

## **Abstract**

This paper, based on anthropological field research in Lusaka, Zambia, first in 1971-72 and again in 1981, concerns the sexual divisions of the labor force and the system of social reproduction that reinforces the expectations and behavior patterns of women and men. While race and gender were dominant in shaping a person's work prospects during the colonial period, factors such as regional background, ethnicity, class, education, and religion also affected the terms on which an individual entered the labor force. They continue to do so today. Each person's job position represents the impact of a combination of these factors, without one alone being determinant. Yet, even within the constraints of these factors people make choices. Such choices come to differ as the labor market changes and as institutions and role expectations become altered. How these factors intersect cannot be disaggregated from statistical sources. Indeed in Zambia very little, if any, can be read from official statistical sources, as employment figures were not broken down by sex until the first census taken after independence. This paper introduces the "work history," an extended interview topically oriented to retrieve details about the interaction of home work and petty trade with wage work. Illustrations of such "work histories" collected from the same women in 1971-72 and 1981 are included. The source material in these "work histories" provides an opportunity for a dynamic analysis of how, when, and why women have played different roles in Lusaka's changing economy. They thus help correct the static view of Lusaka's labor force as a male institution against which women's opportunities have been negatively measured.

## **About the Author**

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# **"The Work History": Disaggregating the Changing Terms of Poor Women's Entry into Lusaka's Labor Force**

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## "THE WORK HISTORY": DISAGGREGATING THE CHANGING TERMS OF POOR WOMEN'S ENTRY INTO LUSAKA'S LABOR FORCE

### Introduction

This paper adds to a research tradition which continues to reveal inequalities between women's and men's productive opportunities in rural as well as urban Africa (Boserup 1970; Meillassoux 1981; Nelson 1981). It concerns poor women's lack of wage labor prospects in Zambia, particularly in Lusaka in the 1970's. Briefly, my thesis is this: although these women's wage labor participation increased only slightly over the last decade, and although most of them structure their activities around the needs of their households as women presumably always have done, they nevertheless do so as a result of a changed combination of factors; therefore, for explanatory purposes, what these women do today needs to be accounted for differently.

This growing inequality in the division of labor by gender is conditioned and shaped by a complex combination of forces belonging to such disparate domains as economy, polity, and culture. Since these forces pertain to different domains and are not synchronized in time and space, they complicate research and lessen the explanatory power of comparative cross-cultural studies of the role of gender in the changing division of labor.

The unidimensional approach to comparative analysis may be corrected in various ways. Demonstrating the use of a comparative historical approach, Jane Guyer recently suggested an alternative (1980). In her analysis of why the different divisions of labor by gender in two pre-colonial rural West African societies tended to change in the same direction with the adoption of cash cropping during the colonial period, she proposed that similar carefully circumscribed comparisons offer one way of holding some of the possible determinants constant while exploring the full interrelationship of others (1980:373).

This paper, taking up Guyer's suggestion in slightly altered form, attempts a modest historical comparison of the same population segment, but studied at two different points in time. It concerns a low-income settlement in Lusaka, studied 1971-72 and again in 1981,<sup>1</sup> and it seeks to disaggregate the combined effects of factors which shape married women's work participation.

The old adage, plus ça change, plus ça ne change pas, does not hold true for poor women and their work in Zambia. The demonstration of this claim is linked to an analytical concern of giving a central role to the human actor. While at one level of analysis I have myself in previous work described the women I studied as appendages to their men (Hansen 1975), there is a need to clarify what this means at another conceptual level, that of the woman actor who makes decisions and makes choices about her activities. For although the social relations of her society are governed by structures and forces outside of her particular locality, she is an

individual who makes conscious decisions and who thus also shapes, to some degree, those very relations.

To demonstrate how the individual actor may be brought back into analysis, I suggest an approach which I term the work history, which combines data from direct observation and extended interviews, topically oriented to retrieving details about the relationship of housework to trade and wage work.<sup>2</sup> Before sketching the work history, the explanatory background is discussed and the stage is set in time. The latter is presented in some detail as an outline of women's urban wage labor opportunities prior to and after Zambia's independence in 1964. Next follow general socio-economic descriptions, which show the women's background and the broad categories of their work involvement for each of the two points in time of the research. They are based on sample surveys from which I have drawn straight-forward patterns. While displaying trends, this body of data hardly allows insights into the complex interrelationship between the many factors that influence what women do in economic terms. In contrast, this information can be gleaned from the work history. How work histories were compiled is discussed; some are presented and interpreted in the light of the argument made at the beginning of this paper. In the conclusions I briefly suggest some theoretical implications of my findings for the question of how to explain gender and class inequality in Zambia.

