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

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4: Consumption
Goods, wealth and meaning

> So many have been led away by the wave of prosperity & materialism (…) at present they are eager rather to gain the world – It's not to be surprised at – to possess a bicycle & good clothes & a brick house is so much more than their father even dreamed of.[1551]

Over the course of the twentieth century dramatic changes in patterns of consumption have occurred throughout Mwinilunga District.[1552] Around 1900 communities in this area had still appeared to be relatively 'self-sufficient'. People had been able, at least in theory, to produce most items required for daily subsistence within the village or adjoining neighbourhood. Bark cloth and animal skins for clothing, clay pots for cooking, housing material from the forest and iron tools for agricultural production could all be procured locally.[1553] The volume and importance of imported use-products increased significantly as the twentieth century progressed, though.[1554] Mass-manufactured, industrial and store-bought items replaced local alternatives, particularly after 1940.[1555] Goods such as enamel plates and cups, candles, cloth, bicycles and much more, spread widely even in remote areas. Although the pre-colonial long-distance trade had precipitated these changes and had introduced goods from overseas many centuries earlier, it was only after the inception of colonial rule that the outward manifestation of the consumer shift became fully and unmistakably apparent.[1556] What had once been luxury items for the elite, used as markers of identity and status because of their scarcity, became widely diffused, accepted and generally expected items in all layers of society and everyday life.[1557]

In the 1950s the District Commissioner Mwinilunga observed that marked shifts in patterns of consumption had occurred: 'dresses, clothes were better, there were more bicycles, more Kimberley brick houses, lamps, suitcases, blankets etc. all seemed to have improved.'[1558] The acquisition of consumer goods has ideologically been linked to 'improvement' in other contexts as well.[1559] In official discourse and public consciousness consumption has been attributed positive qualities and an expansive dynamic, 'more money creating fresh wants.'[1560] Officials firmly believed that consumption

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[1551] (EOS) H. Julyan Hoyte, 19 November 1947.

[1552] See: R. Ross, M. Hinfelaar and I. Peša (eds.), *The objects of life in Central Africa: The history of consumption and social change, 1840-1980* (Leiden etc., 2013); Compare to: F. Trentmann (ed.), *The Oxford handbook of the history of consumption* (Oxford etc., 2012).

[1553] A. von Oppen, *Terms of trade and terms of trust: The history and contexts of pre-colonial market production around the Upper Zambezi and Kasai* (Münster etc., 1994); J.C. Miller, *Way of death: Merchant capitalism and the Angolan slave trade 1730-1830* (Madison, 1988).

[1554] D.M. Gordon, 'Wearing cloth, wielding guns: Consumption, trade, and politics in the South Central African interior during the nineteenth century', in: Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life*, 17-40; K.T. Hansen, *Salaula: The world of secondhand clothing and Zambia* (Chicago etc., 2000).

[1555] T. Burke, *Lifebuoy men, Lux women: Commodification, consumption and cleanliness in modern Zimbabwe* (Durham etc., 1996); M.J. Hay, 'Material culture and the shaping of consumer society in colonial Western Kenya', *Working papers in African studies* (Boston University, 1994).

[1556] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'; Miller, *Way of death.*

[1557] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'; D.M. Gordon, 'The abolition of the slave trade and the transformation of the South-Central African interior during the nineteenth century', *The William and Mary quarterly* 66:4 (2009), 915-38; J. Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world: African consumerism and the genealogies of globalization* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2008).

[1558] (NAZ) SEC2/966, R.J. Short, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, July 1958.

[1559] See: F. Trentmann, 'Beyond consumerism: New historical perspectives on consumption', *Journal of contemporary history* 39:3 (2004), 373-401; F. Trentmann, 'Crossing divides: Consumption and globalization in history', *Journal of consumer culture* 9:2 (2009), 187-220; D. Miller, 'Consumption and commodities', *Annual review of anthropology* 24 (1995), 141-61.

[1560] (NAZ) SEC2/131 Vol.1, Kasempa Province Annual Report, 31 December 1929.

would entail involvement with the capitalist market economy, as individuals would be obliged to earn money in order to purchase much desired items from emergent village stores. Money would become a necessity and would supplant modes of exchange based on barter. In this sense, consumption might serve a 'civilising mission' and lead to 'development'.[1561] Nevertheless, 'materialism' and 'riches' admittedly had dubious and potentially dangerous flip-sides, causing the dissipation of communal social bonds and initiating a trend towards individualism.[1562] Competitive consumptive display was particularly condemned by missionaries, who stated that: 'The inroads of so-called civilisation have brought materialism and the deification of riches which are hardening the hearts of many.'[1563]

Looking beyond the outward appearance of consumption, this chapter will focus on the socially embedded and contested process of how the meaning and value of goods has been constructed over time.[1564] No matter how complete the 'consumer revolution' might seem, it was equally slow, complex and at times contradictory.[1565] Unravelling the meaning and value of goods can be a first step towards understanding their social impact. Both changes and continuities in patterns of consumption during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries will be dealt with. Next to the functional motives behind consumer shifts, the labour inputs required for the acquisition of consumer goods have to be taken into consideration. By looking at a number of concrete examples, namely changes in ironworking, clothing and housing, the links between consumption, trade, production and social relationships will be examined. Although consumer habits indeed underwent fundamental change, there might be long-term threads weaving past and present patterns of consumption together, particularly with regard to concepts of 'wealth in people' and 'self-realisation'.[1566]

From locally produced to store-bought goods: Exchange and the creation of value

Exchange and trade occupy a prominent place in debates on African consumption.[1567] Modes of exchange and networks of trade have generally been seen as developing along a linear course.[1568] By means of increasingly complex and long-distance trade networks, a transition from small-scale and relatively self-sufficient communities to market integration, commercialisation and globalisation would allegedly be set in motion.[1569] Modes of exchange, in tandem, would progress from non-

[1561] Burke, *Lifebuoy men*, 84-5; J.L. Comaroff and J. Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution: The dialectics of modernity on a South African frontier, Volume two* (Chicago and London, 1997), 166-217.

[1562] J. Parry and M. Bloch (eds.), *Money and the morality of exchange* (Cambridge etc., 1989), 4; K. Barber, 'Money, self-realization and the person in Yoruba texts', in: J.I. Guyer (ed.), *Money matters: Instability, values and social payments in the modern history of West African communities* (Portsmouth etc., 1995), 205.

[1563] (EOS) W. Singleton Fisher, n.d.

[1564] See: A. Appadurai (ed.), *The social life of things: Commodities in cultural perspective* (Cambridge etc., 1986); M. Douglas and B.C. Isherwood, *The world of goods: Towards an anthropology of consumption* (London and New York, 1979); J.I. Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization in Equatorial Africa', *Man* 28:2 (1993), 243-65; Hansen, *Salaula*; Burke, *Lifebuoy men*; Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world*.

[1565] R. Ross, M. Hinfelaar and I. Peša, 'Introduction: Material culture and consumption patterns: A Southern African revolution', in: Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life*, 1-13.

[1566] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'; J.I. Guyer, 'Wealth in people, wealth in things – Introduction', *Journal of African history* 36:1 (1995), 83-90; F. de Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars: Identity, expenditure and sharing in southwestern Zaire (1984-1997)', *Development and change* 29:4 (1998), 777-810.

[1567] See: R. Gray and D. Birmingham (eds.), *Pre-colonial African trade: Essays on trade in Central and Eastern Africa before 1900* (London etc., 1970); J. Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things', in: Trentmann, *The Oxford handbook of the history of consumption,* 85-107.

[1568] For a critique, see: F. Cooper, 'What is the concept of globalization good for? An African historian's perspective', *African affairs* 100:399 (2001), 189-213.

[1569] J. Vansina, 'Long-distance trade routes in Central Africa', *Journal of African history* 3:3 (1962), 375-90, suggests a tripartite division between local trade from village to village, trade over longer distances and direct long-distance trade; Gray and Birmingham, *Pre-colonial African trade,* suggest a distinction between subsistence-oriented and market-oriented trade. Certain debates on globalisation assume that 'local' or 'bounded' units have increasingly become connected to 'the rest of the world' through the flow of people, goods and ideas.

monetary gift exchange and barter to capitalist commodity exchange.[1570] For the area of Mwinilunga, such clearly demarcated stages of trade do not seem to apply. Far from being historically successive, 'subsistence' and 'market production' could coincide.[1571] Even today, barter and monetised exchange exist side by side, whereas trade within the village is complemented by imported trade items from across the globe. This diversity of trade might enhance rather than undermine economic activity.[1572]

Notwithstanding diversity, officials have persistently complained about 'self-sufficiency' and 'subsistence', lamenting the lack of 'market integration' throughout Mwinilunga District.[1573] In the 1920s one District Commissioner deplored that: 'It could not be other than depressing to a political economist to see a community that exports nothing and buys little or nothing that is imported.'[1574] Reports from the 1970s were only moderately more positive: 'Most of the people are still subsistence farmers, growing enough only for their consumption requirements, and only selling a little which enables them to purchase basic household utensils.'[1575] Through taxation, cash crop production, waged labour and consumption, the colonial administration made attempts to integrate Mwinilunga into the market economy.[1576] Officials suggested a linear and ultimately inevitable transition from subsistence to market incorporation.[1577] By looking at pre-colonial precedents of exchange, trade and market interaction through a focus on consumption, such binary discourses of subsistence and market incorporation can be challenged. The inhabitants of Mwinilunga District had longstanding interactions with objects, trade and markets, enabling them to assign meaning and value to consumer goods, to appropriate and domesticate them in locally specific ways.[1578] Such interactions set the stage for colonial and post-colonial consumer behaviour and demonstrate how the meaning and value of goods has been socially constructed.

Production and exchange: The foundations of trade

Throughout the pre-colonial period most goods required for daily subsistence could, in theory, be procured or produced within the confines of the village or its surroundings.[1579] The ability to locally fabricate a wide range of use-products was due to extraordinary skill and knowledge, emanating from years of habitation in the specific environment of Mwinilunga.[1580] Continual adaptation, borrowing and

[1570] Parry and Bloch, *Money and the morality of exchange*, 8-12; Guyer, *Money matters,* 1-6.

[1571] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; J.A. Pritchett, *The Lunda-Ndembu: Style, change, and social transformation in South Central Africa* (Madison, 2001); K. Crehan, 'Mukunashi: An exploration of some effects of the penetration of capital in North-Western Zambia', *Journal of Southern African studies* 8:1 (1981), 83.

[1572] S.S. Berry, 'Stable prices, unstable values: Some thoughts on monetization and the meaning of transactions in West African economies', in: Guyer, *Money matters*, 309.

[1573] This is based on a wide reading of archival sources (NAZ), see: Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*.

[1574] (NAZ) KSE6/1/4, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 31 March 1922.

[1575] (NAZ) MRD1/8/27 Loc.4272, North-Western Province Development Committee, 20 March 1970.

[1576] T. Burke, 'Unexpected subversions: Modern colonialism, globalization, and commodity culture', in: Trentmann, *The Oxford handbook of the history of consumption,* 470-2; Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution,* 166-8.

[1577] See: L.M. Thomas, 'Modernity's failings, political claims, and intermediate concepts', *The American historical review* 3:116 (2011), 727-40; Cooper, 'What is the concept of globalization'.

[1578] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world*.

[1579] Miller, *Way of death,* 48: 'Most western central Africans personally produced a much higher percentage of what they consumed than do modern people, and their cultural assumptions made it appear easier to fabricate what they desired for themselves than to acquire it from others, although that sometimes required extending the concept of the "self" to include assemblages of the kinspeople and dependents necessary to accomplish the tasks at hand (…) axioms of production for use by oneself and one's own must have profoundly influenced the ways that people generally thought about goods.'

[1580] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; See: J. Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests: Toward a history of political tradition in Equatorial Africa* (Madison etc., 1990); J.I. Guyer and S.M. Eno Belinga, 'Wealth in people as wealth in knowledge: Accumulation and composition in Equatorial Africa', *Journal of African history* 36 (1995), 91-120.

innovation gave rise to a multiplicity of crafts. This entrepreneurial spirit resulted in the weaving of a range of mats which have become renowned far beyond Mwinilunga. Examples are *chisesa* (mat of split palm or bamboo), *chisalu* or *chikongolu* (mat for drying or enclosing), *chikanga* (bed mat) and *chisasa* (worn-out mat), made from bamboo, grass, reed or palm fibres.[1581] The proliferation of so many types of mats went beyond the requisites of subsistence or use value, and therefore suggests productive differentiation, craftsmanship and exchange value.[1582] Self-sufficiency, rather than implying isolation, was a rarely obtained ideal carrying connotations of strength, autonomy and wealth.[1583] The notion of self-sufficiency is captured by the Lunda verb *dikilakesha*, which is based on the verb *kula* meaning to grow, to grow up to maturity, to be an adult. Self-sufficiency required the careful composition of skills, strategies and resources within the individual, household or village unit.[1584]

To give examples of the variety of local productivity, women could weave baskets (to carry and store crops or fish, or to sift meal), plates and cups could be produced from calabashes, whereas hunting spears or fishing hooks might be produced by a blacksmith.[1585] A sense of this vibrant workmanship was captured in the 1950s when a crafts show boasted numerous types of mats, baskets, pots, stools, spoons, spears, bows and arrows, walking sticks, drums, combs and brushes, next to more recent additions such as tables, chairs, cupboards, doors, window frames and needlework.[1586] In spite of the presence of store-bought alternatives, local production retained its attractions throughout the twentieth century, going beyond factors of functionality, availability or price. Although most goods could indeed be produced locally, and notwithstanding the ingenuity of artisans, neither the process of production nor access to finished goods was by any means unproblematic.[1587] To enable and regulate access to goods, relationships of exchange and trade developed. These encompassed the straightforward exchange of goods between neighbouring villages, but could also comprise complex and long-distance trade networks.[1588] Due to various factors, trade became indispensable.

First of all, natural resources are spread unevenly across the landscape, problematizing issues of access.[1589] Not all parts of the district can easily access the *wumba* soils from which clay cooking pots are made, for instance, as this soil is only found next to certain rivers.[1590] Furthermore, salt could be difficult to obtain. Whereas high-quality salt pans are available across the border in Angola and in adjacent Kasempa, in the area of Mwinilunga vegetal salt (*mungwa wamusengu, mungwa webanda* or *mukeli*) would be relied on.[1591] Although inferior to marine or rock salt, it could be used to season vegetables in the absence of alternatives.[1592] Exchange and trade, connecting local, regional and

[1581] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mrs Lukaki Salukenga and Mrs Lutaya, 6 August 2010, Kanongesha. See: M.K. Fisher, *Lunda-Ndembu dictionary* (Revised edn., Ikelenge, 1984).
[1582] Crehan, 'Mukunashi', 88.
[1583] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars', 795-6.
[1584] See: Guyer and Eno Belinga, 'Wealth in people as wealth in knowledge'; Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'.
[1585] See: Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu.*
[1586] (NAZ) Box 5A Shelf No. 9, Mwinilunga District Show, 15 June 1956.
[1587] Studies of local crafts are scarce, see exceptions on ironworking: C.E. Kriger, *Pride of men: Ironworking in 19th century West Central Africa* (Portsmouth, Oxford and Cape Town, 1999); E.W. Herbert, *Iron, gender, and power: Rituals of transformation in African societies* (Bloomington etc., 1993).
[1588] See: Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests*; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*
[1589] Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests*; Miller, *Way of death*; Herbert, *Iron, gender, and power.*
[1590] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Levu Mongu, 17 May 2010, Nyakaseya.
[1591] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mrs Mandosa Kabanda, 2 August 2010, Kanongesha; *Lunda-Ndembu dictionary*.
[1592] Miller, *Way of death,* 56-7. Vegetal salt would be obtained by burning certain types of grass, which grow in silted river marshes. After sifting the ashes and mixing them with water, vegetal salt can be used to season vegetables, yet due to its taste and quality informants considered this type of salt unsuitable to season valuable game meat. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries trade salt remained highly valued, as described in the 1930s: 'Salt was a very precious commodity, and a little of it in a screw of paper would make an old Lunda woman

international actors, could balance out scarcity and abundance, allowing the tapping of alternatives to local resources.[1593] Trade spread salt through the area, enabling villages far removed from salt pans access to this scarce resource. Livingstone, for example, mentioned traders carrying salt as a medium of exchange in the 1850s.[1594] Adapting to changing circumstances, this trade endured well into the colonial period:

> Salt is gathered in the Kasempa salt pans by Mwinilunga natives and carried here for sale at 1 ½ d per lb. Some take small presents of salt to Chief Kasempa, some barter fish for salt, while others just gather their salt and return, meeting with no hindrance (…) Missions to the North can import very cheaply from Angola where the salt is of better quality.[1595]

Distinct types of goods could be exchanged for one another (fish for salt, salt for money) over long distances, giving rise to relationships of power and interdependence (involving the payment of tribute to Chief Kasempa), creating determinants of value and routes of trade which proved remarkably enduring.[1596] Trade could occur between neighbouring villages and over longer distances, involving the exchange of bulky foodstuffs as well as scarce luxuries. Making a virtue out of environmental necessity, trade could be actively sought rather than reluctantly acceded to. Furthermore, trade could stimulate the creation of socio-political and economic ties in the wider region, as trading partners would exchange ideas and skills along with goods.[1597] In this sense, 'trade has been a major avenue for stimulating innovation and diffusion, because ideas always accompany trade.'[1598]

Secondly, the production of goods required labour inputs, particularly under prevailing technological bottlenecks. Securing labour supplies could be problematic, necessitating elaborate planning to accommodate all productive activities.[1599] For example, to construct a wattle and daub house preparations would start early in the dry season. Appropriate poles and thatching grass would be gathered and left to dry, whereas the final structure would only be completed when the rains would commence, four to five months later.[1600] Consequently, the allocation of labour inputs became subject to relationships of power, involving hierarchies of gender, age and status.[1601] House construction is gendered, as men are responsible for erecting houses and women can lay claims on this.[1602] The failure to erect a proper house is considered a legitimate reason for a woman to request divorce from her husband.[1603] Revealing age as well as gender hierarchies, a girl's parents could request their son-in-law to construct a house for them as part of the bride service arrangements during betrothal. Similarly, a chief could call his subjects to erect a house for him.[1604] This was an ultimate symbol of power and authority, a mark of 'singularity', which set the chief apart from the rest of the population, as not even headmen could claim assistance in house construction.[1605] Because human labour is a scarce and finite

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happy for days (…) Salt is very precious and every grain that I inadvertently dropped was eagerly licked up by the small children.' E. Burr, *Kalene memories: Annals of the old hill* (London, 1956), 93, 110.

[1593] Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests*; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*

[1594] I. Schapera (ed.), *Livingstone's African journal: 1853-1856* (London, 1963)*,* 121.

[1595] (NAZ) SEC2/133, N.S. Price, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 31 December 1935.

[1596] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'.

[1597] See: Miller, *Way of death*; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*

[1598] Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests*, 94.

[1599] Miller, *Way of death,* 40; G. Austin, 'Resources, techniques and strategies South of the Sahara: Revising the factor endowments perspective on African economic development, 1500-2000', *Economic history review* 61:3 (2008), 587-624.

[1600] V.W. Turner, *Schism and continuity in an African society: A study of Ndembu village life* (Manchester etc., 1957), 36.

[1601] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu.*

[1602] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, 181-2.

[1603] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mrs Nsombi, 30 July 2010, Kanongesha.

[1604] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, see: Mulumbi Datuuma II, 'Customs of the Lunda Ndembu Volume I: The Kanongesha Chieftainship succession in Zambia' (Unpublished manuscript, 2010).

