an extensive plan to render the town "rat proof." Over 300 structures were to be demolished over a ten year period, with new right of occupancy terms to be negotiated before rebuilding.⁴⁶ Freehold properties were also expected to conform to the building rules. All of this, of course, was presented as a response to a public health emergency.

44 Memo, Buckley Act. DO Mwanza to C. Sec., DSM, 27.11.30. TNA U3 12441:51

45 Exec. Officer MTA to PC, Lake Province, 4.3.37. TNA U3 12441:97; and PC, Lake Province to C. Sec., DSM, 18.3.37. TNA U3 12441:101

46 Sec., Indian Association, Mwanza to C. Sec., DSM, 2.12.37. TNA U3 25450:4-8; and Webster, PC Lake Province to C. Sec., DSM, 15.12.37. TNA U3 25450:1-3.

The local Indian Association protested vociferously, petitioning the governor. They disputed the Mwanza administration's claim that the epidemic had emanated from the hide godowns. They claimed it to have been a "mild outbreak" and the first in thirty years. Moreover, they cast doubt on the MTA's true intentions, noting that no government buildings in the town centre had been slated for demolition. The Association pointed out that "no attempt is made to keep the town clean anyway," and that the real health problem was malaria, for which few drainage projects had ever been undertaken.⁴⁷ The actual demolition was opposed since it was by section and not by individual structure. The average cost of each building was put at 7,000/-, and the total loss to landlords would be some Shs. 21,000,000/-. Many properties were mortgaged, thus the Association claimed funds were tied up in trade, and such losses would ruin many small traders and shopkeepers.⁴⁸

The Association demanded compensation based on their estimates and disputed the administration's authority in this case. In particular, they urged that a "larger body" than the MTA decide on the matter.⁴⁹ Unfortunately, time had passed many of the members by. Several commodity

47 Sec., Indian Association of Mwanza to C. Sec., DSM, 2.12.37. TNA U3 25450:4-8

48 *ibid*

49 *ibid*

markets, like hide buying, had faded in importance. Large firms now dominated the principal avenue for merchant capital, cotton buying and ginning. Thus, the economic and political clout of small buyers and the bazaar merchants was in decline, and even though the Indian Association backed them, they could not completely halt the plan.

The Provincial Commissioner, Webster, sought the support of his superiors, assuring DSM that the Indian Association's accusations were unfounded. He maintained that 1500 rats per month were being caught in the contested neighborhoods, while there were no cases of plague in the government buildings except the goal.⁵⁰ Moreover, he said there were two garbage trucks and that convict and station labor was used to clean the town. Most importantly, he argued that there should be no compensation for dilapidated structures, since Mwanza rents were "exorbitant" for "bad accommodation" and thus these landlords had already profited greatly.⁵¹ Finally, he suggested the compromise that appeals to the MTA for specific cases would be possible.

The governor and secretariat viewed the plan very much in favor of the Mwanza administration. They referred to the affected structures as "unsightly and insanitary hovels,"

⁵⁰ Webster, PC Lake Province to C. Sec., DSM, 15.12.37.
TNA U3 25450:1-3

⁵¹ *ibid*

and declared them a problem which had to be dealt with "sooner or later."⁵² Of the complainants it was said, "it is the unprogressive and offending element in the townships that does its best to make the task harder.... and Government should do its utmost to squash their unfounded complaints."⁵³

In his official response to the Indian Association, however, the governor was rather conciliatory. While rejecting most of their assertions about the local administration and MTA's handling of the affair, he offered that individual inspections would be conducted by the Public Works Department engineer, that repairs might replace many demolitions, and that appeals would be heard.⁵⁴

Thus, like the earlier plans in 1926 and 1927 this effort was slow and compromised. Many structures were saved through repairs or extensive appeals. During the slack housing market of the late-1930's it was possible to conduct demolitions, however, as wartime shortages affected new construction, many had to be postponed.⁵⁵ This time,

52 File note, C. Sec., DSM, 22.12.37. TNA U3 25450:11

53 *ibid*

54 C. Sec., DSM to Indian Association, Mwanza, 8.1.38. TNA U3 25450:14-6

55 Health Officer to Exec. Officer, MTA, 18.2.44. TNA Acc.246/110/5:173

though, local merchants were much less effective in influencing or derailing the administration.