#### Choice and the human actor

The question of where conceptually to situate the individual is a prominent concern to social anthropology.<sup>3</sup> Several ways of studying human action have been proposed, often in reaction against or as complements to perceived deficiencies of prevalent explanatory frameworks. One of the better known attempts is the use of what is known as situational analysis. As variously elaborated by Max Gluckman (1940) and his colleagues (Mitchell 1956; Turner 1957; van Velsen 1964), this method offered new insights into how the flux of social life in rural and urban Central Africa in the 1940s and 1950s was patterned, and it helped mend the overly static and highly abstracted analysis of society, its groups, and institutions, produced by old-style structural-functionalism. Complementing it, situational analysis brought to the fore a methodological space within which to account for the variable, often contradictory, behavior of individuals.

Related notions of a degree of freedom to maneuver were elaborated in explanatory frameworks of social exchange and transaction for use in analyses of the dynamic roles of individuals who make instrumental choices among alternatives. Exemplified by Frederik Barth's formulation, the existence of social forms and institutions is not taken as granted prior to analysis but, rather, explained as results generated through purposeful transactions between individuals (1966).

Barth's conceptualisation includes an obvious referent to game theory which in turn has informed other explanatory attempts at using formal calculations of economic rationality in anthropological analysis (Salisbury

1968). Noting that "real life choices seldom approximate optimality," Michael Chibnik in a study of wage labor and cash cropping in rural Belize recently argued for and showed how the factor of choice may be accounted for in statistical analysis of the relationship between observed characteristics of male economic actors and the decisions they actually make (1980:86).

The general applicability of his approach, however, seems limited. There are corresponding but hardly similar constraints on urban women's work choices and on the way in which work is undertaken, which, as far as low-income Zambia is concerned, makes housework their monopoly and restricts them from many wage labor occupations.

While recognizing the importance of choice and decision-making, these approaches do not fully come to terms with the question of change posed in this paper. All of the approaches sketched above allow process to enter into analysis, but they do so at the situational level rather than at that of structural change. Local ramifications of changes in the overall structure of society need to be accounted for as well. This task, in much of the last decade's research on growing inequality in Africa whether based on class and/or gender, has been attempted by means of explanatory frameworks using notions of economic dependence (Amin 1976; Bryceson 1980; Etienne 1980; Murray 1981; Remy 1975). Various brands of the dependency paradigm have attributed inequality to external politico-economic forces which set into motion local dynamics at the level of broad categories, be they classes, segments, fractions, proletarians, or peasants.

The dependency paradigm offers a welcome corrective to explanations which uncritically attribute inequality to factors embedded in, or derivative from, local indigenous practices of a frozen timeframe called tradition. Yet it may be faulted on other accounts. Its two major weaknesses, for the present purpose, concern the undifferentiated level at which explanations are framed, thus eluding the conscious human actor, and the unspecified time scope within which they operate. These deficiencies are being widely debated across the social sciences,<sup>4</sup> within which one of the most stimulating intellectual currents has been to place the human actor on center stage (Bourdieu 1976, 1977). Equally inciting are recent attempts by anthropologists to give the time factor a central role in analysis (Comaroff 1982; Guyer 1980, 1982; van Binsbergen 1981). While such attempts may help restore the empirical canvas, they also have theoretical implications for our understanding of the roles of class and gender in the ongoing process of change in urban Africa and elsewhere.

### Women and work in the colonial city

Empirically, the data needed to answer questions about evolving patterns in urban women's economic activity in Zambia are not always available. The colonial authorities' concern to create a readily available male labor force for manual work on white farms and in mines and to service the needs of the dominating groups in the growing towns is conspicuous in the irregularly taken censuses of which few categorized work by sex. It therefore becomes

difficult not to emphasize the restrictive impact which colonial policy on labor and urban administration must have had on women's opportunities. Although it crudely telescopes the complexity of the processes involved, a brief outline may suffice for the purpose of this paper.