[1605] I. Kopytoff, 'The cultural biography of things: Commoditization as process', in: Appadurai, *The social life of things*, 73.

resource, the quintessential expression of power is to acquire access to and control over labour resources, to build wealth in people.[1606] If successful, this control could result in the increased production of goods (iron tools, spoils of the hunt and houses are but some examples), but it could equally cause dependency.[1607] No one person could produce all goods single-handedly, whether for want of physical strength, knowledge or time. This caused divisions of labour within society, which required complementarity and would lead to power hierarchies and trade.[1608] Because hunters would trade game meat for iron spears produced by blacksmiths, social relationships, political alliances and networks of trade would arise. Household self-sufficiency, although perhaps a professed goal, could not be more than an ideal.[1609]

Thirdly, the production of consumer goods required knowledge and expertise.[1610] Examples from neighbouring areas mention closed, hierarchical and esoteric associations, organised along lines of gender or kinship, which might monopolise access to knowledge of a specialist craft, such as ironworking.[1611] What is perhaps remarkable about Lunda society is that, generally speaking, access to knowledge is unrestricted and specialisation remains rare.[1612] Nevertheless, knowledge might be segregated by gender, age or heredity. Whereas women would specialise in pottery, men would focus on ironworking. Furthermore, certain lineages might dominate specific occupations within the village and specialised hunting guilds did exist, most notably the *wuyanga* cult for gun-hunters.[1613] Even if knowledge could be guarded by rules, taboos or birth, barriers remained highly permeable. In theory, access to knowledge is open to all on the basis of personal capacity and interest.[1614] Any woman who showed proclivity to do so could weave mats or make pots, although in practice very few did. Limited demand, competition, access to resources, labour and knowledge all restricted the number of craftsmen and women in a village.[1615] Furthermore, artisans would overwhelmingly diversify their livelihoods, continuing to produce their own food, hunt or fish next to manufacturing hoes or baskets. Dependency on a single source of livelihood was deemed risky, unwise and ultimately unsustainable.[1616] Nevertheless, even partial craft specialisation evoked the necessity of exchange and trade. Not all villages possessed potters and thus pots might be obtained from distant villages where production was acclaimed, in exchange for chickens, cassava meal or hoes. Patterns of trade thus necessarily obfuscate notions of 'subsistence' or 'self-sufficiency'.[1617] To sum up, natural resource allocation, access to labour and knowledge all encouraged exchange and trade beyond the boundaries of the individual, household or village level.[1618]

Through exchange and trade socio-economic and political relationships and hierarchies of power between Mwinilunga and the broader region have been established.[1619] Not only the barter of bulk goods, such as the exchange of sorghum for fish or game meat between neighbouring villages, but also access to scarce luxury goods through long-distance trade proved important during the pre-

[1606] Miller, *Way of death*; Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'; De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.
[1607] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'.
[1608] Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests*.
[1609] Crehan, 'Mukunashi'.
[1610] Guyer and Eno Belinga, 'Wealth in people as wealth in knowledge', 109, 117.
[1611] Herbert, *Iron, gender, and power*, 26-7.
[1612] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*
[1613] Turner, *Schism and continuity*, 30.
[1614] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*; Guyer and Eno Belinga, 'Wealth in people as wealth in knowledge', 93.
[1615] Crehan, 'Mukunashi', 88.
[1616] Crehan 'Mukunashi', 89; See: J.K. Thornton, 'Pre-colonial African industry and the Atlantic trade, 1500-1800', *African economic history* 19 (1990/91), 1-19.
[1617] Crehan, 'Mukunashi'; Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world.*
[1618] Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests*; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*
[1619] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'.

colonial period.[1620] An example of the range and complexity of trade networks is provided by the description of markets in Musumba, the Lunda capital to which Mwinilunga was linked through allegiance, tribute and trade.[1621] In the 1880s the Portuguese explorers Capelo and Ivens described these markets as follows:

> at a short distance from the *mu-sumba* are established vast markets, true bazaars containing straight lanes or streets where flour of various kinds, peanuts, palm-oil, fresh and dried meat, millet, salt, tobacco, palm wine, sorghum, and other articles are displayed, and are bartered for merchandise, such as blue and red baize, cottons, printed calico, large white and small red beads, powder, arms and bracelets.[1622]

Local, regional and long-distance trade networks were clearly interrelated. Foodstuffs produced locally would be gathered at regional centres, where goods supplied through the long-distance trade could be obtained. These goods would then be distributed through networks of tribute, allegiance and trade to all corners of the Lunda polity, including Mwinilunga.[1623] Production and consumption were linked and transcended the local level in both supply and demand. Local and long-distance trade were further linked through caravans. Caravans would travel long distances at a slow speed, carrying trade goods such as guns and cloth and stopping at villages along the way to exchange these goods for locally produced food, ivory, beeswax or rubber. In this sense, caravans could function as large mobile markets.[1624] The long-distance trade provided access to a wide range of imported goods.[1625] Some of these were categorically similar to items which had been produced locally, as manufactured cloth could be used as a substitute for bark cloth or skins.[1626] Other goods might be unknown and might evoke change. Guns fundamentally differed from spears and thereby guns altered the practice of hunting.[1627] Imports included cloth, beads, guns and gunpowder, liquor and a whole range of other items.[1628] Due to their seemingly irrational and unintelligible demand some of these items would be denounced as 'trinkets' by European traders.[1629] By the turn of the twentieth century an official described that: 'the custom is for a black trader to appear twice a year to purchase rubber and ivory. If he does not appear the village becomes uneasy – the ladies impatient for their new clothes, and gentlemen half wild for tobacco.'[1630] How can this demand for imports in Mwinilunga, which has been portrayed dramatically as the 'unquenchable African thirst for foreign goods',[1631] be explained?

Goods, value and meaning: Wealth in people and self-realisation

Through their interaction with goods, the inhabitants of Mwinilunga have assigned meaning to objects, creating and contesting their value. The value of goods informs their demand and can explain patterns

[1620] Miller, *Way of death*; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; Gordon, 'The abolition of the slave trade'.

[1621] See: E. Bustin, *Lunda under Belgian rule: The politics of ethnicity* (Cambridge etc., 1975); J.J. Hoover, 'The seduction of Ruwej: Reconstructing Ruund history (The nuclear Lunda: Zaire, Angola, Zambia)' (PhD thesis, Yale University, 1978).

[1622] H. Capelo and R. Ivens, *De Benguela as terras de Iaca: Descricao de uma viagem na Africa Central e Ocidental, Vol.1* (Coimbra, 1996), 315. Quoted in Turner, *Schism and continuity*, 4-5, slightly different translation.

[1623] See Chapter 1.

[1624] See: S.J. Rockel, *Carriers of culture: Labor on the road in nineteenth-century East Africa* (Portsmouth, 2006); Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*

[1625] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'.

[1626] Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things', 90.

[1627] G. Macola, 'Reassessing the significance of firearms in Central Africa: The case of north-western Zambia to the 1920s', *Journal of African history* 51:3 (2010), 301-21.

[1628] S.B. Alpern, 'What Africans got for their slaves: A master list of European trade goods', *History in Africa* 22 (1995), 5-43.

[1629] J. Prestholdt, 'On the global repercussions of East African consumerism', *The American historical review* 109:3 (2004), 761; Miller, *Way of death,* 73.

[1630] E.A. Steel, 'Zambezi-Congo watershed', *The geographical journal* 50:3 (1917), 187.

[1631] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, 208.

of exchange. Going beyond functional or economic aspects, consumption is inherently social, involving interpersonal relationships and hierarchies of power:[1632]

> Economic exchange creates value. Value is embodied in commodities that are exchanged. Focusing on the things that are exchanged, rather than simply on the forms or functions of exchange, makes it possible to argue that what creates the link between exchange and value is *politics*, construed broadly.[1633]

Consumption can be a means of communication within society. Goods are given meaning and value through use and exchange, and are therefore cultural:

> Consumption is the very arena in which culture is fought over and licked into shape (…) Instead of supposing that goods are primarily needed for subsistence plus competitive display, let us assume that they are needed for making visible and stable the categories of culture (…) This approach to goods, emphasizing their double role in providing subsistence and in drawing the lines of social relationships, is (…) the way to a proper understanding of why people need goods (…) consumption activity is the joint production, with fellow consumers, of a universe of values. Consumption uses goods to make firm and visible a particular set of judgments in the fluid processes of classifying persons and events.[1634]

These views focus on consumption as a social process, involving interpersonal relationships, competition and hierarchies of power. Goods might be seen as markers of social relationships, means of communication, as well as media of power and control.[1635]

For Central Africa, particularly for the pre-colonial period, 'wealth in people' has been proposed as a concept for understanding the relationships between value, meaning, goods and people.[1636] The notion of 'wealth in people' explores how: 'control of necessary and scarce material goods mediates authority over people and, conversely, how those with power and authority use their power to channel access to material wealth.'[1637] Entangled in webs of meaning and power, people and goods were mutually constitutive, as one could be used to gain access to and control over the other:

> economic wealth and political power and authority were frequently indistinguishable in Africa, where capital was people. A wealthy man increased productivity by organizing and controlling people (…) the prime economic resource remained human labor put to work in the fields and (…) control of people thus opened the road to wealth.[1638]

People and human labour remain highly valued in African societies as factors of production and wealth: 'For all that wealth was sought by traders, wealth for its own sake did not acquire followers (…) Wealth remained what it had always been: a crucial avenue to authority and power.'[1639] Understanding the relationship between people, goods and value can explain the driving forces behind consumption.

In the area of Mwinilunga, a hierarchical model of wealth in people might apply to the period of slave raiding at the end of the nineteenth century.[1640] During this period large villages were established under strong headmen who dispensed goods to followers in order to gain their allegiance. Village heads provided protection from hostile attack and acted as gatekeepers, bringing in and controlling the distribution of imported goods.[1641] Through goods 'Big Men' sought to attract followers and build hierarchies of power, dependency and debt. By controlling imports and limiting competition, village heads could ensure relations of dominance and subservience. Access to imported cloth and beads could attract the allegiance of wives, children and slaves. This could further boost the prestige and productive capacities of village heads, ultimately attracting even more followers and creating a

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[1632] See: Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world*; Burke, *Lifebuoy men*; Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life.*

[1633] Appadurai, *The social life of things*, 3, 57.

[1634] Douglas and Isherwood, *The world of goods,* 57, 59, 60, 67.

[1635] See: J.M. Allman (ed.), *Fashioning Africa: Power and the politics of dress* (Bloomington etc., 2001); Burke, 'Unexpected subversions'; Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things'.

[1636] See: Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'.

[1637] Miller, *Way of death*, 41.

[1638] Miller, *Way of death,* 43, 45.

[1639] Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests*, 237.

[1640] See: Gordon, 'The abolition of the slave trade'.

[1641] See: Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things', 87; Gordon, 'Wearing cloth', 25-34.

cycle of commodities-dependents-commodities.[1642] Consequently, 'power had to do with the control of imported goods.'[1643] This situation was short-lived and fragile, though, being challenged at the beginning of the twentieth century:[1644]

> The accumulation of wealth and property or stock invited murder and the gathering together of large communities invited attack from more powerful communities, neighbours on the west (…) armed with muskets and large supplies of powder, freely obtained in exchange for the fruits of their expeditions, whether slaves, rubber or ivory.[1645]

Large stockaded villages dissipated into small household settlements, where competition rather than monopolistic control predominated.[1646] Processes of accumulation and the hierarchical control of goods, therefore, seem to fit poorly with the realities of the bulk of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries throughout Mwinilunga District.[1647]

Notions of wealth in people as 'self-realisation' might be more applicable to small villages where a competitive spirit prevails and headmen have been described as *primus inter pares*.[1648] Rather than aiming to accumulate a quantitatively large following, 'self-realisation' could take many personalised forms.[1649] This approach emphasises fluidity, by suggesting 'a *multiplicity* of control and access mechanisms, at many levels, that makes definitive order – of either the goods, or the people, or the principles of operation – virtually impossible. All control, however apparently effective, was partial, provisional and ephemeral.'[1650] Self-realisation acknowledges the intrinsic value of people, stressing the goal of making oneself a respected member of society.[1651] By realising the full potential of individual personality, one could attract the esteem and loyalty of others. The achievement of personhood might be connected to:

> a growing sense of insertion into and responsibility for the lives of other members of one's kin group (…) The elder ideally forms the middle of the relationships that are being knotted around him and of which he becomes the constituting focal point and nexus (…) [this involves] social responsibility, highlighting the elder's capacity to weave the social network and give a tangible form to ties of reciprocity and solidarity.[1652]

Self-realisation might be achieved through a diversity of strategies, such as agricultural production, hunting or labour migration, but could also be expressed through consumption.[1653]

Notions of social responsibility, individual personhood and wealth could be realised through the acquisition of goods. The influx of imported goods, which accelerated greatly in the course of the twentieth century, did not constitute a qualitative shift in ideas of wealth in people, but did provide additional options towards self-realisation.[1654] Material wealth, in the form of clothing, bicycles, housing and much more, even at present continues to be invested in social relationships and can serve to build alliances, underlining the enduring importance of connections between people, goods and wealth.[1655] Due to the wide range of available consumer goods throughout the twentieth century, individual personhood and authorship gained a competitive element, which had profound

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[1642] Miller, *Way of death*; Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'.
[1643] Ross, Hinfelaar and Pesa, *The objects of life,* 4.
[1644] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth', 34-8.
[1645] (NAZ) KSE6/1/1, G.A. MacGregor, Balunda District Annual Report, 1908-9.
[1646] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'; Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'.
[1647] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade;* Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu.*
[1648] Turner, *Schism and continuity*; Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'; De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.
[1649] Barber, 'Money, self-realization and the person'.
[1650] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization', 252.
[1651] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'; De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.
[1652] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars', 797.
[1653] J.A. Andersson, 'Reinterpreting the rural-urban connection: Migration practices and socio-cultural dispositions of Buhera workers in Harare', *Africa* 71:1 (2001), 82-112.
[1654] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'.
[1655] See the contributions to Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life.*

consequences for productive and social relationships.[1656] The meaning and value of goods (which could convey status, hierarchy and power) was constituted through interpersonal relationships and therefore goods could embody and contest social hierarchies. How this has played out in the area of Mwinilunga will be illustrated by three examples, namely ironworking, clothing and housing.

Ironworking: Smelters, smiths and craftmanship

Ironworking has been a long-established craft in the area of Mwinilunga.[1657] The development of metallurgical skills probably dates back to the earlier half of the first millennium A.D.[1658] Although the initial spread was slow and haphazard, in the long run ironworking knowledge constituted a 'technological breakthrough'.[1659] Access to iron ore and the production of iron artefacts proved of vital importance, as iron tools have contributed to the development of agricultural production, hunting and fishing, but have equally influenced settlement patterns and social organisation in the area.[1660] Several localities within Mwinilunga District boast deposits of iron ore, although these vary in quality, accessibility and workability.[1661] In the vicinity of these sites ironworkers have historically engaged in both smelting and smithing activities. The items which these craftsmen produced, such as knives, spears, arrowheads, hoes and axes, proved indispensable to production and survival, but could also serve as a medium of exchange in the long-distance trade or be deployed as symbols of political power, prestige and beauty. Iron items, especially *mubulu* bracelets which symbolise betrothal and fertility, might be used as bodily adornment, whereas standardised iron bars could serve as currency.[1662] Notwithstanding the vibrancy and value of metallurgy, it will be examined why throughout the twentieth century locally produced iron items have increasingly been replaced by industrially manufactured and imported ironware.[1663]

The practice of ironworking in Mwinilunga

In 1910 the District Commissioner acknowledged the importance of the metallurgical craft, as well as the knowledge and expertise involved:

> In several localities where rich ore or iron stone is to be found the smelting of the ore and working of the pig iron, which is of an extremely tough nature, into hoes, axes, spears and arrow points, is carried on by a few natives who seem to acquire a reputation for this work which is handed down from generation to generation.[1664]

In spite of its value, only several decades later iron production had all but died out in the area of Mwinilunga. Reasons for this decline should not only be sought in competition from mass-produced iron tools, but also in the organisation of the metallurgical craft itself. Access to raw materials, labour

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[1656] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'; Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'; Hansen, *Salaula.*

[1657] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade,* 105, argues that metallurgy was probably developed around 500 A.D. as part of 'a set of rather revolutionary productive innovations.'

[1658] J. Vansina, 'Linguistic evidence for the introduction of ironworking into Bantu-speaking Africa', *History in Africa* 33 (2006), 321-61; J. Vansina, *How societies are born: Governance in West Central Africa before 1600* (Charlottesville etc., 2004), 60-7, tentatively dates the beginning of the Iron Age in West Central Africa to the 4th century A.D. See: Kriger, *Pride of men*, 34-41. Copper smelting at nearby Kansanshi has been dated to the 5th-7th centuries A.D.

[1659] Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests*, 58, 60.

[1660] Kriger, *Pride of men*; Herbert, *Iron, gender, and power.*

[1661] In the 1850s Livingstone described such a site, Schapera, *Livingstone's African journal,* 239.

[1662] Iron was increasingly replaced by cheaper, more readily accessible and easier to mould brass as the raw material for *mubulu* bracelets over the course of the twentieth century.

[1663] Compare to: C.L. Goucher, 'Iron is iron 'til it rust: Trade and ecology in the decline of West African iron smelting', *Journal of African history* 22:2 (1981), 179-89; W. MacGaffey, 'The blacksmiths of Tamale: The dynamics of space and time in a Ghanaian industry', *Africa* 79:2 (2009), 169-85; Kriger, *Pride of men*, Epilogue; Thornton, 'Precolonial African industry', 8-9.

[1664] (NAZ) KSE6/1/1, C.S. Bellis, Lunda District Annual Report, 31 March 1910.

inputs and expertise proved problematic even before the advent of imported axes and hoes under British imperialism.[1665]

For one, iron ore deposits are not distributed uniformly over the area of Mwinilunga. Deposits are concentrated along rivers and streams with clayey soil types, but are unavailable in other areas.[1666] Moreover, for smelting large amounts of hardwood are required. This is a resource which, similarly to iron ore, is not universally accessible. Smelting (which involves the extraction of workable bloom from iron ore, whilst discarding residue slag) necessitates extremely high temperatures, which can only be achieved by making use of ample amounts of the right types of charcoal. This constitutes such a drain on the forest resources that in some parts of the district hardwood has become scarce and difficult to obtain.[1667] Furthermore, smelting required extensive preparations. A furnace had to be constructed, most commonly at the root of a large anthill, supplies of wood had to be gathered and rituals would be observed. Not only did a ceremony precede the inauguration of the furnace, but metallurgists had to adhere to strict sexual and food taboos.[1668] Smelting could extend over several days, or even weeks, if preparations are taken into consideration. From dawn till dusk groups of up to twenty men might be employed full time, pumping bellows to generate the heat necessary to smelt iron. After smelting the bloom iron would again be transformed into use products through labour intensive smithing. All this contributed to the high value and limited availability of iron utensils throughout the pre-colonial period.[1669]

Apart from natural resources and labour inputs, the individual skill of the smelter or smith proved crucial to ironworking success. Metallurgical knowledge was difficult to access.[1670] Knowledge of ironworking remained confined to a select group of men, mastered only after years of diligent apprenticeship. Although smelters and smiths most probably never constituted a separate or strictly demarcated class of the population, craftsmen did enjoy high levels of respect.[1671] Master ironworkers were widely known in the region and informants today hold great pride in their descent from these famous men, or even boast merely having witnessed the act of smelting during their lifetime.[1672] This adds credence to the claim that: 'there was potential for self-valuation, for partial authorship, in the competitive validation of the work contributions of young men to iron-smelting.'[1673] Metallurgy could be a means for men to make a name for themselves, to create personal as well as material value and power, a means of self-realisation. Not only the knowledge but also the practice of ironworking was ritually embedded, as metallurgists abided by strict rules and taboos. This further elevated the status of ironworking and the value of its output.[1674]

Ironworking was thus a labour intensive and specialist craft, producing items which were valuable and scarce, in spite of persistently high demand. It might even hold true that demand structurally outstripped supply before the twentieth century, giving rise to an elaborate long-distance trade in iron items.[1675] Not only for clearing the land, but also for constructing houses, cooking and cultivating, iron tools were required. Even though iron smelting and blacksmithing were in many ways

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[1665] Herbert, *Iron, gender, and power.*

[1666] Some deposits of iron ore would be of very low quality or so tough that they would prove difficult to work.

[1667] Goucher, 'Iron is iron'; Kriger, *Pride of men.*

[1668] These views are based on numerous oral interviews, for example Headman Kachacha, 27 July 2010, Kanongesha.

[1669] Kriger, *Pride of men*; Herbert, *Iron, gender, and power.*

[1670] In this respect, smelting was more difficult than smithing.