12.5 Summary

Urban policy and politics, in a district town like Mwanza, were a matter of contest and compromise. While at first the British administration pursued its own, aggressive agenda, it was soon forced to moderate its stance and mediate between the interests of the colonial state, various factions of local merchant capital, and African residents.

During the interwar years, the central political issue in Mwanza was the regulation of space. On the surface these were segregation efforts by European residents, directed toward predominantly Asian and African neighborhoods. Driving debate, however, were economic rivalries over rural markets, the survival struggles of small, independent traders, and attempts by local merchants to enter or control agricultural processing.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation began as a test of the ideas of historians John Iliffe and Fred Cooper within the confines of a colonial district town. Neither Iliffe's broad themes, nor Cooper's narrow model were completely geared to this effort, however. While the case of Mwanza town validated some elements of both approaches, it contradicted others. Thus, in order to explain smaller-scale urbanization, it became necessary to produce a synthesis, combining Iliffe's emphasis on the penetration of capital and rural-urban articulation, with Cooper's time and space paradigm.

THE PROBLEM RESTATED

While Fred Cooper (1983) argued that struggles among capital, workers and the state shaped the African city, actually the penetration of capital and the process of articulation with rural production played a far greater role in determining the socioeconomic, political and physical configuration of the district town. There certainly were class formations and class struggles within colonial Mwanza; yet, until the 1950's, the town was dominated by rural-oriented merchant capital. The urban working class was

small and slow in coalescing, since production remained anchored in the countryside.

THE ARGUMENT

For a variety of political, economic and ecological reasons the people of precolonial Usukuma developed networks of settlements, but no large, urban, central place. Production and exchange were diffused throughout the region, as was political power. Settlement in late-nineteenth century Mwanza was similarly fractured. Mwanza villages, the German station and Askari village, and coastal merchant enclaves maintained distinct territorial and cultural boundaries.

By the turn of the century, however, increasing German political and military dominance combined with settlement by coastal entrepreneurs and workers had begun to erode the indigenous Mwanza social order. The extension of KUR steamer service stimulated a regional trade boom; drastically reducing the cost of imported goods, and making practical the export of bulky, agricultural produce. Within a decade Mwanza town emerged as the hub of regional commerce, attracting businesses and immigrant workers. In such an atmosphere, merchant capitalists and their enterprise became the driving force in shaping economic and spatial organization.

Merchants were dependent on the German civil administration to provide a legal framework for commerce, appropriate space for commercial use and, to a lesser extent, discipline labor. Gunzert's regime moved slowly, even carelessly, when pressured by merchants. Ultimately, it forged local compromises, deviating from official policy to balance the interests of merchants and African residents, while maintaining its own revenue imperative.

Developments in town were closely linked to the extension of commerce in the countryside. During the decade between 1903 and 1913 Mwanza town's merchants developed an extensive rural trade network encompassing much of the district. For their own part they did so by distributing trade goods, extending credit, organizing transport, and purchasing regional agricultural produce and livestock. They depended, however, on the political and economic power of the German administration and its indirect rule authorities, to organize rural production and provide transport infrastructure.

This rural, exchange-oriented focus continued to expand under the British administration, and reached its apogee during the cotton boom of the mid-1920's. Thereafter, economic collapse during the early years of the Great Depression forced an official reorganization of the colonial commercial framework, pitting the revenue interests of the

state against the credit and transport needs of Mwanza's "duka network." The result was a series of political contests among merchants, and between merchants and the administration, both in town and in the countryside.