Colonial laws and ordinances on taxation, reserves, townships and municipalities, urban employment, wages and housing -- taken together -- certainly produced an urban wage labor force predominantly comprised of men (Heisler 1974). When women's unequal access to education (Snelson 1970:162-63, 214-16, 242-43) and the various socio-cultural expectations that colored women's and men's views about their roles vis-a-vis one another are added to the above factors, the overall characterization becomes one that stresses women's unequal exposure to town life and white mannerisms. In the same vein, the towns become places characterized by uneven sex ratios where, for a good part of the colonial period, men during the time of their work contracts lived dormitory style in employer-provided housing away from white residential areas. Until the mid-1940s, wages were pegged at the level of farmhands and remained at this level for unskilled workers on the mines as late as 1953 (Harries-Jones 1977:141). As a result, a spatial division of labor by gender was established in which men were the urban wage workers and women the peasant reproducers of migrant labor power (Cliffe 1978; Palmer and Parsons 1977). For a long time this combination of factors restricted women's entry to towns and thus curtailed their access to wage labor. Nonetheless, from the early decades of this century, women migrated to the line-of-rail towns (alone or in the company of men) and to the north when the coppertowns began growing in the late 1920s. While in the post World War II economic boom, when the most restrictive legal ordinances were lessened and urban family quarters were provided for some married workers to stabilize urban livelihoods and thus increase productivity, women still largely remained outside of the urban wage labor force. The Annual Reports (published from 1940 through independence) of the colonial labor departments contain frequent references to the "idle" and "lazy" existence of these married women in towns (1948:7; 1949:14).

Colonial wisdom reflected the needs of the economy. When labor shortages in the post-war and early 1950s hit all kinds of industries, the government, for the first time, showed interest in the urban female labor reserve. This is reflected in the Annual Reports in which the years 1951-57 provide the only time-slice with an employment breakdown by sex. This short period of time spans the climax of the post-war economic boom and its subsequent bust, the consequences of which were felt particularly in Lusaka. Many of the city's administrative and service functions were moved to Salisbury, which had been the administrative headquarters for the Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland since 1953.

Colonial authorities took a changed interest in African women during the late 1940s and early 1950s. They now argued that women were needed in domestic service to release men for employment elsewhere (Annual Reports 1949:8; 14). Throughout the colonial period domestic service was second

only to mining as an urban source of income in terms of numbers of Africans employed. Away from the mining towns in cities such as Lusaka, most persons earning wages were domestic servants and most of them were men.

Table 1 gives the 1951-57 employment breakdown. The 1951 figure for women domestic servants (250) must be viewed with circumspection since the 1946 census lists a total of 589 women domestic servants (1946-Census 1949:72). Assuming the latter figure to be more reliable, the numbers of women domestic servants barely changed during this period, which would indicate the government's lack of success in recruiting women into this occupation. For this, African men's unwillingness to allow their women to work outside the home was offered as a recurring explanation (Annual Reports 1950:20; 1951:22; 1953:18). Such statements, which merely beg the question, hardly explain the sudden increase of women domestic servants after independence.

Table 1 also indicates that while the government was unsuccessful in making women enter the ranks of domestic servants, they had better luck in turning out women teachers, nurses, and welfare assistants. Women in these occupations were employed by the government, municipalities, local authorities, and the mines (and are contained within those categories in Table 1). The period of the 1950s had seen a slow change in the nature of the official ideological discourse on race, from one which jurally placed Africans in subordinate positions to one that gradually allowed them limited civil rights and some specialized occupational and professional training.<sup>5</sup> Now, under schemes for African advancement, more teachers' training programs were opened up, and municipalities and mines expanded the variety of vocational and training courses for the rapidly growing urban population.<sup>6</sup>

As the "winds of change" were sweeping also through this part of Africa, the new opportunities that were provided to African women along lines of training and the professions placed, on the one hand, a minority in such nurturing occupations as teaching, nursing, and welfare work, and aimed in general, on the other, to instill in them western-derived standards of housewifery and the "house-proud" complex (Gwilliam and Read 1949:8). These standards distorted the degree of interdependence which had existed between women's reproductive and productive work in rural households before the labor migration process had been set into motion. The socio-economic assignment of gender roles in the labor force also changed qualitatively for men. With the demise of the Federation within view, African male clerks began to replace white women in bureaus and offices and to attend to customers in shops (Annual Reports 1959:1; 1960:1). Taken together, these policies concealed a new accentuation on the cleavage between urban women's and men's productive roles.