[1671] Access to the ironworking craft was not restricted by kinship or heredity in any strict sense. Although certain lineages might dominate ironworking, apprenticeship was open to both patrilineal and matrilineal descendents and even to outsiders. See: Kriger, *Pride of men*; Herbert, *Iron, gender, and power.*

[1672] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Kenneth Kalota, July 2010, Kanongesha. Metallurgy was a strictly male enterprise, women would be guarded from even witnessing the smelt.

[1673] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization', 254.

[1674] Kriger, *Pride of men*; Herbert, *Iron, gender, and power*; Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests,* 60.

[1675] Kriger, *Pride of men*, 66-9.

indispensable to village life and subsistence, iron tools were neither abundant nor easily accessible. In the 1920s it was reported that one village containing 24 adult women possessed only 3 hoes.[1676] Although this case might have been exceptional, knives, hoes and axes were highly valued and could be bartered for goods such as livestock, agricultural produce or even for items imported through the long-distance trade. At the outset of the twentieth century, the District Commissioner remarked that iron articles 'are usually bartered for calico, powder or caps, the buyer having previously bartered rubber with the Portuguese traders for these goods.'[1677] Products of metallurgy were part of networks of exchange, barter and sale, occasionally involving trade over long distances, answering to local supply and demand.[1678]

Mass-manufactured iron tools: Competition or opportunity?

Because the production of iron tools was a labour intensive and intricate process, and output was consequently restricted, smelters and blacksmiths faced competition from mass-manufactured iron tools and scrap metal once these became widely available.[1679] Whether these were imported from overseas or produced in the burgeoning urban centres of the region, alternative sources of iron posed challenges to established ironworkers. Competition caused the decline of local smelting activity during the twentieth century, and furthermore compelled the smithing craft to either transform its activities or anticipate a similar decline.[1680] By the end of the 1920s the outlook appeared bleak:

> The old blacksmiths (…) are gradually dying off, or getting too old to work and the younger generations do not appear anxious to learn the trade, so it can only be a matter of a few years when nothing but imported hoes and axes will be seen in the villages.[1681]

A different, and more revealing, explanation for the decline of the metallurgical craft in Mwinilunga District might be provided:

> The reason for this pathetic decay in local industries is not difficult to see: scrap iron can be picked up at any of the Mines and the less energetic present day native is thus saved the arduous toil of extracting his ore from the iron stone rock; while indifferent German ware can be purchased at any of the appropriate stores.[1682]

Factors such as knowledge, skill and apprenticeship of metallurgists, as well as labour and price differentials played a role in the decline of local ironworking. However, these factors cannot fully account for why industrially manufactured iron goods came to supplant established local production. Especially if it is considered that consumers deemed local products to be of better quality ('stronger') and more serviceable than imports, the rapid spread of mass-produced iron tools appears paradoxical.[1683]

Narratives explaining the decline of local crafts by reference solely to external stimuli and unfavourable (international) trade relations or pricing mechanisms should be balanced by taking local factors and dynamics, such as labour supply, raw materials distribution and ironworking knowledge into account.[1684] Items are embedded in social relationships, hierarchies of power and processes of meaning-making, all of which need to be considered when assessing shifts in consumer behaviour.[1685]

[1676] (NAZ) KSE6/1/4, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 31 March 1921.

[1677] (NAZ) KSE6/1/1, C.S. Bellis, Lunda District Annual Report, 31 March 1910.

[1678] Herbert, *Iron, gender, and power*; Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests*, 60.

[1679] See: S.T. Yusuf, 'Stealing from the railways: Blacksmiths, colonialism and innovation in Northern Nigeria', in: J-B. Gewald, A. Leliveld and I. Peša (eds.), *Transforming innovations in Africa: Explorative studies on appropriation in African societies* (Leiden etc., 2012), 275-95.

[1680] See: MacGaffey, 'The blacksmiths of Tamale'.

[1681] (NAZ) KSE6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 1927.

[1682] (NAZ) KSE6/1/6, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 31 December 1928.

[1683] Kriger, *Pride of men,* Epilogue.

[1684] R.A. Austen and D. Headrick, 'The role of technology in the African past', *African studies review* 26:3/4 (1983), 163-84; Thornton, 'Precolonial African industry'; Burke, *Lifebuoy men,* 202-3.

[1685] Burke, *Lifebuoy men*; Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world*; Hansen, *Salaula.*

Before the twentieth century ironworking knowledge had remained confined to a select number of men, who enjoyed great prestige due to their expertise and control of output. These individuals held power and had opportunities towards self-realisation through the creation of valuable goods. Their singular personalities and skills enabled them to build large followings and amass wealth in goods as well as people.[1686] Smelters and smiths were 'Big Men' *par excellence*, as 'knowledge was particularly highly valued and complexly organized.'[1687] Nevertheless, their position remained tenuous and contested, especially because output could not meet demand. The attractions of imported iron goods have to be seen in this light. These goods could compete with locally produced items because hoes, axes, knives and spears were essential to the productive life of all members of society and hence to the self-realisation of hunters, agricultural producers and carpenters. Access to iron tools, which had previously remained restricted – as men had to enter ties of dependency with smelters to acquire spears, whereas women would obtain hoes only after marriage – was opened up through channels of mass supply.[1688]

Competition, in the long run, eroded the privileged position which smelters and smiths had enjoyed. Output could no longer be controlled and the frail monopoly power of smelters was dissipated through the multiplicity of consumer demand and market supply. The path was thus paved for self-realisation of a different type, not through metallurgical skill but through other productive activities that made use of iron tools.[1689] Cultivating large fields, erecting houses and riding bicycles, all facilitated by access to industrial iron, could serve to build alternative forms of wealth, in goods, people and knowledge. Although smiths remained important, as their activities were indispensable for mending broken tools and for other services, the balance of power had shifted.[1690] With a degree of sarcasm, by the late 1940s the District Commissioner observed that: 'in this age of progress, people cannot be bothered to toil at creating a useful object when a mass produced article can be bought at the local stores.'[1691]

Labour scarcity, price mechanisms, competition and the viability of local crafts can be illustrated by looking at attempts by the colonial government to revive the blacksmith craft in the 1920s and 1930s.[1692] At the start of the twentieth century officials had observed that demand for iron tools structurally outstripped supply within Mwinilunga District. In an endeavour to correct the imbalance, officials stimulated local metallurgy. Such attempts aimed to enhance local money earning opportunities, to provide an alternative to labour migration and to encourage agricultural production through the provision of affordable hoes and axes. In 1921 the District Commissioner explained that:

> Two years ago it was extremely difficult to find one of the coming generation apprenticed to this [blacksmithing] craft, and our efforts to save the industry seemed doomed to failure until the price of the imported article increased to such an extent that it seemed a favourable opportunity to renew our attack. The smiths were told early in April last that I was willing to purchase at local rates every hoe and axe made in the sub-District and that all articles bought would be resold at the same price to either natives or Europeans – i.e. no commission would be charged or profit made (…) the smiths began to think that after all it might be worth their while to start working at their trade in real earnest (…) even if it is impossible to work up a small export trade, it is highly desirable that enough Alunda hoes should be made, at a reasonable price, to supply the local demand.[1693]

To stimulate metallurgy, the administration had to offer high prices, creating a de facto subsidised ironworking craft. Although this proved untenable in the long run, a temporary rise in output did result:

[1686] Kriger, *Pride of men.*
[1687] Guyer and Eno Belinga, 'Wealth in people as wealth in knowledge', 93.
[1688] See: Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'.
[1689] Compare to: Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'; Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things'.
[1690] MacGaffey, 'The blacksmiths of Tamale'.
[1691] (NAZ) SEC2/957, R.N. Lines, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 29 July 1949.
[1692] Burke, 'Unexpected subversions', explains contradictory colonial policies towards African consumption.
[1693] (NAZ) KSE6/1/4, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 31 March 1921.

> a moderately successful effort was made to revive the almost dead blacksmiths industry. The output from these smithies gradually increased until the smiths were selling upwards of 1000 hoes and axes per annum with the local Native Commissioner's aid; i.e. in addition to those sold in their villages.[1694]

In the 1920s prices for locally produced iron tools ranged from 1/- to 2/6 for hoes, whereas axe heads were sold for 1/- to 1/6 each, allowing for a small profit to the craftsman. Officials overwhelmingly stressed price differentials of imported versus locally produced iron tools as a factor explaining output, competition and patterns of consumption.[1695] The temporary rise in output of locally produced hoes and axes in the 1920s, following inducements by the colonial government, was attributed to pricing:

> They [blacksmiths] will, however, make a few dozen [hoes] each month when they know the Native Commissioner is willing to pay cash for all they bring along. The imported article is expensive (owing to the distance from railhead). The Alunda are poor and improvident and often quite unable to pay the price asked by the storekeeper for his hoes: the storekeeper in his turn is not keen on handling the native made article, there is no profit on them – the Alunda know their value too well.[1696]

Even if they could be produced in sufficient quantities, local hoes and axes would prove too expensive to be sold outside of the district, due to prohibitive costs of transport and marketing. Nevertheless, this purely economic rationale has to be questioned, as both production and consumption should be understood within the totality of their socio-economic, political and cultural context.[1697]

Over the course of the twentieth century, imported hoes and axes gradually became more plentiful and affordable within Mwinilunga District. The attractions of store-bought hoes and axes lay in their availability and favourable price, but could equally be attributed factors such as utility or form:

> Hoes were being imported by the storekeepers, of a smoother surface than those manufactured locally, with the result that they were readily purchased by the natives – despite the fact that the hoe made by the village smith was admitted to be more serviceable.[1698]

Imported hoes and axes gradually became more plentiful and affordable over the course of the twentieth century. Not only did the price of mass-manufactured iron tools decrease, but local purchasing power increased as a result of waged employment and sale of agricultural produce.[1699] Former Member of Parliament Peter Matoka attributed the decline of the local ironworking craft to externally induced 'underdevelopment',[1700] resulting from debilitating colonial policies: 'Developing technologies such as iron smelting, gunsmith, cloth weaving, salt preparation, hoe and axe making were discouraged over the years in favour of factory made items from Europe for which markets had to be developed.'[1701]

Nevertheless, the long-term economic consequences of the replacement of locally produced iron tools by mass-manufactured items remain ambiguous.[1702] By and large, for local metallurgists the transition was negative. Previously smelters and smiths had been a relatively privileged and affluent segment of the population. Ironworking had provided income earning opportunities within the district, mitigating the need to seek alternative employment to pay taxes or to satisfy monetary requirements. In the 1920s it was noted that: 'Blacksmiths can readily earn money for their tax – and more – if they wish. The others have to go afield.'[1703] In the course of the twentieth century their income dwindled. Nevertheless, some blacksmiths were able to successfully transform their enterprises and adapt their activities to changing circumstances.[1704] In the 1950s it was reported that:

[1694] (NAZ) KSE6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 31 March 1926.
[1695] Burke, 'Unexpected subversions', describes the colonial focus on price differentials of consumer goods.
[1696] (NAZ) KSE6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 31 March 1926.
[1697] Appadurai, *The social life of things*; Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world.*
[1698] (NAZ) KSE6/1/4, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 31 March 1921.
[1699] See: Burke, *Lifebuoy men*, 106-8, for a discussion about the 'creation of an African market'.
[1700] Burke, 'Unexpected subversions', 471; Burke, *Lifebuoy men,* 84-5; See: Hansen, *Salaula.*
[1701] (NAZ) HM77/PP/2, P.W. Matoka, Review of Zambia's 33 Years of Independence, 8 November 1997.
[1702] Herbert, *Iron, gender, and power*; Kriger, *Pride of men.*
[1703] (NAZ) KSE6/2/2, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Quarterly Report, 31 December 1921.
[1704] MacGaffey, 'The blacksmiths of Tamale'; Yusuf, 'Stealing from the railways'.

> A small iron industry still flourishes in this district (spears, axes, hoes and knives are made). Annual production: 50 hoes sold at 4/- for large size, 3/- for small size; 30 axes sold at 2/- each; 60 hunting knives at 1/- each; 50 spearheads at 3/- each; annually £23 handed down as family business.[1705]

Whereas some resorted to mending broken hoes and axes, creating a recycling business which reduced the need to purchase tools from the stores, others engaged in new activities, such as gun, bicycle and motor car repairs. As Mwinilunga is far removed from the main areas of industrial production and supply, repairmen and other craftsmen are in high demand and enjoy esteem.[1706] The existing knowledge and expertise of craftsmen could, to a certain extent, be transformed and adapted.[1707]

The negative view of decline or underdevelopment of ironworking can further be qualified by linking the availability of imported iron tools to other aspects of production.[1708] Colonial officials related the supply of iron hoes and axes to agricultural output. In 1927 the District Commissioner observed that: 'in the cultivating season there is a great demand for these articles [hoes and axes], and a shrinkage in the supply results in a diminution in the acreage cultivated.'[1709] In this connection, the ready availability of mass-produced iron tools might positively influence agriculture by facilitating the cultivation of fields.[1710] Whereas previously there had been a scarcity of iron tools, industrial production made supply more abundant, if still expensive. In the 1920s officials further established the connection between metallurgy and agricultural production, as attempts were made to spur both:

> with an increased number of cheap hoes and axes available cultivation improved so much that it is now possible to purchase nearly all the meal we require locally (…) it is hoped that now the smiths efforts are slackening the acreage cultivated will not shrink in sympathy (…) the lethargic smiths are not farsighted or energetic enough to make and store hoes for the demand they know arises each year during the cultivating season.[1711]

Metallurgy influenced productive activities beyond agriculture. Access to a bicycle enabled the marketing of agricultural produce at distant markets, generally facilitating travel and mobility. Furthermore, iron tools are indispensable to the craft of carpentry, which developed in Mwinilunga due to missionary education and occupational training.[1712] In these and other ways, access to iron was directly connected to productive activities, which in turn could serve to build personal status and wealth.

The availability of imported iron tools provided a means to challenge the authority of smelters and smiths. Due to their knowledge and expertise, these individuals had been able to constitute wealth in people. Imported iron tools, however, provided new avenues towards self-realisation by enabling the composition of singular personalities through fishing, agriculture or hunting.[1713] Competition and the expansion of sources of supply enabled a different negotiation and balance of power in the area, jeopardising the position of smelters, but opening up alternative opportunities. Even so, blacksmiths adapted and persevered in their enterprises. Innovative individuals continue to repair bicycles, construct door bolts and manufacture fish hooks from iron.[1714] Nevertheless, in the course of the twentieth century supply and competition broadened the previously more exclusive hold on power and resources held by smelters and smiths.[1715] The rapid influx of iron played a role in the transition

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[1705] (NAZ) SEC2/963, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 16 June 1955.
[1706] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu.*
[1707] Kriger, *Pride of men*, Epilogue; Burke, *Lifebuoy men*, 205.
[1708] Miller, 'Consumption and commodities', 144.
[1709] (NAZ) KSE6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 1927.
[1710] W. Allan, *The African husbandman* (Edinburgh etc., 1965).
[1711] (NAZ) KSE6/1/5, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 31 March 1926.
[1712] I. Peša, 'Buying pineapples, selling cloth: Traders and trading stores in Mwinilunga District, 1940-1970', in: Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life,* 262-3, 279-80.
[1713] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization', 252-3.
[1714] See: J.A. Pritchett, *Friends for life, friends for death: Cohorts and consciousness among the Lunda-Ndembu* (Charlottesville etc., 2007).
[1715] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization', 258-9.

from locally produced to store-bought utensils, but so did issues of price, labour, natural resources and knowledge. The result has not been a simple replacement of 'old' by 'new', nor a complete decline of previous artisanal activity. Rather, a complex consumer landscape has emerged. Whereas previously metallurgical knowledge had been a key 'resource' as well as a 'means of production',[1716] with the advent of mass-manufactured iron tools value came to lie in the skill of composition: 'The value of objects and the work that produces them was part of this larger process through which people achieved 'reality', a singular composition of multiple dimensions.'[1717] Diversity, proliferation and compositional skills, rather than monopolistic control came to prevail over the course of the twentieth century. Being able to exploit opportunities through access to iron tools, individuals still remained primarily interested in building wealth in knowledge, goods and ultimately people.[1718] By hosting agricultural work parties or constructing large houses, the deployment of iron tools could serve to attain prestige and wealth. Even if a transition from locally produced to store-bought goods has occurred, this transition did not signal a major rupture in underlying notions of wealth and social relationships. The outward appearance of goods has changed, but iron tools can still be used to build social personhood, express status, attract a large following and thereby enhance productive and reproductive capacities. Iron tools continue to be fundamentally connected to notions of wealth in people, and this explains their persistent value.[1719]

Cloth, clothing and culture

Similarly to metallurgy, a clothing transition from locally produced to mass-manufactured and store-bought garments has occurred throughout Mwinilunga District. Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, bark cloth and animal skins have largely been replaced by industrially manufactured cloth.[1720] Clothing is an especially interesting item in the study of consumption, because of the way in which it mediates between the individual and society. Clothing dresses the individual body for social display and thereby engages in processes of meaning-making, as well as struggles over power and hierarchy.[1721] Clothing: 'being personal, is susceptible to individual manipulation. Being public, it has social import.'[1722] Clothing can be an expression and even an agent of social change, both constructing and challenging social identities, conveying class, gender and generational distinctions or aspirations.[1723] Godfrey Wilson, during his 1930s fieldwork in the urban area of Broken Hill (Kabwe), aptly captured the relevance of clothing. His observations might be extrapolated to Mwinilunga due to the labour migration which connected the two areas. Mine workers spent 51.4% of all cash earnings on clothing:

> The desire for clothes is the normal conscious motive that brings men to town, and "nakedness" is the usual answer to the question "what made you leave the country?" They have been driven, without any possibility of return, from their Eden of bark-cloth and skins. Every African man of whatever social group tries to dress smartly for strolling round the town, or for visiting in his spare time, and loves to astonish the world with a new jacket, or a new pair of trousers of distinguished appearance. Women behave in the same way; and they judge husbands and lovers largely according to the amounts of money which they are given by them to spend on clothes. Clothes are discussed unceasingly (…) they are tended lovingly and carefully housed in boxes at night. It is largely by accumulating clothes that men save.

[1716] Guyer and Eno Belinga, 'Wealth in people as wealth in knowledge', 117.
[1717] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization', 253.
[1718] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.
[1719] Vansina, *Paths in the rainforests,* 237; Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'.
[1720] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth', 25-9; Hansen, *Salaula,* 24-39.
[1721] Hansen, *Salaula,* 6-12; K.T. Hansen, 'Second-hand clothing encounters in Zambia: Global discourses, Western commodities, and local histories', *Africa* 69:3 (1999), 343-65; Allman, *Fashioning Africa*, 2-6.
[1722] H. Hendrickson (ed.), *Clothing and difference: Embodied identities in colonial and post-colonial Africa* (Durham, 1996), 2.
[1723] P.M. Martin, 'Contesting clothes in colonial Brazzaville', *Journal of African history* 35:3 (1994), 401-26, especially 420; R.J. Ross, *Clothing: A global history* (Cambridge and Malden, 2008).

> Clothes (…) are the chief medium in which obligations to country relatives are fulfilled. The Africans of Broken Hill are not a cattle people, nor a goat people, nor a fishing people, nor a tree cutting people, they are a dressed people (…) clothes symbolize their claim to civilized status.[1724]

Evidently, clothing did not merely function as bodily covering, but was also an item of display, a means of conveying social status, a negotiating tool in gender relations and a medium to fulfil social obligations.[1725] By paying particular attention to changes in production, style and status, the history, meaning and importance of clothing in Mwinilunga will be examined. Clothing could serve to build social relationships, but could equally challenge existing hierarchies of power, allowing 'the expression of variety, individuality, and uniqueness.'[1726] The cultural biography of clothing will be traced, by highlighting the changing functions and meanings of clothing in the social life of Mwinilunga District.[1727]

During the seventeenth century imported manufactured cloth had started to trickle in to the area of Mwinilunga through the long-distance trade.[1728] In the eighteenth century textiles constituted 55% to 80% of all imports to Central Africa.[1729] Nevertheless, the circulation of textiles only really increased in the second half of the nineteenth century, when 'an industrial commodity replaced a mercantile one.'[1730] Due to increased supply, imported cloth was transformed from a luxury item for elite use to a quotidian item for public use, imbued with multiple layers of meaning. Clothing became an item of mass consumption through a gradual process which would only be completed in the twentieth century: 'A rare thing had become a necessity that people craved.'[1731] Imported garments had captured local fascination and had been highly valued from the outset, as was remarked by Silva Porto in 1880: 'The gold of these areas is cloth, and cloth fascinates the savages.'[1732] Rather than stressing eccentricity, an association existed between 'power and material wealth', as Central Africans possessed a 'well-informed knowledge of the symbolic importance of dress and the association of style, finery, wealth and power.' Far from simply copying European dress styles or accepting imports without discrimination, people in Mwinilunga 'appropriated foreign items in a purposeful manner derived from their pre-existing cultural perceptions.'[1733] In order to understand local interactions with imported clothing, pre-existing patterns of dress will first be examined.