During the interwar years, the central political issue in Mwanza was the regulation of space. Property formed the legal linchpin in the regional circulation of capital, acting as collateral for the extension of credit within the duka network. Hence, in the mid-1920's merchants lobbied for wider property rights and more secure tenure, in order to sustain or increase their rural trading activities. Later, with their business activities threatened by competition and economic depression, European residents implored the administration to devise "relayout," or segregation schemes, for the neighborhoods of Asian competitors.

Reproducing the town - recruiting and maintaining its labor force - was not only a complex matter, but a contradictory one. While merchant capitalists and the administration needed workers and generated employment, both often paid low, even below subsistence, wages. The pay scales of local businesses were determined by occupation, with skilled or trusted employees doing quite well, whereas others had little opportunity or mobility. The administration responded to this low wage environment, not

by raising government pay, but instead by reinforcing it, making up recruitment shortfalls with compulsory work gangs.

Disciplining labor, however, was of limited concern to the administration, and there was little discernable pressure from the commercial community for them to do so. Instead, officials focused their attention on people at the margins of the town's economy: unlicensed vendors, brewers or cultivators. While successive administrators attempted to aggressively control these activities, sooner or later each worked out some local compromise.

CENTRAL ISSUES

The driving force in the creation of colonial Mwanza town was rural-oriented merchant capital. After the arrival of KUR steamers Mwanza became a distribution and collection point for regional commerce, a node of articulation between rural production and metropolitan capital. Moreover, collectively and in ethnic factions, local merchants initiated town struggles over space and worker behavior, enlisting the support or mediation of colonial officials.

Merchant capitalists were dependent on the colonial authorities, both to organize or regulate agricultural production in the rural areas, and provide police powers and a capitalist legal framework in town. Despite repeated lobbying by merchants, however, both German and later

British officials in Mwanza moved slowly, attempting to steer a middle course between interests of urban capital, workers, African cultivators and their own superiors in Dar es Salaam.

Establishing capitalist property relations, making land a transferable commodity, was vital to the enterprise of merchant capital. While land in town was used only secondarily for production, i.e., industrial processing or market gardening, as an exchangeable asset it served as the primary form of collateral within the credit-based, rural duka network. Therefore, struggles over space evolved out of the efforts of merchants, through the aegis of the colonial administration, to confiscate, purchase or lease land from African residents for commercial or residential use.

Later, struggles over urban space were fueled by contests between factions of merchant capital. Competition for rural marketshares, frustrations over business failures, and attempts by large firms to gain monopolistic privileges crystalized into racial/ethnic segregation efforts in town during the mid-1920's, and again in late 1930's. Both contests pitted European against Asian merchants, with African residents being forced by the Town Authority to vacate plots in order to placate the warring parties.

Local merchant capitalists were less concerned with efforts to discipline labor, or struggles to control worker time and behavior as Cooper defined it. The labor requirements of urban merchant capital were limited, since production was firmly anchored in the rural areas. Thus, during the interwar years the colonial authorities focused their police activities on marginal people or occasional laborers whose activities, such as beer brewing or livestock keeping, threatened the health or public order desired by non-African residents.

CLASS FORMATION

Fred Cooper, in his coastal trilogy, traced the emergence of an African working class from the heyday of plantation slavery to the urban strikes of the 1940's. Further, in Struggle for the City (1983) he established an analytical framework which highlighted struggles between labor and capital, over work time and space, mediated by the colonial state. Class formation in Cooper's analysis centered on the emergence of an urban proletariat, and its efforts to resist or reshape the colonial or capitalist order.

John Iliffe discussed economic transformations in broad, sweeping terms such as the penetration of capital and the expansion of scale. Class formations, or more specifically the emergence of an African working class,

however, he covered with a detailed, institutional approach. Thus, Iliffe discussed the rise of an urban working class and petty-bourgeoisie in terms of the formation of labor unions and political parties.

The analysis and events outlined by Cooper and Iliffe do not necessarily contradict those in Mwanza; however, they do pose problems in periodization and focus. Between the penetration of capital at the turn of the century and the organized strikes of the 1940's, there were other important urban developments. The African proletariat did not emerge fully formed in the late 1940's, nor were its sole concerns institutional.