Bark cloth and animal skins: The meaning and value of clothing

Prior to the advent of mass-manufactured imported garments, bark cloth and animal skins had provided covering, protection, warmth and clothing to the inhabitants of Mwinilunga. Although both bark cloth and animal skins could be worn by men and women in public and private settings, subtle differences distinguished the two.[1734] Whereas bark cloth would most frequently be associated with quotidian and domestic spheres, with women and children, garments made out of skins would be associated with luxury and status, with chiefs, hunters and prominent men, with political and economic power.[1735] In the 1870s Cameron noted this gendered division in dress: 'The clothing of the men

[1724] G. Wilson, *An essay on the economics of detribalization in Northern Rhodesia, Part 2* (Manchester, 1968), 18.
[1725] See: Allman, Hansen, Hendrickson and Ross.
[1726] Hansen, 'Second-hand clothing encounters', 346.
[1727] Kopytoff, 'The cultural biography of things', 66-7.
[1728] Compare to: Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world.*
[1729] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*, 224; Miller, *Way of death*, 74-5n3.
[1730] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth', 27.
[1731] Hansen, *Salaula*, 26.
[1732] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade,* 223; Quoting A.F.F. da Silva Porto (1885), *Viagens e apontamentos de um Portuense em Africa* (Coimbra, 1986), 606.
[1733] Martin, 'Contesting clothes', 405.
[1734] These views are based on numerous oral interviews, for example Chief Kanongesha's mother, 12 August 2010, Kanongesha. Detailed descriptions of the use of bark cloth or animal skins as clothing are rare. See: Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; Miller, *Way of death.*
[1735] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*, 225, suggests the opposite, that bark cloth was highly labour intensive and prestigious, more so than skins. It might be that the relative prestige of bark cloth and skins shifted over time.

consisted of skin aprons, whilst the women contented themselves with wearing a few shreds of bark cloth.'[1736] Further distinctions could be made. The skins of small animals, such as duiker (*nkayi*) or impala (*mupaala*), could be used to carry new-born babies in, yet these held little prestige. Contrastingly, leopard skins (*chisumpa*) were a chiefly prerogative connoting wealth and power, circulated through networks of tribute linked to the central Lunda court.[1737] Although bark cloth and skins provided distinct advantages (protecting the body against the elements, expressing identity and portraying social status) some qualifications did apply. Access to natural resources could be problematic, as the *musamba*, *mupuchi* and *katochi* trees from which bark cloth is preferably obtained are spread sparsely over the area. Moreover, the production of bark cloth is a labour intensive process. Trees are first cut down, then the bark is stripped from the tree, and thereafter the bark is soaked and beaten until soft.[1738] Animal skins, similarly, could be difficult to procure. Access to animal skins would depend either on hunting skills where game is plentiful, or on ties of kinship, clientage and trade with hunters where game is scarce or unavailable.[1739]

Due to the temperate climate of Mwinilunga, clothing could remain minimal.[1740] Elders recall dressing in a loincloth (*mwinda*), which was still common among women and children during the first half of the twentieth century.[1741] A narrow piece of cloth or skin would be strapped between the legs to cover the pubic area, leaving the chest and legs bare. Livingstone described this in the 1850s:

> The women as usual were nearly naked in front, and a little piece of cloth, about a foot long by 6 inches and less in breadth, was usually thrust between the thighs when near us. The covering behind (a skin of some small antelope) was much broader and longer than that in front – a curious perversion of the feelings of decency.[1742]

Although there might have been adequate clothing for adults, additional requirements (such as cloth to carry babies in, clothing for small children or blankets to provide warmth during the cold season) could only be met with difficulty.[1743] In the absence of blankets intense feelings of cold would prevail and people would resort to burning fires inside their huts. Livingstone evidences the scarcity of cloth:

> The women here shew that cloth is very scarce, for instead of a cloth in which to suspend their children a belt of about 1 ½ inch[es] is made of bark and slung from the shoulder to the opposite side. The child is placed in this as a partial support against the side of the mother. The belt comes around the hips of the child, and he is taught to rough it from his earliest years. I suppose that the chief clothing of the parents is the fire at night.[1744]

In this context the quantity of imported cloth was particularly advantageous, even if supply only increased gradually.[1745] Foreign trade made affordable clothing accessible in previously unimaginable quantities and this explains part of the eagerness to obtain imported manufactured cloth.[1746]

Similarly to skins, bark cloth is imbued with ritual meaning and importance, being used in initiation and healing ceremonies, as well as in the annual *Chisemwa Chalunda* celebrations.

[1736] V.L. Cameron, *Across Africa* (London etc., 1885), 403.

[1737] This view is based on numerous oral interviews; Mulumbi Datuuma II, 'Customs of the Lunda Ndembu'; (NAZ) NWP1/2/23, R.C. Dening, Comments on H. Vaux's Report; (NAZ) SEC2/402, H. Vaux, Report on the Sailunga Kindred, 1936.

[1738] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*, 225.

[1739] See Chapter 2.

[1740] See: Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*, 224; Miller, *Way of death,* 79-81.

[1741] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mrs Nakineli, 14 April 2010, Ikelenge; *Lunda-Ndembu dictionary.*

[1742] Schapera, *Livingstone's African journal,* 36.

[1743] See: Gordon, 'Wearing cloth', 26-7.

[1744] Schapera, *Livingstone's African journal*, 228.

[1745] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*, 226.

[1746] Prestholdt, 'On the global repercussions'.

From imported goods to objects of local desire: The spread and attractions of manufactured clothing

At the beginning of the twentieth century European travellers, traders, missionaries and colonial officials were the chief suppliers of imported cloth to Mwinilunga, even if they frequently operated through African intermediaries who would dispense cloth in the villages.[1747] Europeans supposed a 'universal' demand among the local population for 'superior' imported cloth, which in their eyes expressed a higher degree of 'civilisation' or even 'modernity' than bark cloth or skins could convey.[1748] The local meaning and value of cloth remained poorly understood. Travellers commented on the 'craving for cloth' among the Lunda:[1749]

> Clothing is much more eagerly enquired after by all than beads or other ornaments (…) Cotton cloth is in great demand. Men and women come running after us with fowls, meal, &c, which we would gladly purchase had we the means, and when they find we have no cloth they turn back disappointed.[1750]

Although actively promoting the spread of cloth, officials equally foresaw that heightened demand might prove problematic:[1751]

> The desire of bought calicoes etc. is inordinately developed amongst these people, and almost as soon as they handle cash they wish to turn it into calico, which at the beginning will make it extremely difficult to obtain their cash before it reaches the store.[1752]

Various groups, such as traders, missionaries or administrators, differently envisaged the purpose and effects of clothing on African societies. Within the context of imperialism and colonialism, dress was part of a broader 'civilising mission'.[1753] Nevertheless, clothing was not merely an issue of culture and morals, of dressing 'properly' or 'decently', but was connected to economic interests. Officials, attempting to entrench industrious behaviour under capitalsim, saw clothing as a potential aid. By insisting on dressing in imported apparel, which could only be purchased in European trading stores with cash, the colonial administration could propel individuals into waged labour or cash crop production to earn money over and above their tax requirements.[1754] In the post-colonial period, clothing discourses were even more firmly grounded in ideologies of 'improvement' and 'development', 'a matter of objective issues, universally desirable goals, and technocratically necessary interventions.'[1755] Everyday clothing practices, however, could differ from and subvert official discourse and intentions. Consumers could appropriate manufactured garments in unexpected locally specific ways, reimagining and refashioning them in their circulation, based on 'existing relationships to global commodity flows.'[1756] Therefore, paying attention to how imported cloth and clothing has been incorporated into Lunda society and how it has been given meaning can reveal changes in material culture and values, but can equally shed light on the engagement of local actors with missions, markets and state policies.[1757] Function and taste could be important when composing apparel, but clothing choices were equally enmeshed in social, cultural, economic and political processes. In order to grasp the changing meaning and value of clothing, the societal context has to be understood: 'Since clothing is inescapably a demonstration of identity, wearing clothes – or for that matter not doing so – is inevitably a political act, in the widest possible sense of that word.'[1758]

[1747] Hansen, *Salaula*, 24-29.

[1748] See: Burke, *Lifebuoy men*, 84-6; L. Schneider, 'The Maasai's new clothes: A developmentalist modernity and its exclusions', *Africa today* 53:1 (2006), 101-31; Hansen, *Salaula*; Thomas, 'Modernity's failings', 727-40; Ross, *Clothing,* 83-4; Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution,* 218-73.

[1749] Burke, 'Unexpected subversions', 475, refers to 'the allure of the foreign'.

[1750] Schapera, *Livingstone's African journal*, 69, 102.

[1751] Burke, 'Unexpected subversions'.

[1752] (NAZ) KSE 6/2/1, J.M. Pound, Lunda District Quarterly Report, June 1913.

[1753] Hansen, *Salaula*, 27; Ross, *Clothing*, Chapter Seven; Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution*, 218-73.

[1754] Burke, *Lifebuoy men*, 66-70, 84; Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution*, on missionaries.

[1755] Schneider, 'The Maasai's new clothes', 107.

[1756] Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things', 89; Burke, 'Unexpected subversions', 471.

[1757] Hansen, 'Second-hand clothing encounters'; Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world.*

[1758] Ross, *Clothing*, 12; Allman, *Fashioning Africa.*

Ever since the earliest interactions with imported cloth, local preferences of dress have been formulated.[1759] In accordance with local styles such preferences could change over time. To their despair, European traders and officials could exert little influence over changes in fashion.[1760] Only reluctantly would officials accede to demands from workers, who might request wages exclusively in calico of a particular type.[1761] Expressing independent tastes in pursuit of their clothes, the local population could frustrate the economic interests and hegemony of colonial rule. Officials complained that the inhabitants of Mwinilunga District, by crossing borders and trading with the Portuguese in Angola 'obtain all the calico they require to settle their numerous disputes, or cases amongst themselves, and of the particular sort they like, from the Portuguese traders and are therefore quite independent of this station in this respect.'[1762] Although Europeans largely dominated the supply of cloth, the terms of its use and appropriation could be unexpected and distinctly ordained by individual interests and the local context.[1763]

The local circulation, acceptance and use of imported cloth was shaped by social relationships. Through socio-economic and political negotiations and power relations cloth was given meaning.[1764] Due to limited supply prior to the nineteenth century, imported cloth was initially regarded as a highly valued luxury commodity. Its distribution was confined to political elites (mainly chiefs and headmen) who might hand out small pieces of cloth to kin and dependents, circulating cloth through gifts and channels of tribute.[1765] Cloth, as a status symbol, could strengthen the prestige of those with access to it and could enable the expansion of ties of allegiance and dependency. In this sense, dress was imbued with social meaning, being used as a marker of status, an expression of wealth, hierarchy and power.[1766] Travellers juxtaposed descriptions of a 'dirty and wild-looking' population with the apparel of their headman who 'was dressed for the occasion in a coloured shirt, felt hat, and a long petticoat made of coloured pocket-handkerchiefs.'[1767] In the 1930s one missionary described her encounter with Chief Kakoma as follows: 'he was dressed in many yards of trade cloth billowing all around him, and on top of all a weird and wonderful coat of some military uniform of ancient design.'[1768] Even if such showcasing was interpreted as exotic, these descriptions offer an insight into the local use and meaning of clothing. Cloth could be used to establish social relationships, to assert status, build hierarchies of power and create dependency.[1769]

Furthermore, cloth could be used as a medium of exchange, or even as a standardised currency, particularly throughout the nineteenth and in the first half of the twentieth century.[1770] Various standard units derived from the human body might be used as measurement, most notably short (*chibeli*, *chitambala*), one yard (*chitenda*), two yards (*chilala*, *luvunga*, *mudjoka*) and narrow-width cloth (*mukwamba*).[1771] In trade relationships, particularly in the long-distance caravan trade, cloth was a central commodity. Similarly to beads and guns, cloth could be obtained in exchange for

[1759] See: Martin, 'Contesting clothes'; Prestholdt, 'On the global repercussions'.
[1760] Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world,* Chapter Three.
[1761] (NAZ) KSE6/5/1, C.S. Bellis, Balunda District Monthly Report, September 1909: Workers demanded to be paid in only blue calico that month.
[1762] (NAZ) KSE6/5/1, C.S. Bellis, Balunda District Monthly Report, September 1910.
[1763] Prestholdt, 'On the global repercussions'; Hansen, *Salaula.*
[1764] Allman, *Fashioning Africa.*
[1765] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth', 25.
[1766] See: Miller, *Way of death,* 81.
[1767] Cameron, *Across Africa*, 403, 413.
[1768] Burr, *Kalene memories*, 117.
[1769] Martin, 'Contesting clothes'.
[1770] See: Gordon, 'Wearing cloth', 28; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*
[1771] A yard was defined as the length from the tip of the fingers to the middle of the chest; whereas two yards was the distance from fingertip to fingertip of outstretched arms. See: Miller, *Way of death,* 69; *Lunda-Ndembu dictionary*; These lengths of cloth differ somewhat from the list compiled by C.M.N. White and cited in Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*

items such as ivory, rubber, beeswax and slaves.[1772] Furthermore, cloth could mediate social relationships. As a unit of payment cloth could figure in initiation ceremonies, bridewealth and funeral payments, as a remuneration for the services of witchdoctors and healers, or cloth payment might be imposed as a fine in judicial disputes.[1773] Court cases provide evidence of such uses of cloth. In one case cloth was used to cover funerary expenses:

> Mapupu himself came to me to claim goods in compensation for his son Chindora's death, saying that since my sister had killed him, being a witch, I her brother must pay (…) I paid him 8 yards calico, one short flintlock gun, one blanket and one string of beads, and he accepted these.[1774]

Cloth could even be used to redeem individuals from slavery, suggesting that cloth and human lives (wealth in goods and wealth in people) might be directly interchangeable:[1775]

> I went to Swana Chirombo with two guns and some calico to release Kalukeki's child Lusenga from slavery (…) I asked Katoyi to release Lusenga and gave him two pieces of calico (4 yds. and 2 yds.) and a brass anklet, and told him I would find other goods to give him.[1776]

Further signifying links to social relationships, cloth could be a constituent of bridewealth. One man gave his 'mother-in-law 5 pieces of calico (3 pieces of 4 yards each & one piece of 8 yards & one of 2 yards) also some brass wire (3/-) and a plate.'[1777] Initially, the social function of cloth might even have been more important than its utility as dress: 'For years the people have said "What, we Wandembo, pay tax, we have no money, and are not strong, we don't even wear calico". Incidentally forgetting to say that they have hundreds of yards to pay off some affair.'[1778] Cloth could be used as a store of wealth, not being worn, but being kept as an insurance stock with which to fulfil social obligations and payments. Cloth could act as a medium to establish and maintain social relationships, building wealth in goods as well as people.[1779] The social importance of cloth did not cancel out its use value as garment. Rather, the two reinforced each other.

Cloth retained its use as a unit of payment throughout the colonial period.[1780] Because British currency was far from universal in the opening decades of the twentieth century, cloth might be used as an alternative. Food or other goods could be purchased with cloth, or labour might be paid by dispensing amounts of cloth.[1781] Official reports reflect such practices:

> after leaving calico in liberal payment for necessary food taken from the gardens, I eventually returned to Mwinilunga (…) I distributed as much calico as possible to the women and children. They showed confidence by returning again and again to Camp to sell a handful of beans or a little meal (…) I paid off the defaulting carriers of a day, and gave a piece of cloth to each man brought in.[1782]

Colonial rule underlined the importance of cloth, both intentionally and unintentionally. Agricultural producers, wage labourers and mission workers were all rewarded for their toils in cloth. In this manner, the colonial administration encouraged the spread and general use of cloth through all layers of society in Mwinilunga District.[1783] In spite of the initial use of cloth as a unit of barter or payment,

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[1772] See: Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'; Miller, *Way of death*; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*

[1773] Turner, *Schism and continuity*; V.W. Turner and E.L.B. Turner, 'Money economy among the Mwinilunga Ndembu: A study of some individual cash budgets', *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal* 18 (1955), 19-37, provide examples.

[1774] (NAZ) KSE3/2/2/2 Rex v. Mapupu, 9 January 1915.

[1775] See: Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'; Miller, *Way of death,* 81.

[1776] (NAZ) KSE3/2/2/2, Rex v. Katoyi, 25 July 1915.

[1777] (NAZ) KSE3/1/2/1. Mashau of Shimbi v. Nyaikwatelu, 4 August 1917.

[1778] (NAZ) KSE6/2/1, T.M. Lawman, Lunda District Quarterly Report, 14 October 1912.

[1779] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'; Martin, 'Contesting clothes'; Miller, *Way of death.*

[1780] See: Hansen, *Salaula;* Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution;* Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things'.

[1781] W.S. Fisher and J. Hoyte, *Ndotolu: The life stories of Walter and Anna Fisher of Central Africa* (Ikelenge, Rev. Ed., 1992).

[1782] (NAZ) BS2/199 IN2/1/3, G.A. MacGregor, Balunda Sub-District Monthly Report, January 1909.

[1783] Hansen, *Salaula,* 24-39.

officials advocated monetisation in the form of British currency. Using cash instead of cloth could prove problematic, though:

> The introduction of cash is a great thing and avoids much bother in keeping calico etc., but at the same time, in a place like this where calico cannot be bought or if at all, only at a high price, money will always be taken less willingly than cloth: natives here have a stupid habit of coming in some way with a small load of food for sale, say 20 or 25 lbs. One cannot give them much cash for this and with calico at 1/- a yard (the price today at store) they do not receive much benefit by selling, from their point of view. I have landed calico for my own use at 6d a yard but this does not allow of any profit to a trader.[1784]

Notwithstanding objections, cloth continued to be a unit of payment for labour (blankets could be part of road labourers' wages) or a unit of barter when selling crops to missionaries (a basket of cassava could be exchanged for a length of cloth), throughout the twentieth century.[1785]

Over the course of the twentieth century cloth made a transition from luxury good for the elite to a common and everyday item of use.[1786] The value of cloth could even be standardised, if not fixed:

> Wages are from 5/- to 7/- per month and are invariably paid in calico valued at 6d per yard (…) No goat is to be purchased under from 10 yards to 16 yards of calico (…) Fowls are far from plentiful and are valued at from 1 to 2 yards of calico each (…) Calico (common white or blue) is valued at 6d per yard by all natives.[1787]

Cloth, thus, held great significance, going beyond its utilitarian value. Its use as a medium of exchange, a unit of payment and a mediator in social relationships, enhanced the desirability and importance of cloth. Therefore, when supply became more plentiful under colonial rule, cloth spread rapidly and its use broadened.[1788] Even if continuities remained with previous uses of clothing, this transition had profound consequences for the meaning and value of cloth.

During the opening decades of the twentieth century access to imported cloth, purchased mainly through European trading stores, was by no means universal.[1789] Due to economic hardship and unfavourable terms of trade in the 1920s and 1930s, officials noted that people who had once worn imported cloth had reverted to bark cloth and animal skins, signifying the recent and reversible nature of the clothing transition: 'The high prices still asked by the stores for calico and blankets naturally causes a good deal of dissatisfaction among the natives – a large proportion of whom are reverting to skins and bark cloth to cover their nakedness.'[1790] Nevertheless, as the twentieth century progressed cloth was increasingly defined as one of the 'articles that have become necessities.'[1791] Although what was regarded as a necessity was culturally defined and might be contested, the spread of clothing through Mwinilunga District was general and popular. Despite the marked price increase in trading stores between 1914 and 1921, clothing sales continued unabatedly.[1792]

	Price in 1914	**Price in 1921**
White calico	1/- a yard	2/6 to 3/- a yard
Blue or striped calico	1/- a yard	2/6 a yard
Shirts	3/- each	7/- each
Blankets	4/3 each	8/6 each

Whereas prices paid for agricultural produce did not rise in proportion, making it necessary to produce and sell more crops to obtain the same amount of cloth, clothing consumption did not contract. The

[1784] (NAZ) KSE6/1/2, J.M.C. Pound, Lunda Sub-District Annual Report, 1911-12.