From the rise of the merchant petty-bourgeoisie during the German period, to the struggles between ethnic factions of capital, as well as between corporate and merchant capitalists during the 1920's and 1930's, merchants capitalists - the commercial bourgeoisie - dominated Mwanza's politics, and in large part shaped the labor regime and physical layout of the town. Class struggles in Mwanza often had their origin in contradictions within capital. Competition for rural markets created antagonisms which were later expressed in struggles over space or political participation. Initially, these contests involved European and Asian merchants. However, increasingly they became contests between large firms and smaller buyer/traders.

The colonial legal framework and urban-rural commerce also produced a number of men and women who existed on the fringes of class and ethnic boundaries. Some were occasional laborers involved in illicit activity like brewing. Others were cultivators who marketed produce in town. Moreover, many professionals or skilled workers in town often sought opportunities in rural commodity buying.

Finally, the development of a working class lagged behind that of the local commercial and bureaucratic bourgeoisie. While workers were always necessary and present, their numbers and actions were not highly visible or forceful until the 1940's. Moreover, the conditions of work, the over-exploitive wage scheme utilized by commercial and government employers, produced an urban, African working class that by necessity was more interested in petty trade and peri-urban cultivation than collective action.

MWANZA POST-1945

After the Second World War, Mwanza much more closely resembled the colonial city theorized by Cooper. After the boom and bust cycle of the interwar years, local commerce and rural produce buying came increasingly under the control of large merchants and colonial corporate managers. The duka network, though still operating, had lost access to many of the commodity markets that had fueled its initial

expansion. Consequently, there was no longer an effective mass of European or Asian merchants capable of consistently pressuring the administration.

The most notable transformation, however, was the emergence of a local, African professional and working class as an economic and political force. While migration to Mwanza had been increasing slowly during the interwar years, after 1945 Mwanza's population grew much more rapidly as a result of expanded processing employment. 1947 was a year of strikes, and there was railway agitation in Mwanza. Moreover, the teachers and civil servants organizations, labor unions, and eventually political parties championed by Iliffe asserted themselves in town, petitioning and challenging employers and the colonial administration.

Not surprisingly, the administration shifted its focus from accommodating merchant capitalists to contending with labor. The administration made increased efforts to discipline labor, imposing influx control, police action, and courts on Mwanza South and other surrounding settlements which were transferred to town authority. To a certain extent this was done on behalf of merchant employers, though most labor unrest was directed towards state agencies like the railways or steamer line.

Eventually, the administration, in concert with policymakers in Dar es Salaam, reorganized local government to meet the labor and professional challenge. In the early 1950's, they instituted a ward election system to supersede the Mwanza Township Authority. This communal political system, granted African residents greater access, yet the administration was able to maintain control through a coalition of Asian and European merchants.

The era of merchant capital did, nevertheless, have some lasting effects on Mwanza town, and East African urbanization in general. The most obvious was a chaotic system of land tenure, in which many strove to become rentiers. The most significant, however, was the over-exploitive wage, and consequent economic strategies of workers to supplement their income through extra employment or trading activity. This gave rise to a working class ideology which stressed surviving in town through a variety of enterprises in an addition to wage labor.

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/II	" " " " " 1934-6
/III	" " " " " 1936-8
850/I	Medical Sanitation - General 1930-56
885	Training and Discipline 1929-34
887/II	Township Mwanza 1933-41
892/I	Staff: General 1933-48
909/I	Agriculture - General 1923-32
920/I	Charges on Landed Property between Natives and Non-natives 1927-37
935/I	Township Rules - General 1934-54
968/I	Native Language: Swahili etc. 1926-43
992/I	Lake Victoria Fisheries 1927-32
/II	" " " " 1927-34