[1785] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, Mrs Mandamu Sapotu, 10 March 2010, Ikelenge.

[1786] Hansen, *Salaula*; Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'.

[1787] (NAZ) KSE6/1/1, G.A. MacGregor, Balunda District Annual Report, 1908-9.

[1788] It is important to stress, as Hansen and Burke do, that the supply of cloth under colonialism (especially before 1945) remained limited, and that supply could not fully meet demand. Nevertheless, when compared to the nineteenth century the supply of cloth in the twentieth century had increased greatly.

[1789] Hansen, *Salaula.*

[1790] (NAZ) KSE6/1/4, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 31 March 1924.

[1791] (NAZ) NWP1/2/78 Loc.4913, E.L. Button, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 1959.

[1792] (NAZ) KSE 6/1/4, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga Sub-District Annual Report, 31 March 1921.

value of clothing is clearly illustrated by a survey from the 1950s, which concluded that on average men spent £5 17s 4d a year on clothing, out of a total income of £14 10s 4d. Approximately 40% of all male income was spent on clothing, and for those aged between 40 and 60 the percentage was even higher. This pattern differed but slightly for women, who on average spent 33% of their income on clothing, £1 15s 3d out of a total income of £5 5s 6d a year. No other item of expenditure approximated the significance of clothing. Taxation, utensils and other store-bought goods were but minor expenses in comparison to store-bought garments.[1793] Placing these patterns of clothing consumption, taste and appearance in the context of agricultural production, labour migration and social relationships might explain the central position of clothing throughout Mwinilunga.

Clothing consumption, production and social relationships

Ever since the introduction of mass-manufactured imported garments to Mwinilunga, Europeans envisaged the economic repercussions of their adoption.[1794] In the 1850s Livingstone acclaimed the wonders of commerce, as 'the prints of Manchester are by means of it brought to the centre of Africa.'[1795] Commerce appeared so beneficial because it was believed that once clothing would become a necessity, this would lead to participation in the capitalist economy. Individuals desirous of cloth would be propelled to work, either as wage labourers or as cash crop producers, in order to earn a cash income with which to purchase dress. Industrial mass manufacture made it possible to tap into the potentially lucrative African market, which would contribute to sustainable economic growth and support the aims of imperialism.[1796] Only after the 1940s, however, was the full potential of the consumer market realised and was consumption officially encouraged.[1797] Due to booming copper production and high prices on the world markets, consumptive aspirations appeared virtually unrestrained. After independence official policies of 'development' further promoted the acquisition of consumer goods. The favourable economic climate gave way to a worldwide economic recession by the end of the 1970s, which consequently problematized clothing consumption.[1798]

Both in discourse and practice a strong link between consumption and production was established. One District Commissioner remarked that: 'The Lunda people are extremely fond of calico, and later on they will be found to improve in physique and will turn out a good working population.'[1799] Officials were convinced that the demand for cloth would lead to increased agricultural production: 'People are very interested to grow crops because when they take their crops to the traders they get much money and cloth.'[1800] Stated differently, increased production enabled access to consumer goods such as clothing, but moreover, the prospect of consumption could act as a stimulus for enhanced productive activities. Within this logic, consumption was linked to 'development', as a desire for clothing could spur individuals to make larger fields or engage in waged employment in urban areas.[1801] Government officials, in their attempts to propagate capitalism, industrious behaviour and a transition from 'subsistence' to 'market' production, eagerly promoted consumption as a tool to boost productive activities.[1802]

[1793] Turner, 'Money economy', 30.

[1794] Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world*; Hansen, *Salaula.*

[1795] Schapera, *Livingstone's African journal,* 32.

[1796] Burke, *Lifebuoy men*, Chapter Three; Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world*, Chapter Three; Hansen, 'Second-hand clothing encounters', 352-4.

[1797] Burke, *Lifebuoy men*; Hansen, *Salaula.*

[1798] Hansen, *Salaula,* 24-39.

[1799] (NAZ) KSE6/2/1, J.M. Pound, Lunda District Quarterly Report, 31 December 1913.

[1800] (NAZ) NWP1/2/21 Loc.4901, Agricultural Report Chief Kanongeshya Area, 8 February 1950.

[1801] Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life,* Introduction. Perhaps consumption caused something akin to an 'industrious revolution': J. de Vries, *The industrious revolution: Consumer behavior and the household economy, 1650 to the present* (Cambridge etc., 2008), 10, 72.

[1802] Burke, 'Unexpected subversions'.

The links between clothing and labour migration were practical as much as discursive.[1803] One missionary observed that: 'The people in this district are away a great deal working for the white men in the towns, where they earn good money and so for the most part are well clothed.'[1804] Not only were clothes regarded as a reward for waged employment, but clothing could act as a push factor, enticing men to leave their homes in search of income with which to buy the latest fashion.[1805] Mr Makajina made the long trip from Angola via Mwinilunga to Johannesburg, largely on foot, in pursuit of a nice suit. After having made several stops on the Zambian Copperbelt, in Livingstone and Zimbabwe, he proceeded to Johannesburg where the 'latest fashion' was to be found. He only returned to settle in Mwinilunga once he had obtained two black suits and other goods, such as a saucepan radio.[1806] This case might be exceptional in the paramount importance attached to clothing, but it most certainly depicts a broader trend. Other migrants might spend their first wages on clothing, or they might send clothes home as remittances to maintain ties with kin.[1807] Production and consumption were thoroughly intertwined, both in official discourse and in the daily lives of the consuming public. In order to purchase the latest fashion a cash income proved indispensable. In turn, those with access to the latest fashion could attract the admiration of others, building personal status and value. Within the framework of wealth in people consumption could further aspirations towards self-realisation: 'By representing aspirations publicly, new consumer imports were tools in the constitution of personhood and strategies of distinction.'[1808] Clothing could serve to build, maintain or challenge social relationships. Through its ability to convey status, hierarchy and power, clothing could be distinctly social and political.[1809]

Clothing could serve as a public statement of personal worth, wealth and status. Prior to the twentieth century imported cloth had still entered the area in relatively small quantities through a limited number of channels, enabling the control of this stream by a small group of powerful individuals. The political elite of chiefs, headmen and traders could direct the import of cloth, a good which conveyed prestige and commanded respect to the owner.[1810] Cloth could be used as a status symbol, the distribution of which could attract followers, dependents and wives.[1811] Within the context of wealth in people 'Big Men' could act as gatekeepers, monopolising imports and thereby building and maintaining social and political hierarchies.[1812] A cycle was created whereby goods could be used to gain human allegiance, which in turn could serve to increase productivity and obtain more goods (cloth-people-more cloth).[1813] Through the labour power of their dependents, which facilitated the acquisition of produce such as ivory, rubber and beeswax, chiefs and headmen could access cloth and other imported goods of the long-distance trade. By dispensing cloth to their dependents, chiefs and headmen could swell their productive activities, generating means to obtain even more cloth.[1814] The slave trade was the apex of this cycle between goods and people. In the 1950s one District Commissioner recalled that:

[1803] See: M. Barrett, ''Walking home majestically': Consumption and the enactment of social status among labour migrants from Barotseland, 1935-1965', in: Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life,* 93-113.
[1804] (EOS) Alfred Digby Fisher, December 1930.
[1805] The Rhodes Livingstone Institute researchers have described this process with eloquence.
[1806] Interview with Mr Makajina Kahilu, 8 March 2010, Ikelenge.
[1807] Wilson, *Essay on the economics.*
[1808] Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things', 96.
[1809] Martin, 'Contesting clothes'; Ross, *Clothing.*
[1810] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth', 25-6; Miller, *Way of death,* 81.
[1811] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization', 258-9.
[1812] Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things', 87.
[1813] Miller, *Way of death;* Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life,* 4.
[1814] Miller, *Way of death,* 71-3; Gordon, 'The abolition of the slave trade'.

> not so long ago (…) lengths of cloth could only be obtained by barter with the Yimbundu [Ovimbundu] tribe, who brought their goods from Angola. The price paid for lengths of cloth was human: five lengths for a boy slave, and ten for a girl.[1815]

Once the supply of cloth increased in the course of the twentieth century the gatekeeper mechanism of control was challenged and eventually undermined. People aspiring to build a new base of social power could amass and distribute imports to challenge figures of authority.[1816] Aspirants 'destabilized structures of authority in novel ways by enhancing their prestige through access to imported goods.'[1817] Cloth became accessible to a variety of individuals through multiple channels of supply, enabling junior wage labourers to contest the authority of elders. Although access to mass-manufactured cloth could challenge the power of established 'Big Men', it enabled others to build up their own authority.[1818] In this sense access to cloth could be a means towards self-realisation. People continued to use the power of cloth to gain respect and human allegiance.[1819]

Clothing, culture and self-realisation

In the area of Mwinilunga cloth was not used solely in ways ordained by European suppliers. Rather, cloth was reinterpreted and transformed, given new and at times challenging meanings.[1820] Cloth could be a means of distinction, expressing status and evoking admiration. Through cloth people could build wealth, manifest power and realise personhood.[1821] Rather than being merely accumulative, wealth acquisition was compositional and self-realisation could be achieved in multiple manners, indicating 'the competitive and constantly innovative process of valorization along multiple routes', making effective control or hierarchy impossible.[1822] In the nineteenth century cloth was mainly a means of control over people, but in the twentieth century cloth continued to be a marker of prestige and wealth. Because clothing could express personal power and value, wearing fashionable clothes could be a means towards building personhood and status, attracting the admiration and allegiance of other people.[1823] According to the principle of self-realisation, 'the assets were not things at all, but the singular persons who harnessed sources and controlled fates.'[1824] Cloth did not only boost the prestige of the owner, but could be handed out to kin and could serve to build and strengthen social relationships. Migrant labourers might carry cloth for their relatives when on leave, remit cloth from town or stock clothes as a store of wealth. Returning migrants would be viewed with admiration, chiefly due to their possession of fashionable clothes.[1825] Cloth could enable a labourer to marry the wife of his choice, or it could serve as remuneration for work parties. Because these work parties might assist the host with the construction of a new house, or with the cultivation of a large field, cloth had the potential of being productive in the strictly economic sense, as well as enhancing social relationships and promoting prestige.[1826] Marital relationships built on the exchange of cloth, as a husband is expected to provide his wife with a new cloth on a regular basis (once a year is the norm today). Failure to fulfil this obligation would justify claims of neglect and might even lead to divorce.[1827] A man whose wife had requested divorce defended himself by stating: 'I have given her clothes and

[1815] (NAZ) SEC2/962 P.L.N. Hannaford, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, April 1954.
[1816] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth', 25, 33.
[1817] Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things', 97.
[1818] Guyer and Eno Belinga, 'Wealth in people as wealth in knowledge', 119-20.
[1819] See also: Hansen, *Salaula.*
[1820] Burke, 'Unexpected subversions', 481; Prestholdt, 'On the global repercussions'.
[1821] Martin, 'Contesting clothes'; Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'.
[1822] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization', 246, 253.
[1823] See: Hansen, *Salaula*; Hansen, 'Second-hand clothing encounters', 344.
[1824] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization', 257.
[1825] Barrett, 'Walking home majestically'; Wilson, *Essay on the economics.*
[1826] Turner, 'Money economy'.
[1827] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mrs Julian Chiyezhi, 2008, Mwinilunga; See Chapter 5.

treated her properly.'[1828] In order to build and maintain social relationships it was necessary not only to have access to cloth, but more importantly cloth had to be distributed. A respectable man would be the provider of cloth for the household.[1829] On the other hand, a man hoarding cloth solely for his own use, while his wife and children walked around in rags, would be strongly condemned.[1830] Wearing a nice suit was not only a personal, but also a fundamentally social act.

Clothing became a good which was universally aspired during the twentieth century. The proverb '*vwala musamba, ihina dakala kutonda*' – 'wear bark cloth, printed cloth is hard to find', reflects the difficulty of obtaining cloth. Nevertheless, this scarcity did not endure.[1831] During the colonial period clothing became widely available and a marked shift occurred within the span of several decades. Whereas in the 1930s it had still been remarked that: 'most of the women wear a long cloth knotted around the arm pits. When they have enough money they get a blouse and skirt',[1832] by the 1960s it was common to possess a spare pair of clothing, as well as two blankets.[1833] Especially from the 1940s onwards a variety of fabrics, designs and qualities of cloth, tailored clothing and ready-to-wear garments became commonplace and accessible. Distinctions of attire from the colonial and early post-colonial period are still vividly recalled and discussed at present. During the opening decades of the twentieth century various types of cloth circulated. The most common varieties were *kanyiki* (blue calico), *mutoma* (white calico) and *sapato* (khaki coloured calico), worn by both men and women.[1834] White cloth was considered the most prestigious of these, being reserved for chiefs, headmen and their wives. In later periods different types of cloth, under a variety of names, spread through the area. This complicated the distinction of quality or value, but nevertheless, consumers expressed clear preferences. Zimbabwean cloth, *chiwankie*, was considered inferior to Congolese varieties of cloth, such as *tumbela* or *katende*, which were less stiff and kept their colour better than cheaper alternatives. *Muzukila* was an affordable cloth worn by the masses, whereas varieties such as *pindalo* could convey wealth, making a person *mbongu* (a stilt-walker, a person who is very rich).[1835] Styles were also highly gendered. Whereas initially both men and women would wear the same type of cloth, wrapped around the lower part of their body or knotted under one armpit, styles would increasingly be differentiated by gender once cloth became more plentiful. Women continued to wear cloth, though of different varieties. Affluent women would wear two or three pieces of cloth, one wrapped around the lower part of the body, one around the chest and one as headgear. Furthermore, women might wear tailored *chitenge* or *chikwembi* (printed coloured cloth) dresses or ready-made blouses and skirts. Men, on the other hand, would wear shorts and blouses (*kahuma*, jacket; *chikovwelu*, shirt; *mupila*, vest; *kaputula*, shorts). After independence long trousers became the standard for men, as it was no longer considered respectable to wear shorts.[1836] Appropriate footwear would complete apparel. Lunda men had made shoes out of animal skins, or in exceptional cases out of tree bark, and these could be worn by hunters when they would go into the bush. Nevertheless, footwear had not been an item of widespread use. Road workers and migrant labourers remembered wearing rubber shoes made of used car tyres to protect their feet. From the 1930s onwards canvas shoes became

[1828] (NAZ) KSE3/1/2/1, Kambai of Kanyika v. Nyansamba of Muloa, 25 June 1918.
[1829] See: J.L. Parpart, '"Where is your mother?": Gender, urban marriage, and colonial discourse on the Zambian Copperbelt, 1924-1945', *The international journal of African historical studies* 27:2 (1994), 241-71; H. Powdermaker, *Copper town: Changing Africa: The human situation on the Rhodesian Copperbelt* (New York etc., 1962).
[1830] See the reference to the song Kabwengenenge below.
[1831] Proverb recited by Mr Justin Kambidima, September 2010, Ntambu.
[1832] (NAZ) HM8FI4/2/1, Singleton Fisher, Missionary Work Among the African People – Life at Kalene Hill, n.d. [1930?].
[1833] (NAZ) LGH5/4/2 Loc.3615, Mwinilunga Security Scheme 1963: Assessment of Common Goods in the District.
[1834] These types of cloth are also mentioned by Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade*; Prestholdt, *Domesticating the world.*
[1835] This is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mrs Mandosa Kabanda, 2 August 2010, Kanongesha.
[1836] Such shifts have equally been described by Hansen, *Salaula.*

accessible to both men and women. Later still, returning migrant labourers introduced the trend of leather shoes. Footwear, an item which had once been regarded superfluous, was transformed into a necessity and a marker of status.[1837]

Cloth was able to fulfil such important functions, expressing wealth in people as well as self-realisation, through its ability to convey value and hierarchy.[1838] Therefore, chiefs would fervently discuss the form and colour of their uniforms. To allow for adequate distinctions, the following suggestions were made in the 1960s: 'A dark blue or black suit with golden buttons and gold braid down the seams of the trousers. The decorations should be different for Chiefs, Senior Chiefs and Paramount Chiefs.'[1839] Similarly, messengers were said to derive their authority from 'the power of their uniform.'[1840] Enabling status distinctions, clothes could be a unique and personal medium but could also visualise social relationships and hierarchies. Targeting the eradication of poverty through development and an insistence on 'modern' attire,[1841] the colonial administration suggested links between clothing, social distinction, wealth and civilisation: 'The appearance of the natives in this area very definitively suggests poverty; few of the natives can boast of anything more pretentious than loin cloths made of skin and bark cloth.'[1842] By the 1950s an old woman wearing rags and walking around barefoot would be considered destitute. Whether this condition was caused because she lacked the physical strength to cultivate her own gardens or because she had lost her husband and had no sons who could provide for her, the absence of clothing was a visible marker of her poverty. Poverty, thus, was not only a lack of material possessions but also a lack of social relationships. A woman without a husband and children who could take care of her clearly lacked wealth in people, power and influence. Clothing could be a positive marker of wealth and social power. A female pineapple farmer who was able to sell large quantities from her fields might use her profits to buy clothes for herself and her children, visualising her achievements and social status through clothing. That her clothing attracted envy from her less well-endowed neighbours merely underlined her personal success. Furthermore, she could use cloth as a payment to attract other women for work parties, enabling her to increase production and fulfil goals of self-realisation.[1843] Clothing could function in a variety of ways, marking status distinctions but also serving to build interpersonal relationships.

With the rise of nationalism under colonial rule, clothing could be used as an economic and political tool to assert equality or even to claim superiority vis-à-vis the white ruling class.[1844] In this sense, clothing consumption might be 'a tool for achieving legitimacy and parity within global modernity.'[1845] By delineating racial and class boundaries through dress, colonial administrators and missionaries had attempted to keep Africans in their place.[1846] Such attempts did not go unchallenged. Wearing the right apparel could serve to assert decency, or even 'civilisation' and 'modernity'.[1847] A discussion, initiated by several chiefs from Mwinilunga District in the Provincial Council, evidences that this could be an aspired goal: 'Africans desirous of living a decent life, get their requirements from European stores, I do not think any of us here today is wearing clothing bought in an African store.'[1848] Nevertheless, clothing was more than a simple emulation or 'mimicry' of whites.[1849] People 'wore

[1837] Pritchett, *Friends for life*, describes the same.
[1838] Compare to: Martin, 'Contesting clothes'.
[1839] (NAZ) LGH5/2/8 Loc.3613, North-Western Province Resident Secretaries Conference, 20 October 1969.
[1840] (NAZ) KSE6/1/4, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 31 March 1922.
[1841] Schneider, 'The Maasai's new clothes', 110.
[1842] (NAZ) SEC2/953, G.S. Jones, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 27 February 1933.
[1843] Interview with Mrs Nanci Kamafumbu, 19 April 2010, Ikelenge.
[1844] See: Ross, *Clothing*, Chapter Nine.
[1845] Burke, 'Unexpected subversions', 476.
[1846] See: Burke, *Lifebuoy men,* 99.
[1847] See: Schneider, 'The Maasai's new clothes'; Allman, *Fashioning Africa.*
[1848] (NAZ) North-Western Province African Provincial Council, May 1958.
[1849] J. Ferguson, 'Of mimicry and membership: Africans and the "New World Society"', *Cultural anthropology* 17:4 (2002), 551-69.

European clothes as an attempt to make clear that they were as good as anyone in the world, and certainly the equals of those who were perceived as looking down at the wearer of the suit.'[1850] Clothing was used in locally specific ways to assert social and political status within the community. After independence the importance of clothing was further underlined. Government officials designated clothing 'improvement' as one of the main markers of 'development'.[1851] In numerous reports and public statements it was decreed that: 'no person should ever really dress in rags in Zambia nor indeed go barefooted.'[1852] By the 1970s it was stated that: 'The principle task of any government like ours in a developing country is, as quickly as possible to provide (…) better clothing.'[1853] Clothing became a marker of 'development' and 'modernity',[1854] as it could secure 'membership as respectable equals (…) in the nation.'[1855]

Until the present day the importance of clothing remains paramount. A popular song, *Kabwengenenge* (2007), depicts a man who does not like to cultivate his fields. Due to his poverty the man is unable to buy cloth for his wife, which causes her to steal the *chitenge* (printed coloured cloth) of her neighbour. This shames her to such an extent that she subsequently sneaks around the village, using shortcuts so that nobody can see her. Nevertheless, the neighbour discovers the theft and claims the *chitenge* back, leaving the woman nude and embarrassed.[1856] This song connects the themes of production and consumption, underlining the importance of cloth, as well as its links to social distinction, status, wealth and work. The moral of the song is that a husband should work hard to provide his wife with a decent garment, because without cloth a woman is poor and unworthy. Cloth did not gain such supreme and enduring importance as an item of utility alone. The use and meaning of cloth changed over time, but its significance was based on the interrelations between clothing, social relationships, power and status. Therefore clothing practices and preferences can only be understood by looking at clothing, people and wealth in all their complex reciprocity.

Grass, mud and bricks: Housing, community and permanence

Even more than metallurgy or clothing, housing is a locus of consumption where the individual meets a wider collective.[1857] Inhabited by individuals, nuclear families or extended kin-based entities, dwellings are integrated into larger units of settlement, such as farms, villages or towns.[1858] Housing might express struggles in society, between men and women, between chiefs, the government and their subjects: 'Within the domestic realm and the social worlds of its residents, individuals enact state- or civically-generated definitions of the family, perform daily acts of sustenance, and act on deeply held beliefs of "the good life."'[1859] Architectural styles, which have changed over time, are connected to social relationships and notions of wealth. Housing can mediate the personal or domestic sphere and broader issues of culture, ideology, society and economy:

> The built environment constitutes a carefully contrived stage on which social action occurs. Dwellings in particular are a universal aspect of material culture that cross-culturally define the domestic domain,

[1850] Ross, *Clothing*, 170.
[1851] Hansen, *Salaula,* 38.
[1852] (NAZ) Second National Convention on Rural Development, 12 December 1969.
[1853] (NAZ) A New Strategy for Rural Development in Zambia, 1974.
[1854] Schneider, 'The Maasai's new clothes', 116.
[1855] Schneider, 'The Maasai's new clothes', 124.
[1856] Kabwengenenge, Kanongesha Band, 2007 – The translation and explanation of this song was kindly provided by Mrs Julian Chiyezhi, September-October 2008, Mwinilunga.
[1857] Miller, *Consumption and commodities,* 155.
[1858] G. Kay, 'Social aspects of village regrouping in Zambia' (University of Hull, 1967).
[1859] A.S. Lewinson, 'Domestic realms, social bonds, and class: Ideologies and indigenizing modernity in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania', *Canadian journal of African studies* 40:3 (2006), 463-4.

> often serve as a setting for corporate economic activity and solidarity, and provide an affirmation of cultural values.[1860]

Turner has explored socio-cultural and political importance and the ideological power with which housing location was imbued in the area of Mwinilunga in the 1950s. He depicted the 'spatial separation of adjacent genealogical generations' within the village, which acted as a hierarchical ordering mechanism for power relations, the 'visible end-result of a number of social tendencies.'[1861] An inherently social expression, housing in the area of Mwinilunga was connected to broader issues of socio-economic and political power, holding complex meaning for its occupants.

Housing is a pivotal aspect of daily life and social well-being, and therefore it is essential to study the 'socio-cultural precepts of building form', as well as residential development, in order to illustrate how an 'indigenous micro-planning system served as the spatial embodiment of the popular consciousness', closely connected to issues of wealth and socio-political power.[1862] The tension between discourse and practice should be examined, between (post-)colonial government doctrine and housing construction in the area of Mwinilunga. In official discourse issues of housing have been connected to debates on permanent residence, agricultural productivity and ultimately to issues of 'modernity'.[1863] A clear link between housing, health, social welfare and material wellbeing is suggested by an official statement from the 1980s:

> Housing is a basic human necessity which plays an important part in maintaining good health habits and social stability of a nation. It provides the necessary physical environment in which the family develops and such physical environment plays a decisive role in raising the general level of the standard of living of the people.[1864]

Housing was afforded prominence in UNIP campaigns and policies after independence. It was decreed that: 'No person should really fail to have a decent two- or three-roomed Kimberley brick house.'[1865] This mode of reasoning was essentially a continuation of colonial rhetoric. Generally, officials viewed the transition from grass housing to wattle and daub, and later sundried or burnt brick houses, roofed with iron sheets instead of grass, not only as positive and desirable, but ultimately as inevitable.[1866] Government officers held that transitions in building style would be accompanied by a trend towards permanent residence, as opposed to the frequent shifting of locations, as well as expanded and improved methods of agricultural production and material prosperity.[1867] The colonial and post-colonial state viewed housing and building control as 'spatial strategies aimed at social control' and aimed at 'implanting a landscape of hegemony' through the built environment.[1868] Ultimately, 'Colonial regimes articulated power and a vision of modernity through architecture that materialized the regulating, authoritative nature of bureaucracy and the state.'[1869] In the case of Mwinilunga shifts in housing patterns were complex, at times contradictory or reversible, but above all they were not determined by imperatives of government ideology or economic necessity.[1870] Official visions were contested through daily practices. Struggles over housing expressed a mixture of indigenous and external socio-economic and political factors, as well as cultural and ideological values. Housing held

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[1860] N. Gabrilopoulos, C. Mather and C.R. Apentiik, 'Lineage organisation of the Tallensi compound: The social logic of domestic space in Northern Ghana', *Africa* 72:2 (2002), 222.

[1861] V.W. Turner, 'The spatial separation of generations in Ndembu village structure', *Africa* 25:2 (1955), 121-37.

[1862] G.A. Myers, 'Sticks and stones: Colonialism and Zanzibari housing', *Africa* 67:2 (1997), 253.

[1863] See: Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution,* 274-322.

[1864] (NAZ) Department of Community Development, North-Western Province, 1980.

[1865] (UNIPA) Kimberley brick is a term used for sundried mud brick structures.

[1866] Kay, 'Social aspects of village regrouping', 23-32; A. von Oppen, 'The village as territory: Enclosing locality in Northwest Zambia, 1950s to 1990s', *Journal of African history* 47:1 (2006), 57-61.

[1867] Von Oppen, 'The village as territory'; Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees.* See: Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution,* 274-8.

[1868] Myers, 'Sticks and stones', 252.

[1869] Lewinson, 'Domestic realms, social bonds, and class', 466.

[1870] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* Chapter Three.

complex local meaning.[1871] More often than not, government officials 'misunderstood (…) customs and the contradictory dynamics within them as practised', and therefore attempts towards control, planning and authority often proved 'ineffective in shaping space to control', or 'remaking spatiality'.[1872] Changes in housing styles throughout Mwinilunga District will be examined, by relating shifts in housing to social relationships and processes of meaning generation.

Grass, mud and the meaning of housing

Early colonial officials voiced recurrent complaints about the 'impermanence' of Lunda housing.[1873] Throughout the nineteenth century settlements in Mwinilunga had been small and had shifted their location frequently.[1874] Travelling through the area in the 1870s Cameron described how his party:

> passed many small hamlets consisting only of a few huts in the centre of a patch of cleared and cultivated ground (…) The huts were all small, and while some were circular with conical roofs and walls of stakes, with the interstices filled in with grass, others were oblong with sloping roofs and were lined with mats.[1875]

Houses might be constructed in a number of ways, but most common were either grass, or wattle and daub structures. These could be conical, round or square in shape, possessing sloping grass thatched roofs.[1876] To an extent architectural style depended on permanence of residence. When founding a settlement in a new location, residents would start with building grass *nkunka*.[1877] As temporary dwellings which would be destructed on departure, *nkunka* might be built near the fields during harvesting time, or in the bush during hunting expeditions. Equally, *nkunka* would be constructed for ritual purposes. They might house boys and girls during initiation ceremonies, patients during healing rituals, or function as seclusion huts for menstruating women. Only in exceptional circumstances would *nkunka* be inhabited for more than one or two years.[1878] In most cases they would be abandoned within a single season. After several months *nkunka* would be replaced by fortified wattle and daub housing, which could be inhabited for years if repaired occasionally.[1879]

Housing was not only connected to permanence, but equally to status and to hierarchies of power based on gender and age. Turner described that: 'older men are the first to move into permanent mud houses when a new village is being built, while the sisters' sons, who are working for their uncles, are still quartered in the grass houses.'[1880] Elder widows might be housed in *nkunka* permanently, because they lacked access to male labour to procure poles for wattle and daub constructions. House construction was part and parcel of negotiations over meaning, hierarchy and power. Especially access to and mobilisation of labour for house construction reflects societal power relations. House construction is highly labour intensive and therefore access to extra-household labour is sought for tasks such as woodcutting or roofing. Furthermore, house construction is gendered, depending on male labour. Access to male labour could be gained through marriage (women commanding the labour of their husbands), age (elders commanding the labour of juniors) and status hierarchies (chiefs commanding the labour of subjects).[1881] Housing is thus thoroughly social, expressing hierarchies of gender, age, wealth and social status.

[1871] Turner, 'The spatial separation'.
[1872] Myers, 'Sticks and stones', 252-3.
[1873] Compare to: Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees.*
[1874] Kay, 'Social aspects of village regrouping', 5-9; Turner, *Schism and continuity,* 2-3.
[1875] Cameron, *Across Africa*, 404-5.
[1876] These views are based on numerous oral interviews and a reading of archival sources (NAZ).
[1877] See Chapter 1 for *nkunka* (conical grass structure).
[1878] See: Turner, *Schism and continuity.*
[1879] According to informants wattle and daub houses would be inhabited for four to five years before shifting.
[1880] Turner, 'The spatial separation', 130, refers to M. McCulloch, *The Southern Lunda and related peoples (Northern Rhodesia, Belgian Congo, Angola)* (London, 1951), 40.
[1881] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, Chapter Two; Turner, *Schism and continuity.*

The design of the village was further connected to ritual power.[1882] As has been described by Livingstone, religious meaning permeated the space of the village:

> They are idolators, near every village an Idol is seen, a block of wood with a rough human head carved on it, or a lion made of clay and two shells for eyes standing in a little shed. The people when unsuccessful in any enterprise, or sick, beat a drum before them all night, and they are otherwise very superstitious (…) In the deep dark forests near their villages we always met with idols and places of prayer (…) the worshipper – either male or female – comes alone and prays to the gods (Barimo) or spirits of departed relatives, and when an answer to the petition seems granted, meal or other food is sprinkled on the spot as a thankoffering.[1883]

The spirits of the ancestors, who are buried on the outskirts of the village, connect village residents to the land. These ancestral connections are a prerequisite for village wellbeing, fertility and prosperity, although ancestors might influence village affairs both benevolently and malevolently.[1884] Because death is interpreted as a bad omen, especially if it involves the headman or prominent elders, a village would shift its location after the occurrence of a number of deaths.[1885] Going beyond matters of architecture, housing is imbued with ritual, socio-economic, cultural and political meaning.

Colonial observers condemned the impermanence of Lunda housing, connecting this to issues of 'laziness', lack of hygiene or even 'primitivity'.[1886] Nevertheless, impermanence could have a logic of its own and was not universal. Both grass and wattle and daub houses were constructed from locally procured materials. Poles and thatching grass, from specific hardwood trees and reeds, could be difficult to access as they tended to be dispersed over the landscape. Grass and especially wattle and daub houses could be remarkably strong and durable, if properly constructed.[1887] These structures could provide shelter and comfort, offer protection against wild animals and could withstand the vagaries of the long rain season in Mwinilunga.[1888] Yet permanence did not always result. If house construction needed to be completed rapidly, inferior alternatives to established building practices would be resorted to. Due to constraints of time, labour or natural resources, houses would sometimes be put together in a haphazard way, making frequent modifications, repairs and rethatching necessary. White ants might attack the poles, whereas rain and humidity would affect roofing.[1889] All these factors encouraged the frequent relocation of dwellings and settlements.

Impermanence was informed by considerations other than architecture. The search for hunting, fishing or cultivating grounds, disputes within the village, war and enemy attack, or death and improvidence could all be reasons causing a household or village to relocate. Generally, villages would shift their location in intervals ranging from one to twenty years.[1890] This mobility was coupled with, and facilitated by, the small size of villages. In the 1950s Turner noted that population increase seemed 'to have led to an increase in the number of villages rather than in the size of individual villages.'[1891] Turner attributed the small size of villages to ecological factors (the carrying capacity of land for agricultural production and an occupational focus on hunting) as well as the fissile nature of virilocal marriage in a matrilineal descent system.[1892] This tendency towards small and mobile villages was

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[1882] Turner, *Schism and continuity.*

[1883] D. Chamberlain (ed.), *Some letters from Livingstone, 1840-72* (London, 1940), 219, 249-50.

[1884] Turner, *Schism and continuity,* 173.

[1885] This view is based on numerous oral interviews for example Mr Zakewa Kahangu, 26 April 2010, Nyakaseya, a reading of archival sources (NAZ) and is reflected in Turner, *Schism and continuity,* 263-5.

[1886] Kay, 'Social aspects of village regrouping', 9-12; Compare to: Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees*; Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution.*

[1887] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*

[1888] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu.*

[1889] This view is based on numerous oral interviews.

[1890] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* 91; (NAZ) SEC2/955, R.C. Dening, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 1947; (NAZ) NWP1/2/17, F.M.N. Heath, Mwinilunga District Travelling Report, 1948.

[1891] Turner, 'The spatial separation', 122.

[1892] Turner, *Schism and continuity.*

temporarily offset by the end of the nineteenth century, due to slave raids and ensuing insecurity. Centralisation of population and authority resulted, as people sought security in numbers and founded large settlements headed by elders who exercised an exceptional level of authority.[1893] Such settlements would be surrounded by a stockade, which had earlier served to keep away wild animals, such as lions and hyenas.[1894] Due to the labour required to erect a stockade, these settlements would most probably remain in the same place for a longer period of time, signalling increased permanence of residence. 'Big Men' could act as gatekeepers, as a large and permanent village conveyed status and power. Through the authority of the village head, who commanded the respect of the village population, wealth in people was built and strengthened.[1895] A large and prosperous village was a sign of respect and status of village heads whose ultimate aim was to give their name to such a village.[1896] Nevertheless, at the beginning of the twentieth century these concentrated and more permanent villages had started to split up once more. This might not have been only due to the cessation of slave raiding, but could equally be attributed to changes following the inception of colonial rule.[1897] Housing had an indigenous logic and held complex meanings, yet building forms did become influenced by colonial rule, both in discourse and practice.

Promoting 'improved' housing: Official attempts at housing reform

Colonial observers denounced the impermanent housing styles in the area of Mwinilunga as rude or even 'primitive', propagating permanent brick houses instead.[1898] In a project of social engineering, the colonial state set out 'to reduce the chaotic, disorderly, constantly changing social reality beneath it', attempting 'to create a terrain and a population with precisely those standardized characteristics that will be easiest to monitor, count, assess, and manage.'[1899] Consequently, existing settlements were described in derogatory terms, as collections of 'wretched huts and dirty villages.'[1900] Even if both grass and wattle and daub structures were condemned, *nkunka* were particularly detested. Sedentarisation of settlement and cultivation were aspired. In this connection, *nkunka* appeared 'illegible and resistant to the narrow purposes of the state.'[1901] Colonial officials even convicted people in court for building and living in impermanent *nkunka*:

> I found the two accused living in "nkunkas", their wives were there – also their fowls and their possessions (…) I arrested them for living in the forest & building nkunka without permission – and took them to their village (…) I quite see that it is necessary for natives to protect their crops – but this is no excuse to desert their huts in the village & leave them for months in a filthy condition & allow grass to grow in them – which shows they must have been away for a long time.[1902]

Although discussions centred on the outward appearance of housing, the logic behind colonial spatial planning 'was at once aesthetic, scientific, and practical.'[1903] Rather than mere architecture, issues of control, order and authority were at stake. Housing 'improvement' was cast in a discourse of development and civilisation, encompassing such aims as hygiene and livelihood security.[1904] In promoting 'improved' and 'permanent' housing the underlying aim of the colonial state was to make

[1893] Kay, 'Social aspects of village regrouping', 3; Gordon, 'The abolition of the slave trade'.
[1894] This view is based on oral interviews, for example Headman Chinkonja, 13 August 2010, Kanongesha.
[1895] See: Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'; Miller, *Way of death.*
[1896] Turner, *Schism and continuity,* 104-5.
[1897] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* Chapter One.
[1898] Kay, 'Social aspects of village regrouping', 12.
[1899] J.C. Scott, *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed* (New Haven and London, 1998)*,* 81-2.
[1900] (NAZ) KSE6/1/2, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Lunda Sub-District Annual Report, 1913-14.
[1901] Scott, *Seeing like a state*, 224.
[1902] (NAZ) KSE3/2/2/7, Rex v. Shiwimbi, 17 January 1928.
[1903] Scott, *Seeing like a state*, 140.
[1904] Schneider, 'The Maasai's new clothes'; Scott, *Seeing like a state*, 188.

villages sedentary and legible so that they would be amenable to government control.[1905] Such attempts had a powerful aesthetic dimension, as 'the visual aesthetics of how a proper village should look combined elements of administrative regularity, tidiness, and legibility', linked to a particular representation of order.[1906] Sedentarisation and permanent housing, it was believed, would result in a disciplined and productive population, replacing the unruly mass of shifting cultivators so difficult to control. Permanent settlement would facilitate tax collection, spur agricultural production, waged labour, and would ultimately create governable citizens.[1907]

Officials did recognise that people could have specific reasons for shifting their settlements every so often, but nevertheless they continued to insist on permanence and administrative control:

> Some villages are well kept and have quite well built huts, whereas others are just collections of grass shelters which the builders would be at no great loss to leave (…) all are of very nomadic habits and although in many cases they have built good huts to live in and have made decent villages they are only too ready and anxious to shift their habitat. They have their own native reasons for shifting which to them are good enough but from an official point of view not adequate. Three years seems long for them to reside on one spot when having had a number of deaths in the village and having played out the surrounding land by their wretched method of kachai [finger millet] cultivation they crave to move and start lopping off timber in a new area and building again.[1908]

Even if officials connected improved housing to increased permanence of residence, the connection proved far from straightforward.[1909] A well-built house might be abandoned once residents moved to another site, in the same fashion as a less permanent house would be. Deep-rooted socio-cultural dispositions towards shifting settlements worked against the construction of brick houses.[1910] Nonetheless, the colonial administration persistently asserted the desirability of building more permanent houses, preferably in bricks, even if such attempts met with resistance:

> With a few, very few, exceptions there was a marked improvement in the appearance of the villages. They are beginning to look more prosperous. Having collected the scattered family groups I have been busy persuading them to build a better type hut (…) In some cases I have met rebuffs; take Nyachikanda for example: When asking this gentleman why he lives in such a miserable hut when the majority of his people had built themselves respectable houses, he said: 'If I live in my present hovel of grass and leaves; shall I someday die?' 'If I build a hut of wattle and daub; shall I someday die?' On receiving an answer to both these questions in the affirmative he naively said: 'Why then would I worry to build a good hut!'[1911]

Whilst the efficacy of government campaigns might have remained questionable initially, by the end of the 1940s a housing transition from mud to brick appeared to be in full swing:

> The general outline [of a village] is an open circular layout, which in some cases has been turned consciously into a square (...) Huts or houses fall into three categories: (1) Small wattle and daub huts, approximately 7' x 10', smaller than the average pigstie in the UK. These are not by any means temporary dwellings, found only in new villages, but some villages of many years standing are still entirely composed of them. (2) Medium sized huts, normally wattle and daub and often two-roomed approximately 11' x 17' in size – Most of the huts in established villages are of this type (...) a commendable effort is being made to build this type of hut in Kimberley brick in several villages (...) it appears that exhortation and incessant visits are having some effect. (3) Comparatively large Kimberley brick houses, of three rooms or more, of good construction (...) Besides the Chief, the only other Kimberley brick dwelling of four rooms belonged to a wealthy villager in an outlying area (...) It appears to be beyond the physical capacity of the normal householder to construct anything larger than the

[1905] See: Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees.*
[1906] Scott, *Seeing like a state*, 237.
[1907] Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees*; Scott, *Seeing like a state*; Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution.*
[1908] (NAZ) KSE6/2/1, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Lunda District Quarterly Report, 30 September 1916.
[1909] Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees;* Turner, *Schism and continuity.*
[1910] Turner, 'The spatial separation'.
[1911] (NAZ) KSE6/2/1, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Lunda District Quarterly Report, 30 September 1915.