992/III	Lake Victoria Fisheries 1934-48
1098/I	Immoveable ex-enemy property 1920-37
1151/I	Agriculture: Rice 1929-49
1214	Railways and Marine Staff 1927-52
1356	Allocation of Cotton Gineries and Buying Plots 1936-7
1357	Surrender of Plots 1936-8
1358	Sale of Plots 1936-7
1359	Letters and Petitions over Same 1936-8
1387	Export by Steamer - Mwanza 1937
1414/I	Cotton Booths and Produce Stores 1936-7
/II	" " " " " 1938
1423/VIII	Produce and Cotton Marketing
1475/I	Transport - General 1937-9
/II	" " 1939-47
1478	Town Headmen or Liwalis 1935-58
1732	Destitute Persons - Non-natives 1942-53
1775	Cost of Living Committee 1943-5
1796	Meat Factory - Mwanza South 1943-5
1873/I	Township Ord. (Removal of undesirable Natives) no.6 of 1944, 1941-59
1921/I	African Associations 1945-50
1937/I	African Housing 1945-50
D1/1	Deceased Native Estates
L3/11	Native Poll Statistics 1942-53
PC11.6/I	Education: Imami Ismailia School 1929-32
18/3	Railway and Marine: Ports and Piers
25/10	Townships: Est. of Shops on borders of Townships, Trade Centres, and Markets 1928-32
27/2	Trade and Peddler Licenses etc. 1926-9
/4	Trade Credit to Natives 1927-37
/6	Trade Questions 1928-32
31/3	Misc. Cinematograph Exhibition 1927-31
/6	" Cinema Films General 1929-37
/9	" Royal Auto Club 1929-32
/11	" European Association 1929
/12	" Collection for Charitable Purposes 1930-42
43/2	Claims by Indians against Native Treasuries
/4	Complaint for Compensation 1928
/6	Claims of Africans vs. Europeans 1928-31
/8	" " Europeans vs. Europeans 1928-30
48/1/I	African Civil Service 1925-8
/II	" " " 1928-32
49/1	Tenders 1927-32
50/3	Complaints: Sadala bin Saidi - Cattle ex Mwanza Bukoba
52/3	Cattle Census 1930
misc.	Police Correspondence 1929-44
misc.	Agriculture Correspondence 1921-9
misc.	Lake Province Court Appeals 1931-8

Acc. 41 Mwanza District Office files

A1/2 Accommodation and Housing: African Urban Housing
 1952-6
 ADM/1 General Administration: Mwanza Township 1944-51
 /20 DO Mwanza: General Correspondence 1936-52
 L1/8 Annual Report on the Requisition of Labour 1936-61
 4/7 Liwali's Court, Mwanza 1936-59
 NA/11 Native Affairs: Mwanza Chiefdom 1933-48
 L2/4/III Lands: Right of Occpancy - Native Township
 L4/7 Liwali's Court Mwanza 1936-59
 P1/3 Reports on Crime 1930-55
 MED/1 Medical Sanitation - General 1931-56
 TRA/2 Motor Vehicles: Transport of Goods and Passengers
 1934-45
 105/5 Agriculture: Cotton Buying Markets 1937-8
 110/1,3,6-8 Bankruptcy: Cases Commenced after 1.3.30
 111/2,59,82 Deceased Estates
 115/83 Finance: Meat Rations Ltd. 1937-49
 118/10 Police and Prisons 1936
 /14 Police Reserve 1938-52
 121/5 Lands: Rights of Occupancy, Native - Township
 1930-1
 /8 Lands: Transfer and Conveyance 1931-8
 /8/II " " " " 1930
 /11 " Conversion of Kiwanja Tenure into Right of
 Occupancy, Mwanza Township 1931-9
 /12/III Lands: Survey and other Frees 1932-9
 /18/I " Missungwi Trading Centre - General 1931-2
 /18/II " " " " " 1932
 /18/III " " " " " 1936-49
 /20/II " Conveyance Natives to Non-natives 1930-49
 /23/II " Tabora Rd. 1932-5
 /25 " Morogoro Rd. Mwanza Township 1935-6
 /26 " Shabali Rd. Mwanza Township 1932-6
 /27/II " Mwanza Township 1935-6
 /27/V " " " 1936-7
 /31 " Right of Occupancy Transfers 1925-30
 /32 " " " " Surrender 1926-30
 /33 " Kayenze Trading Centre 1930-8
 /36 " Kisesa 1932-49
 /38 " Ryasisi 1932-8
 /41 " Nyegesi Trading Centre 1936-51
 /42 " Makuyuni 1932
 /46 " Survey and Boundry Marks, etc. 1923-30
 /47 " Regulations and Circulars 1922-9
 /48 " Kifuli Trading Centre 1933-7
 /OF/38 " Application for Plots 1923-30
 /OF/85 " Grants of Right of Occupancy 1928-30
 122/6 Judicial: Appeals from Court of Town Headman
 /8 " Records of Criminal Cases 1931-9
 /9 " Police Reports of Apprehensions 1931-2