> medium sized two room hut. For larger construction extra labourers are required, and that means money, which the ordinary villager has not got.[1912]

The transition from grass or wattle and daub housing to brick housing and the implications of this trend should be further explored.

The construction of sundried brick houses required considerable investment of time, labour and capital, yet officials still remarked that: 'The standard of house building in this District is amongst the highest in the Territory.'[1913] Connected to aspirations towards self-realisation, by the 1950s a transition to brick housing could be observed throughout the district:

> The general tendency to replace pole and dagga houses with Kimberley brick structures which has been noted in the past two years, is becoming increasingly pronounced in all areas. It appears that to own a well-built Kimberley brick house gives one almost as much added "face" as owning a bicycle does.[1914]

The shift towards sundried brick houses was clearly reflected in the 1963 census. By then, 50.5% of all houses in the North-Western Province were constructed in brick, whereas 49.5% remained wattle and daub.[1915] Building styles were not solely connected to issues of permanent residence, but had to do with status, hierarchy and power within the village community. Although constructing a large brick house could enhance the status of the owner, it could equally be a considerable expense. Making bricks, whether sundried or burnt, involved a long process. Brick housing required store-bought materials (glass for windows, doorframes, various metal accessories, etc.), access to (extra-household) labour and capital.[1916] Moreover, brick houses were not necessarily more permanent than well-built wattle and daub houses. Sundried bricks could be attacked by white ants, whereas roofing still had to be repaired regularly, especially if it was made of grass. Nevertheless, government officials connected brick housing to notions of 'permanence' and 'civilisation':

> We all know that there is a growing demand for better houses, as our country becomes more civilised. The standard of housing in an area establishes in the minds of visitors the degree of civilisation in that area (...) often well-built houses stand without doors or windows because the owner has insufficient funds to pay for the licences for his timber.[1917]

Even if constructing a brick house could involve a considerable expense of time, labour and material resources, brick housing gained popularity throughout Mwinilunga District because of the connections between housing and notions of status, wealth and self-realisation.[1918] The meaning of brick housing, however, did not conform to colonial expectations of permanence, civilisation and development, but was part of indigenous socio-cultural dispositions, relationships of power and hierarchy.[1919]

Although brick housing might radiate status and power within the community, resources and wealth were required to construct a brick house. Both productive resources and social power had to be mobilised to realise housing consumption. Labour migration, for example, could serve to meet the expenses of constructing a brick house.[1920] Returning migrant labourers might spend their savings on iron sheet roofing, or could commission a work party to construct a house on return from town. This might make labour migrants 'Big Men' who would enjoy respect and status in the village: 'a brick-built house plastered with cement and roofed with asbestos or iron sheets reflects urban success.'[1921] Furthermore, advancing aims of self-realisation, earnings from cash crop agriculture could be invested in house construction. Because housing carried an element of prestige, pineapple farmers would invest

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[1912] (BOD) Richard Cranmer Dening Papers, Mwinilunga District Tour Report No.6, 1947.
[1913] (NAZ) NWP1/2/105 Loc.4920, H.T. Bayldon, North-Western Province Annual Report, 1963.
[1914] (NAZ) NWP1/2/33, K. Duff-White, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 5 October 1950.
[1915] (NAZ) CO3/1/36, Final Report of the May/June 1963 Census of Africans.
[1916] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* Chapter Three.
[1917] (NAZ) North-Western Province, African Provincial Council, May 1958.
[1918] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*, Chapter Three.
[1919] Myers, 'Sticks and stones'.
[1920] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Safukah Kazomba, 28 April 2010, Nyakaseya.
[1921] Andersson, 'Reinterpreting the rural-urban connection', 99.

their profits in the construction of large brick houses.[1922] Status and prestige were inherently social and therefore one pineapple farmer constructed a brick house with ten rooms. Signalling that he was able to take care of his family, the owner of this large, well-built brick house gained standing in his community.[1923] The word for house, *itala*, is derived from the verb *tala*, to look at or to attract the regard of others.[1924] Personal achievement gained public expression through housing. That is why Chief London Ikelenge built a two-storey sundried brick house in the 1950s. Chief Ikelenge used his resources to build a large house, which enabled him to display his prestige and power, but also to accommodate his extended family and receive numerous guests.[1925] Housing, beyond serving as an expression of personhood and self-realisation, could enhance wealth in people by anchoring social relationships. The construction of a large house could attract the settlement of extended kin and even strangers, thereby enhancing the labour, resources and power of the house owner.[1926] It is this social dynamic that informed the construction of brick houses in the area of Mwinilunga.

The meaning of housing was contested and could easily be misinterpreted, though. With a sense of puzzlement, colonial officials remarked that: 'Size rather than quality still remains the African's ideal, however, no doubt from motives of prestige; and a large tumble down house is preferred to a small sound one.'[1927] Brick housing conferred more prestige than wattle and daub constructions, but nevertheless a large wattle and daub house could still form the centrepiece of a prosperous village and boost the status of its owner.[1928] The meaning of housing could be connected to chiefly authority. In discussions with colonial officials chiefs suggested that respectable housing was a requisite if chiefs wanted to gain recognition from and exert influence over the population. Especially because of the rising material wealth of labour migrants and emergent agricultural producers, chiefs sought to assert equality with – or preferably superiority over – their subjects in matters of housing. If they failed to do so the legitimacy of their power might be questioned:

> It is quite impossible for a Chief to maintain his position and influence among the emergent and sophisticated Africans if he is confined to a hovel. With these people prestige is largely derived from visible material wealth and a large house has a very considerable influence in this direction. The general trend is for improved housing and a higher standard of living.[1929]

Housing, status and authority were social and relational. Wealth in people was connected to wealth in goods, as chiefs sought to assert their authority and gain respect from their following by exposing material wealth in the form of housing. Some chiefs lacked the material resources or capacity to do so, and would make claims on the government to erect houses for them:

> The government should build houses for Chiefs (...) The Chiefs themselves were not able to do so, as they did not have the means (...) Many Chiefs lived in poor houses with the result that their standard of living was low.[1930]

Housing was connected to authority, power and wealth in people. The colonial and post-colonial government insisted on the construction of large and permanent houses for other purposes, though.

Both the colonial and the post-colonial government propagated housing 'improvement', as it was universally presented, as an adjunct towards permanent settlement and increased (agricultural) productivity. Colonial policies which aimed to eradicate shifting cultivation (slash-and-burn *chitemene* agriculture) were closely correlated to issues of order, control and raising agricultural productivity.[1931]

[1922] Peša, 'Buying pineapples', 277-8.
[1923] Interview with Mr Ngomi Kamafumbu, 8 March 2010, Ikelenge.
[1924] *Lunda-Ndembu dictionary.*
[1925] Interview with Mrs Yiness Ikelenge, 10 April 2010, Ikelenge; (NAZ) KSE4/1, Mwinilunga District Notebooks.
[1926] Turner, *Schism and continuity.*
[1927] (NAZ) NWP1/2/78 Loc.4913, F.R.G. Phillips, Mwinilunga District Annual Report, 1955.
[1928] Turner, *Schism and continuity.*
[1929] (NAZ) NWP1/3/2 Loc.4921, Provincial Commissioner Solwezi, 6 May 1960.
[1930] (NAZ) LGH5/4/12 Loc.3618, House of Chiefs, 12 July 1965.
[1931] Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees;* Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution*; Kay, 'Social aspects of village regrouping'.

Because 'shifting cultivation is an exceptionally complex and hence quite illegible form of agriculture', the state aimed 'to replace this illegible and potentially seditious space with permanent settlements and permanent (preferably monocropped) fields.'[1932] Failing to recognise the inherent logic of shifting fields and settlements in a fragile environment – the 'disorderly order' of a practice which could yield high returns – the colonial government advocated fixed settlements with permanent houses as 'superior' alternatives.[1933] In official discourse the connection between agricultural production, permanent settlement and housing was strongly established. In the 1940s officials asserted that: 'The progressive trend towards Kimberley brick houses was most noticeable. If shifting cultivation is remedied over the course of years, then more substantial houses will inevitably follow.'[1934] According to such reasoning, the trend towards permanent housing would inevitably entail higher agricultural productivity. In the 1950s it was noticed that: 'Mud and wattle houses are dying out rapidly with the general raising of the standard of living brought about, to a certain extent, by agricultural development.'[1935] Similar discourses have been replicated by the post-colonial state, especially in schemes such as Intensive Development Zones, where 'model villages' might function as centres for 'development'.[1936] After independence a strong connection between improved housing and 'modern life' was established. In official discourse housing became the hallmark of 'development' and was regarded as a fundamental right of citizens.[1937] Numerous loan schemes were set up by the post-colonial government, connecting housing to social welfare:

> The Ministry of Housing and Social Welfare was prepared to give out money to people in the rural areas to enable them to build better houses in model villages. The villages they had were not the villages needed in future. If people lived in these villages the Government would build schools, dispensaries, post offices, recreation centres.[1938]

Officials hoped that permanent houses in model villages would create a superior type of individual, earning money, producing for the market, educating his children and so on.[1939]

Housing was one of the first wishes brought forward by the population when asked to express themselves politically before and after independence. The construction of permanent houses was considered to be one of the most successful government schemes:

> The group housing scheme proved to be most significant in the activities of the department and met with an encouraging response from local communities in all provinces (...) in all cases, communities willingly contributed communal labour and available local resources.[1940]

By the 1970s the transition to brick housing was even described in terms of a 'revolution': 'The desire of the people to build permanent structures (…) has indeed become real in this Province (…) There is a complete rural village housing revolution.'[1941] Official discourse established the connection between housing, permanence and productivity more clearly than ever:

> We now know for certain that our communities are stable enough in the rural areas; they do not move their villages any time they feel to do so as was the case in the not too distant past, hence the need for permanent houses (…) Unless the rural areas are developed to a certain standard, we shall continue to have the present problem of rural population flocking to urban areas. One of the most important ways to stop this is to improve rural houses (…) It follows, therefore, that in such villages productivity in

[1932] Scott, *Seeing like a state*, 282.
[1933] Myers, 'Sticks and stones'.
[1934] (NAZ) SEC2/956, F.M.N. Heath, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 18 July 1948.
[1935] (NAZ) SEC2/962, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 20 August 1954.
[1936] K. Crehan and A. von Oppen (eds.), *Planners and history: Negotiating 'development' in rural Zambia* (Lusaka, 1994).
[1937] See: Ferguson, *Expectations of modernity.*
[1938] (NAZ) LGH5/1/3 Loc.3604, Mwinilunga Rural Council, 29 December 1964.
[1939] Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees,* 114-21; Crehan and Von Oppen, *Planners and history.*
[1940] (NAZ) Department of Community Development, 1965.
[1941] (NAZ) North-Western Province Department of Community Development, 1973.

> whatever venture by villagers, is higher than in certain disorganised villages with poor types of houses.[1942]

Housing practices regularly clashed with official discourses and intentions, as housing held multiple socio-economic, ritual and political meanings in Mwinilunga District.[1943] Residents would read equivocal meanings into housing which only rarely conformed to government policies. Much to the annoyance of the government, no clear-cut connection between housing and permanence or (agricultural) productivity could be established.[1944] Especially the increased appearance of farms in the 1940s and 1950s proved a nuisance to officials, who were puzzled by continuing 'impermanence':[1945]

> Even the building of Kimberley brick houses has failed to compete with Lunda instability, and one can see whole villages of abandoned Kimberley brick houses whose occupants have split up and moved on. The present strong tendency for individuals in this area to break away from villages and set up their own "farms" or individual settlements is an illustration of this. For a progressive individual living in a village has no assurance that he can stay there permanently.[1946]

Official policies failed to eradicate the impermanence of settlements, because they failed to comprehend the social logic and meaning of housing.[1947] Throughout the twentieth century individuals continued to shift their settlements contrary to government regulations.

Although the transition from grass and wattle and daub housing to brick housing did indeed accelerate from the 1950s onwards, the meaning attached to housing could not be ordained by government policy or economic imperative. Housing was and remained a fundamentally social act, establishing a connection between the individual and the village community.[1948] Housing was imbued with deeply rooted ritual, cultural and social meanings, conveying status, hierarchy and power. Through housing wealth in people was given physical expression. Even if individuals no longer live in large kin-based settlements, housing can still express interpersonal ties and therefore housing carries so much prestige. More important than its material expression, housing holds social meaning and this has remained imperative throughout the transition from grass and mud to brick housing.[1949] The construction of a well-built brick house went beyond reasons of ostentation. The underlying purpose and fundamental aim of house construction, both past and present, is for the owner of the house to become the focal point of a large and prosperous village. The 'prestige attached to living in a long-established village' could be considerable, exactly because of high rates of village fissure.[1950] Powerful individuals sought to give their names to such a village, so that their memory would endure even in afterlife. Therefore, 'when a village has become unquestionably established as a persistent social unit, the personal name of an outstanding headman tends to petrify into a title which is inherited by his successors.'[1951] Through housing a 'man is able to achieve a certain sense of immortality, to produce something which endures beyond his lifetime, to inscribe his name in a lasting, more permanent, way in the social life of his community.'[1952] The rationale behind and the desired end-result of investment in housing, was to attract kin and dependents, to build a large homestead. Housing remained connected to wealth in people.

Deviating from official intentions, the construction of brick houses did not automatically result in economic growth or in the emergence of nuclear families.[1953] Housing was invested with prior socio-

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[1942] (NAZ) National Literacy Gazette, 1972.
[1943] Turner, *Schism and continuity.*
[1944] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* Chapter Three.
[1945] Turner, *Schism and continuity,* 42-3.
[1946] (NAZ) LGH5/5/11 Loc.3621, C.M.N. White, Mwinilunga District Land Tenure report No.7, 1940.
[1947] Compare to: Myers, 'Sticks and stones'.
[1948] Turner, *Schism and continuity.*
[1949] Turner, 'The spatial separation'.
[1950] Turner, *Schism and continuity,* 104.
[1951] Turner, *Schism and continuity,* 105.
[1952] C. Piot, 'Of persons and things: Some reflections on African spheres of exchange', *Man* 26:3 (1991), 417.
[1953] Compare to: Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees.*

economic, cultural and ideological meaning, rather than being a clean slate onto which government officials could write their modernising discourse. By contesting official intentions, house owners negotiated their own lived environment.[1954] Housing is an ultimate means of self-realisation, as the house owner becomes the centre of a group of kin and dependents. Constructing a large house is therefore an act of social adulthood, entailing rights as well as obligations, potentialities as well as risks.[1955] Material wealth could be consolidated in housing, and with this wealth house owners could attract a large following, building wealth in people. The labour power which house owners thereby attracted might serve to expand (agricultural) production and create more wealth in future, setting a dynamic of growth in motion. Nevertheless, although brick houses did increasingly spread throughout the district, the habit of building in brick did not simply remedy shifting cultivation or create 'modern' individuals as officials had intended.[1956] In sum, housing should be viewed from its inherently social and relational logic, as a single house stands in relation to the other houses in the village. From this relational logic, housing can be seen as an expression of meaning, prestige and a tool towards self-realisation, building wealth in people.

Goods, people and wealth: The rationale of consumption

What has been suggested throughout the previous examples is that in order to access consumer goods, no matter whether these were locally produced or mass-manufactured and store-bought, it was necessary to mobilise resources. These resources could vary and change over time. Land, political authority and forms of currency could be deployed to gain access to goods.[1957] Yet human labour remained the chief productive resource, constituting the fundamental continuity in patterns of consumption in the area of Mwinilunga.[1958] One accessed wealth through people, by means of their labour, knowledge and skills: 'Wealth in money and things is just one aspect of a wider reality that also includes wealth in people.'[1959] The desired end-result of consumption, which might be defined as 'the articulation of the individual's social identity, and also a matter of social agency,'[1960] would be manifested in and through people, social relationships and social status.[1961] The connection between human labour power, consumption and wealth is particularly apparent in the case of local ironworking, as iron tools could only be produced through the protracted labour and expertise of smelters and smiths, whereas valued iron tools could subsequently be used to generate material wealth as well as wealth in people.[1962] Even in later periods, when goods would be purchased in village stores through the mediation of cash, labour remained indispensable. In order to earn money an individual would resort to labour migration or cash crop production, both highly labour intensive enterprises.[1963] No one individual could muster sufficient wealth in isolation, and therefore ties to other people would be valued and fostered. Wealth continues to be defined as people. Because 'ultimate value is placed on relationships', 'the conversion of things into relationships is a first and unquestioned principle of social life.'[1964] Forms of currency could mediate the connections between wealth, people and goods. By

[1954] Myers, 'Sticks and stones'.
[1955] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'; Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu,* Chapter Three.
[1956] Moore and Vaughan, *Cutting down trees.*
[1957] S.S. Berry, 'Social institutions and access to resources', *Africa* 59:1 (1989), 41-55.
[1958] This goes beyond the 'labour theory of value', encompassing social relationships and wealth in people. See: Parry and Bloch, *Money and the morality of exchange,* 4; Miller, *Way of death,* 40-1.
[1959] F. de Boeck, 'Borderland breccia: The mutant hero in the historical imagination of a Central African diamond frontier', *Journal of colonialism and colonial history* 1:2 (2000).
[1960] H.P. Hahn (ed.), *Consumption in Africa: Anthropological approaches* (Berlin, 2008), 10.
[1961] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'; Miller, *Way of death*.
[1962] Kriger, *Pride of men*; Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization', 254.
[1963] Turner, *Schism and continuity.*
[1964] Piot, 'Of persons and things', 417.

looking at the role of currencies in the area of Mwinilunga, the functions of exchange and the meaning of wealth might be elucidated.

To facilitate exchange, various forms of currency have circulated in the area of Mwinilunga throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Cloth, iron bars, beads and much more had simultaneously co-existed as a medium of exchange, standardised to various extents.[1965] In the opening decades of the twentieth century the colonial administration sought to supplant this multiplicity of currencies with a single general purpose currency, the British pound sterling. This monetary 'revolution' has been attributed profound and far-reaching consequences, both positive and negative.[1966] On the one hand money has been seen as destructive of kinship ties, promoting 'the growth of individualism and the destruction of solidary communities.'[1967] On the other hand, more positively, 'monetization is assumed to act as a catalyst to economic growth and structural change. By permitting (or compelling) people to participate in supra-local circuits of exchange, monetization promotes specialization and exchange and, hence, economic growth.'[1968] Money had both disruptive and constructive potentials in the area of Mwinilunga, playing a role in the development of local notions of accumulation, expenditure and wealth.[1969] Money, however, was not an autonomous or depersonalised force, but proved significant exactly because it was embedded in social relationships.[1970] The symbolism and meaning of money 'relates to culturally constructed notions of production, consumption, circulation and exchange.'[1971] In the 1950s Turner described the tendency towards monetisation with a sense of astonishment, noting:

> the extent to which money economy was replacing the traditional economy of barter and exchange. Marriage payments, for instance, formerly made in cloths, guns or small livestock, are now made in cash. Hoe- and axe-blades, once exchanged by blacksmiths for meat and vegetable produce, are now sold by them for money. Kin nowadays give each other presents of money as well as of fowls and cassava meal. Doctors and herbalists are paid in cash instead of in goods. Money economy, in fact, is penetrating into all the pores of social life.[1972]

This account reveals the intertwined nature of money and social relationships, connected to notions of wealth in people and self-realisation.[1973] Money could be used in social payments, for bridewealth or funeral expenses, to make gifts and could even serve as a payment for witchdoctors.[1974] Tracing the process of monetisation can reveal the sources and meanings of wealth, as well as the relationships circulated through them, exposing the connection between monetary wealth and wealth in people.

At the start of the twentieth century European observers, equipped with different values and cultural attitudes, exoticised Lunda use of money. Colonial officials assumed that Africans, supposedly accustomed only to barter and 'simple' exchange, would be unable to deal with British currency:[1975]

> To give an example with what a backward tribe we have to deal: When I was on tour recently along the Portuguese Border a headman brought to me a small basket of yams. I gave him a shilling. He looked at it suspiciously for some time, then asked: "What is this – a nose ornament?"!! It was explained that

[1965] See: Von Oppen, *Terms of trade;* Miller, *Way of death*; Gordon, 'The abolition of the slave trade'.
[1966] P. Bohannan, 'The impact of money on an African subsistence economy', *The journal of economic history* 19:4 (1959), 491-503; J.L.A. Webb Jr., 'Toward the comparative study of money: A reconsideration of West African currencies and neo-classical monetary concepts', *The international journal of African historical studies* 15:3 (1982), 455-66; Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution,* 166-217.
[1967] Parry and Bloch, *Money and the morality of exchange,* 4, refer to Simmel and Marx.
[1968] Berry, 'Stable prices, unstable values', 300.
[1969] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.
[1970] Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution,* 174-5.
[1971] Parry and Bloch, *Money and the morality of exchange,* 1.
[1972] Turner, 'Money economy', 19.
[1973] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.
[1974] See: Turner, *Schism and continuity.*
[1975] Compare to: Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution.*

> money was much sought after by his more enlightened brothers; he refused to believe it and asked for salt in exchange for his yams.[1976]

Nevertheless, forms of exchange in the area of Mwinilunga had been complex and market-oriented long before the advent of colonial rule.[1977] Numerous currencies, which could be standardised but were not fixed, existed side by side. In the 1850s Livingstone had noted that: 'The native traders generally carry salt and a few pieces of cloth, a few beads, and cartouches with iron balls.'[1978] Various items could function as a medium of exchange. Beads could be used to obtain salt, salt and beads could be used to settle affairs, whereas slaves could be redeemed with guns, cloth or beads.[1979] In case a woman died, her husband might give her relatives 'a pair of shorts, 8 yards of cloth and a cup, as compensation for the death of this woman.'[1980] Colonial officials remarked that: 'Beads are very popular amongst these people, and the smallest spoonful of beads obtains wonderful value in meal.'[1981] Items such as beads, shells, salt and cloth, as well as guns and iron bars could fulfil the monetary functions of standard of measurement, store of value, medium of exchange and means of payment.[1982] Arguably, it was exactly the co-existence of various forms of currency which enabled such high levels of economic enterprise during the pre-colonial period of long-distance trade.[1983] The fluidity and negotiability of multiple forms of currency enabled widespread exchange among all layers of society, promoting entrepreneurship and trade. The availability of multiple currencies could spread the risks of expressing wealth in terms of a single currency. Being sensitive to the vagaries of value fluctuations, single currencies proved prone to attempts at monopoly control by political elites or the state.[1984] In this context, multiple currencies as well as the diversification of income earning opportunities and means of access to wealth appeared particularly sound.

Assuming that monetisation would facilitate market interaction and promote economic growth, under colonial rule attempts were made to impose a single standardised currency to replace the previous multiplicity.[1985] In spite of benevolent rhetoric, British currency did not catch on immediately. In 1911 officials complained that: 'Cash is not yet in general use either for purchasing or payment of labour and in many instances is refused.'[1986] Staunchly convinced of the inherent superiority of British currency, colonial officials expressed no doubt that cash would be accepted sooner or later: 'When they [Lunda] have reaped the benefit of the stores and traded a little the idea of cash will not appear to them so dreadful.'[1987] Far from being an all-purpose currency from the outset, British currency remained highly restricted, being used only for the payment of taxes or the purchase of consumer goods.[1988] By 1960 it could still be remarked that: 'The economic necessity of obtaining the basics of existence does not arise and the only incentive for a local African to work is to pay his tax or to purchase a particular article which he requires.'[1989] Contrastingly, a survey conducted in the 1940s concluded that: 'The average villager appears to spend from 15/- to £3-0-0d per annum on consumer goods.'[1990] Over time monetary spending increased and cash gained a variety of uses. Discursively,

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[1976] (NAZ) KSE6/2/1, F.V. Bruce-Miller, Lunda District Quarterly Report, 30 September 1914.
[1977] Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*
[1978] Schapera, *Livingstone's African journal,* 121.
[1979] (NAZ) KSE3/1/2/1, Msangi v. Chingbwambu, 7 July 1912.
[1980] (NAZ) KSE3/2/2/7, Rex v. Nyaluhana, 8 June 1928.
[1981] (NAZ) KSE6/6/1, Captain Stennett, Balunda District Tour Report, 20 August 1909.
[1982] Webb Jr., 'Toward the comparative study of money', 457; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*
[1983] Miller, *Way of death*; Von Oppen, *Terms of trade.*
[1984] Berry, 'Stable prices, unstable values', 302, 309.
[1985] Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution*; Parry and Bloch, *Money and the morality of exchange.*
[1986] (NAZ) KSE6/1/1, G.A. MacGregor, Lunda District Annual Report, 31 March 1911.
[1987] (NAZ) KSE6/6/1, J.M. Pound, Balunda District Tour Report, 30 September 1910.
[1988] Compare to: Guyer, *Money matters.*
[1989] (NAZ) NWP1/2/90 Loc.4916, Labour in Mwinilunga, Reports and Returns, 1961.
[1990] (NAZ) SEC2/955, F.M.N. Heath, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 16 November 1947.

officials linked monetisation to 'development'.[1991] Trading activities, especially the marketing of agricultural produce, would 'provide the African with ready cash in his pocket for the purchase of consumer goods (…) bringing about a general raising of the social standards of the people.'[1992] Yet the connection between monetisation and economic development proved far from straightforward. Rather than productively investing their earnings, individuals would engage in conspicuous consumption, spending money immediately and – according to colonial officials – irrationally.[1993] By the 1940s officials complained that: 'natives are still unable to forego the lure of ready cash in spite of the threat of hunger or famine.'[1994] Money, appearing to hold an inherent attraction, was even said to be 'a necessity to the welfare of man nowadays.'[1995] Money became so widespread and attractive because it could provide access to store-bought goods, such as soap, paraffin, matches, candles, cooking oil, salt, sugar, clothing and blankets. The desirability of both money and store-bought goods can only be understood by looking at the social logics of consumption.[1996] Wealth cannot be equated to money, as notions of wealth are not universal but are rather informed by a specific socio-cultural and political context.[1997] Notions of wealth in Mwinilunga can only be understood by linking consumption to social relationships, hierarchies of status and aspirations towards self-realisation.[1998]

Connections between money, consumer goods and social relationships have been asserted in theory and practice.[1999] Within a capitalist economy, money enabled access to consumer goods. Productive activities such as cash crop agriculture or labour migration might generate material wealth, making cloth and brick houses quotidian items of consumption rather than luxury goods.[2000] Economic theory has connected monetisation and consumption to processes of individualisation and the destruction of social solidarity.[2001] Turner argued similarly in the 1950s:

> Wherever our kind of Western individualism crops up in Central Africa (…) men plunge into the struggle to earn and save cash for the new goods and prestige symbols that money can buy. To save money they must break the corporate kinship nexus; for in the old order of society, that which a man acquires, he must share out among his kin and neighbours. He cannot both save and distribute money. Thus, the crucial value attached to corporateness is rejected, and with it go many other values and obligations; frankness between group members, comradeship in adversity, mutual generosity and reciprocity (…) As one Ndembu put it to me, 'For Europeans, things are more important than people, for us, people are more important than things.' But Africans are rapidly becoming more 'Europeanized' in this sense.[2002]

Yet the trend towards individualisation did not appear clear-cut. Connections between consumer goods, wealth and people proved complex and enduring.

In most cases material wealth continued 'to be used to gain control over people, as well as vice versa, and exchange remains closely tied to the definition of social identities.'[2003] Money could be used to realise and strengthen social relationships.[2004] Money could be converted into consumer goods and

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[1991] See: Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution,* 171-2.

[1992] (NAZ) NWP1/2/65 Loc.4910, R.S. Thompson, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 19 November 1954.

[1993] See: M. Prowse, 'Becoming a bwana and burley tobacco in the Central Region of Malawi', *Journal of modern African studies* 47:4 (2009), 575-602, for the rationale behind conspicuous consumption.

[1994] (NAZ) SEC2/957, Mr. Sanford, Comment, 1940.

[1995] (NAZ) North-Western Province African Provincial Council, June 1954.

[1996] Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life,* 'Introduction'.

[1997] J. Ferguson, 'The cultural topography of wealth: Commodity paths and the structure of property in rural Lesotho', *American anthropologist* 94:1 (1992), 55-73.

[1998] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.

[1999] Piot, 'Of persons and things'; J. Friedman, 'Consuming desires: Strategies of selfhood and appropriation', *Cultural anthropology* 6:2 (1991), 154-63.

[2000] Burke, *Lifebuoy men.*

[2001] Parry and Bloch, *Money and the morality of exchange.*

[2002] V.W. Turner, *The drums of affliction: A study of religious processes among the Ndembu of Zambia* (Oxford, 1968), 22-3.

[2003] Berry, 'Stable prices, unstable values', 305.

[2004] Barber, 'Money, self-realization and the person'.

personal allegiance: 'Mulepa was more pleased with 3 cigarettes than with the 10/- apparently! I don't blame him, money to him – except with great pawns – only means payment of hut tax or calico for his wives.'[2005] Through money wealth in people could be enacted, as the purchase and distribution of cloth could attract human allegiance and could serve to build a large and prosperous household, in turn enhancing labour power and productive resources.[2006] Inherently social, money could be distinctly enabling: 'money is what *constitutes* social relationships and indeed social being (…) [money] is conceived of as constitutive of individual self-realization (…) money is inseparable from the social regard and the social bonds that support the successful individual.'[2007] Rather than being flaunted, money could be used in productive ways. Money could serve to build social personhood and prestige, attract a large following and thereby enhance productive and reproductive capacities.[2008] Instead of squandering earnings, people could deploy money in socially meaningful and productive ways: 'One Ishimo, a trader and an active man, has in fact opted to use his money and energy within the framework of his home village, and is running for the headmanship.'[2009] In a social and relational setting, wealthy individuals could use money to gain political power and thereby further their assets. Even after independence and in the sphere of formal politics, money continued to be used to attract human allegiance. Within the logic of neo-patrimonialism government funds would be handed out to win support and votes for the ruling party.[2010] Whereas loans would exclusively be given out to UNIP members, they would be denied to ANC supporters.[2011] The connection between money and social relationships, between wealth and self-realisation thus appeared compelling and even natural.

Self-realisation had been a long-established goal in the area of Mwinilunga, involving the development of personhood, the promotion of social status as well as interactions between wealth and people.[2012] Individuals could obtain social recognition and prestige through a multitude of channels, for example through hunting, ironworking, labour migration or by becoming a headman of a large prosperous village. Social adulthood, which could be achieved to varying degrees, was a process.[2013] Through a number of steps, involving continuous hard work and participation in the life of the broader community, well-being and prestige could increase. Wealth was connected to notions of fertility, procreation and social relationships:

> In Luunda land new sources and forms of material wealth, introduced from the outside in the form of new commodities as well as money, have always been incorporated into a wider notion of fecundity in terms of physical health and social and physical reproduction (in relation to agriculture, hunting and reproductive sexuality).[2014]

Wealth was social, rather than purely material. A wealthy man did not only possess much cloth, but above all had many children. *Chikoli*, a ritual to promote prosperity, good health and strength, centred on the *katochi* tree, which symbolised 'many children' due to its numerous roots.[2015] Contrastingly, barrenness was perhaps the most severe form of social destitution.[2016] Wealth and social relationships

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[2005] (BOD) Mss Afr S 776, Theodore Williams Diary, 23 January 1913

[2006] Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'.

[2007] Barber, 'Money, self-realization and the person', 207.

[2008] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.

[2009] (NAZ) SEC2/966, W.D. Grant, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, 21 April 1959.

[2010] See: M. Leenstra, *Beyond the façade: Instrumentalisation of the Zambian health sector* (Leiden, 2012); Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life,* 8-9.

[2011] (NAZ) LGH5/2/7 Loc.3612, J. Chindefu to H. Kikombe, 23 February 1966; See also Chapter 3A.

[2012] See: De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'; De Boeck, 'Borderland breccia'.

[2013] Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'; See: Turner, *Schism and continuity.*

[2014] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars', 784.

[2015] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Maladi, 16 May 2010, Nyakaseya; *Lunda-Ndembu dictionary.*

[2016] See: Turner, *Drums of affliction,* for fertility rituals aimed to prevent barrenness, such as *nkula* and *wubwangu*. Turner, 'The spatial separation', 136, describes how a man's: 'reputation as a sorcerer appears to

were connected in terms of life-giving reciprocity. In order to become a wealthy 'Big Man' a person had to share with his kin, neighbours and friends. Being selfish or self-centred (denoted by the verbs *dikokweja* and *dikokela*, or the noun *chifwa*) involved averting others, evoking a state of isolation which might even cause death (*kokweja*, attract others by kindness; *kokela*, draw towards, attract; *fwa*, die, be broken, be unconscious). Contrastingly, a person with *kashinshi* (thoroughness, reliability, responsibility, trustworthiness) and *kavumbi* (good manners, courtesy, self-respect) would be highly valued, exactly because these personal attributes were inherently social, relational and reciprocal.[2017] The selfish accumulation of wealth was associated with blockage and sorcery, because goods had to flow through social relationships. One wealthy pineapple farmer, for example, was attacked by an *ilomba* (mythical snake, familiar spirit connected to witchcraft), because he failed to share his profit among kin. He faced hardship, misfortune and bad luck, because he had built a large house for his nuclear family in isolation from others.[2018] Individuals engaging in selfish accumulation thus risk being ostracised, because wealth is understood as social, marked by solidarity and reciprocity.

Neither goods nor money created wealth in and of themselves. Rather, goods and money could be a means to become a person. One could generate wealth and realise one's full potential only by becoming the centrepiece of a community of friends, kin or of a village.[2019] A fundamentally social process, this could provide prospects of prosperity and good luck, but equally entailed responsibilities:

> The more one becomes the focus of the social life of the kin group, the more one is given respect, but the more, also, one becomes responsible for the redistribution and sharing of the goods that circulate in the kin group.[2020]

To be respected (*kalemesha*, respectfulness; *lemesha*, to glorify, esteem, honour) involved a heavy duty and hard work (*lema*, to be heavy, important, valuable). Yet hard work paid, because it enabled the expansion of productive and reproductive capacities, through access to the labour power of dependents.[2021] Although not necessarily within a capitalist logic, this ushered an expansive dynamic of goods and people. Goods, which increasingly became available and affordable through emergent village stores, could serve to gain human allegiance, which would in turn expand productive capacities and could thereby further enhance access to goods.[2022] The attraction of goods can be explained by reference to their social capacity to convey distinction, status, hierarchy and ultimately power. This also explains the motivation to acquire goods by engaging in productive activities, or consumptive production.[2023] The relational implications of goods proved paramount. Power relations, hierarchies and the meaning of goods did change over time, though. Throughout the pre-colonial period the consumption of luxury goods was still largely confined to the top of the political hierarchy, as the limited supply of imported goods was controlled by headmen and traders. Similarly, the production of iron tools was limited by access to natural resources and the labour power of blacksmiths, making goods scarce and precious and limiting their consumptive circulation. Under colonial rule and after independence, consumer goods increasingly started to defy pre-existing boundaries, as industrial manufacturing and trade enabled access to a greatly enlarged flow of goods. This access broadened the potential avenues towards self-realisation, beyond the control of headmen, hunters or ironworkers. Power could be accessed through a multiplicity of channels and could be derived from a

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have been assisted by the fact that although he married eight times (and was divorced five times and widowed once) he had no children.'

[2017] This view is based on numerous oral interviews, for example Mr Justin Kambidima, September 2010, Ntambu; *Lunda-Ndembu dictionary*; Turner, *Schism and continuity*; De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.

[2018] Interview with Mr Aaron Chikewa, 27 April 2010, Nyakaseya; His current short height is attributed to witchcraft.

[2019] Turner, *Schism and continuity;* Pritchett, *Friends for life.*

[2020] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars', 794.

[2021] Pritchett, *Lunda-Ndembu*; De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.

[2022] Miller, *Way of death;* Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'.

[2023] Piot, 'Of persons and things', 411, Quoting C.A. Gregory, *Gifts and commodities* (New York, 1982).

multiplicity of sources, but wealth and power continued to be thoroughly vested in people and social relationships.[2024]

In this setting, consumption revolved around the human factor. Consumption did not lead to a dependence on the market.[2025] Although consumer goods were indeed predominantly accessed through the market, their value was expressed in personal and relational, rather than strictly monetary terms. Goods proved meaningful because they could advance goals of self-realisation, further personhood and enable the composition of singular personalities.[2026] Far from promoting an individualising tendency, money and wealth were thoroughly related to people:

> Creating allegiances may no longer have been the primary purpose of holding material wealth, but remained a necessary condition for acquiring and controlling it. Accordingly, wealth continued to be invested in building allegiances and maintaining the social relationships and institutions that sustain them.[2027]

Although there has been a transition from locally produced to mass-manufactured store-bought goods over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the area of Mwinilunga, this transition has not necessarily caused a radical transformation of society.[2028] The underlying motive for the acquisition of goods was and continued to be the social and relational potential of objects. Even if it has been realised in historically diverse ways, the goal of building wealth in people through consumption has endured in Mwinilunga District.

Conclusion

Although a transition from locally produced to store-bought goods has occurred throughout Mwinilunga District, this transition did not signal a major rupture in notions of wealth or social relationships. The outward appearance of goods did change, but this did not signify a 'consumer revolution', as objects continued to be used to forge inter-personal relationships, for purposes of prestige and to express hierarchy. Through a broadened access to goods during the twentieth century avenues towards self-realisation were opened up and diversified, but the ultimate goal remained to become the head of a large and prosperous household. Goods did not primarily hold meaning in themselves, but were valued because of their potential to forge ties with other people. Goods could serve to build social personhood, express status and hierarchy, attract a large following and thereby enhance productive and reproductive capacities. The continuity in patterns of consumption in Mwinilunga District lies in this connection between goods, wealth and people, between money, consumption and social relationships.

Within modernising narratives, consumption, money and the market economy have been afforded profound transformative potential. Through access to consumer goods, individuals might be turned into profit oriented 'modern' consumers.[2029] In the area of Mwinilunga the outward appearance of consumer goods indeed underwent major change. Nonetheless, goods, whether imported or locally produced, were appropriated and invested with meaning within the local setting. Although consumption has been linked to processes of globalisation and Westernisation, homogenisation did not ensue.[2030] The production of meaning continued to be a specific local process. Consumer goods possess a certain plasticity, being 'reimagined and refashioned in their circulation.'[2031] In the area of Mwinilunga goods hold social meaning and can be used as a means of self-realisation within the

[2024] See: Gordon, 'Wearing cloth'; Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'; De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'.
[2025] Parry and Bloch, *Money and the morality of exchange,* 1-7.
[2026] De Boeck, 'Domesticating diamonds and dollars'; Guyer, 'Wealth in people and self-realization'.
[2027] Berry, 'Stable prices, unstable values', 307.
[2028] See contributions to: Ross, Hinfelaar and Peša, *The objects of life.*
[2029] See: Parry and Bloch, *Money and the morality of exchange*; Comaroff, *Of revelation and revolution.*
[2030] Burke, 'Unexpected subversions', 481.
[2031] Prestholdt, 'Africa and the global lives of things', 89.

framework of wealth in people. Goods have been appropriated as a means to gain access to people, and although the external manifestation of consumer goods has changed, the underlying motives for consumption have remained far more constant. Premised on the value of social relationships, consumers in Mwinilunga have developed unique patterns of consumption. In the next chapter, the dynamics of social relationships will be further explored.

4.1: A grass *nkunka* used during female initiation
Source: (NAZ) KSE4/1, Mwinilunga District Notebooks

4.2: Thomas Kapita, a trader, in front of his Kimberley brick house
Source: (NAZ) SEC2/964, Mwinilunga District Tour Report, Accompanying Photographs