123/1/II Communications: Lake Marine and Dhows 1933-48
 /1/III " " " " " 1948-51
 /OF/85 Lands: Grants of Right of Occupancy 1928-30
 127/13A/II African Population Census 1948
 /13A/II I " " " " "
 129/18 Quarterly Returns - Cases from Native Courts 1929
 /18A " " " " " " " "

Acc. 246 Mwanza Area Secretary files

PC3/14 Native Affairs: Native Liquor Ord. 1926-31
 /21 " " Census 1926-9
 PC20/7 Agriculture: Ginneries
 PC27/8 Trade: Kisesa Trade Centre
 PC40/3 Deceased Estates: European 1927-30
 /5 " " Arab 1928-31
 PC52/1 Cattle Overstocking up to 1930, 1928-30
 S/ii/3 Staff: Said bin Ali, Liwali; Mohammed Hussein
 1933-62
 /6 Staff: Junior Service 1938-63
 /7 " Said Abdulkhari, Asst. Liwali 1939-54
 103/15 Township: Removal of Undesirable Natives 1947-9
 115/29 Finance: Customs Dept. 1931-8
 121/12/IV Lands: Survey and other fees, R. of O. 1932-3
 /12/V " " " " " " 1932
 /22 " Nyakato Trading Centre 1932-47
 /U/12 " Provincial Administration - Trading
 Settlement Nyahanga

Acc. 251 Geita District Office files

9/3 Lands: Kome Trading Centre 1934-53
 /9 " Busisi 1932-40
 /28 " Kanyasonga (Buchosa) 1937-50

10000- Secretariat Files

10025 Cattle Trade on Lake Nyanza 1927
 10071/I Right of Occupancy - Mwanza Prov. Trading and
 Building Plots 1921-9
 /II " " 1927-9
 /III " " 1931-4
 /IV " " 1935
 10082/I Right of Occupancy - Mwanza Prov. Agricultural
 Plots 1927-8
 /II " 1927-32
 10158 Kiwanja Tenure: Township Plots - Mwanza Province -
 Conversion to Right of Occupancy
 10294/I Trading Firms - Registration of Companies 1927
 10456/I Mwanza Township Authority 1927-39

10581	Subdivision of Land held under Right of Occupancy 1913-31
10591	Cinemas and Theaters 1927
10592/I	Mwanza Township - layout 1927-36
/II	" " " 1947-52
10804	Trade Facilities Lake Victoria Ports 1933-5
10825	Sanitary Legislation for Smaller Settlements 1927-8
10933/I	Trading Centres in Districts 1927-39
10967	Cotton Buying Plots: Sale by Auction 1927-39
11007	Townships Zone: Extension for Trading Purposes, 1927
11478	Sanitary Labour in Larger Townships 1927-8
11523	Conditions for Railway Construction Labour 1927-32
11552/I	Labour Agents Permits 1927-33
/II	" " " 1933-6
11608	Application - MRLtd - Fuel Cutting Concessions - Mwanza Province 1927-8
11871	Licensing of Itinerant Traders Ord. no.2/1977 - Questions Connected with 1928-39
11881	KAR Camp Mwanza 1928
12019/I	Labour Matters - Lake Province 1928-36
/II	" " " " 1936-8
12072	Lease of Native Houses to Non-natives 1928
12230/I	Pawnbrokers - Registration of 1928-34
/II	" " " " 1933-40
12441	Storage of Hides in Township 1928-37
12452	Meat Rations Ltd.
/III	" " " 1932-4
/IV	" " " 1934-6
/V	" " " 1936-8
12775	Markets - Lake Province 1928
12816	Navigation Laws, Rules and Regulations for the Control of Lake Vessels
12917	Taxation of Natives in Townships
12951	Cotton Industry - Lake Province 1928-38
12972	Acquisition of Botha's House in Mwanza 1929-35
13494	Township Water Supply Schemes 1929
13560/I	Illicit Spirituous Liquor Trade with Natives 1920-34
13723	Native Welfare in Townships 1929-31
13779	Drainage and Sewage Scheme - Mwanza 1943-54
13993	Shop Assistants Employment Ord. 1929-37
18965	Dues: Cattle at Lake Ports 1930
19020/I	Township Building Rules 1930-5
/II	" " " 1936-8
/III	" " " 1938-52
19467	Bwiru Plantation near Mwanza - Prisions 1931
19940	Municipal Rates 1931-51
20220/I	Overstocking in Tabora and Mwanza 1931-4
/II	" " " " " 1933-7
20770	Water Supply for Meat Ration Farm, Mwanza Dist. 1931-2

20906	Liwalis, Quadis and Market Masters: Names, Salaries and Stations
20941	Claims for Freehold - Mwanza Province 1932-5
21226/I	Shop Assistants Employment Ord. 1932-6
/II	" " " " 1937
21249/I	Native Ground Rent 1932-4
/II	" " " 1934-8
21567	Registration and Survey of Lake Vessels
21616	Repartiration of Unemployed Natives in Townships 1931-5
22243/I	Amendments to Township Rules 1934-8
/II	" " " " 1938
/III	" " " " 1940
22286	Native Vessels Ord. - Questions Connected With
22378	Unofficial Township Authority Members 1934
23444	Estimate of Markets, Lake Province 1936-9
23664	Meat Rations Ltd: Progress Rept. to Secretary of State 1936-8
25403	Mwanza - Building Inspection 1937
25418	Aesthetic Regulations - General 1937-8
25420	Complaints of Middlemen and Cotton Growers' Society Ltd.
25450	Complaints against Township Authorities 1937-8
26026/1	Rept. of Commission of Inquiry held at Musoma, Mwanza and Bukoba by R. Langland, PC 1937-8
/6	Rept. of Commission of Inquiry held at Mwanza by G. F. Webster, PC 1939
/13	" " " " 1941
26211/I	Labour Agents 1930
/II	" " 1939
26312	Lake Province Ginners' Association 1938
26385	Inland Water Transport Ord. - Applicaitons and Decisions 1938-9
26693/I	Control of Overcrowding in Dwellings 1938-9
/II	" " " " " 1939-47
28650	Native Representatives on Township Authorities 1940-6
28652	Memo: an Appeal by Nakasero Trading Co., Ltd. 1940
28653	Memo: an Appeal by Mwanza Cotton Trading Co., Ltd. 1940
28685	Control of Immigration of Natives into Townships 1942-54
30180	Estimate of Non-native Tembo Bars 1941-8
30197	Control Civil Depot - Mwanza 1941
30301	Control of Labour in Mwanza Township 1941-2
30598	Cost of Living for Africans in Townships 1942
31694	Mwanza Abatoir 1939
34243	Township Authority, Mwanza Estimates for 1946
34306	Native Beer Saloons 1946
37507	Native Beer Markets
38638	Effect of Industrialisation on Africans 1948

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