Descriptive in nature with aggregate illustrations, the preceding discussions shows that race and gender were dominant in shaping work prospects during the colonial period, but it reveals little about the many thousand urban workers from whose work experience these observations are

combined to expose a changing pattern of gender inequality in work participation. Ethnicity, regional background,<sup>7</sup> education, and religion also affected the terms under which workers entered the labor force, and the timing of their entry was influenced as well by age, marital status, stage in their households' developmental cycle, and by the state of the economy. All of these people's job positions thus represent different combinations of these various factors, without any one factor being determinant.

Choice must have been a factor too, though little can be inferred about it from the studies undertaken during that period. Alleged laziness apart, the official reports contain only a few references to urban women's economic activities, and the Copperbelt research -- undertaken by anthropologists associated with the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute during this period -- gives only scattered information on how single urban women gained an income and on whether married women undertook productive work to supplement their husbands' substandard wages. In a belated publication based on his research in Ndola in the 1950s, Epstein (1981) in his discussion of the domestic domain finally introduces us to some women's plans and choices concerning economic activity and their relations to children, parents, husbands, and lovers. Chauncey offers additional details from the early decades of this century through the 1950s, a time when women's presence in towns was not particularly desired by the colonial government. In his fascinating study of this brief historical moment, he showed that workers were allowed to bring wives and dependents to the mining compounds before this practice became official government policy. Because of their overall scarcity, some urban women were able to gain incomes from selling beer, garden produce, and sex, and with their money they asserted more independence from both men and mines than had been expected (1981:135-64). Making the most out of their economic freedom, some of these women avoided the new gender role of house-proud housewife, preferring temporary unions or the single state. Some women were so successful that they could hire men to work their garden plots (1981:151). Although the companies responded by restricting the scope of such activities, Chauncey's study reveals that some women made choices so as to avoid the role of housewife in the changed division of labor in the urban household.

#### Work opportunity after independence

To retain the colonial legacy as the only backdrop for analysis of wage labor opportunities after independence is misleading. New local dynamics induced by post-colonial economic and political developments are a work in restructuring women's and men's opportunities and in setting different limits around their choices.

Among the new significant forces is the population factor. At independence, the restrictive legislation on rural-urban migration was dismantled. Given the high population growth rate and the unprecedented influx to towns of rural people among whom women were now in the majority (Jackman 1973:17),<sup>8</sup> urban wage labor opportunities were sought by greater numbers of women and men. From a population of 127,704 on the eve



of independence in 1963, Lusaka's size doubled to 267,425 in 1969 and again to 538,469 in 1980 (1980-Census 1981:10). And its sex ratios evened out from 123 men per 100 women in 1969 to 101 men per 100 women in 1980 (Jackman 1973:17; 1980-Census 1981:6).

Because of inconsistent enumerations, urban employment was not categorized by gender in the 1961 and 1963 censuses.<sup>9</sup> A comparison of the 1956 and 1969 censuses reveals that there were 62 men wage employees to every one woman in Lusaka in 1956 and ten to one in 1969 (1956-Census 1960:166; Fry 1979:57). The apparent increase in women's wage labor participation (as indicated in Table 2) fades in light of the now larger urban female population. Men continued to outweigh women in wage employment over an eight-year time span straddling the late colonial and early independence period. Relative changes in the occupational distribution of those women counted as wage employed are perhaps more conspicuous. Given their now greater proportion of the urban population, women's employment in local government, community work, health, and education appears to have declined since 1957, while at the same time it increased somewhat in manufacture and accelerated in domestic service. Unfortunately, government employment is not included in the sources from which Table 2 is derived. More work opportunities in government opened up as the country set about expanding the civil-governmental structure and Zambianizing jobs previously held by expatriates. These changes offered new prospects especially for the first cohort of women who had benefited from the post-colonial expanse of the educational system. Lusaka's "new women" described by Ilsa Schuster (1979) are part of a tiny segment of well-educated women among whom some gained employment in junior positions in administrative offices. But most of Lusaka's women were unable to take hold of such opportunities (Hansen 1980a). The wage labor prospects for those who were poor and had little education steadily changed for the worse throughout the 1970s.

Socio-political and economic developments in Zambia over the last decade are some of the other factors that have adversely affected poor women's wage labor prospects (Tordoff 1980; Turok 1979). An important one to include in the present discussion is the overall economic slowdown which followed in the wake of the 1970s fluctuating and mostly declining world market copper prices. When overall employment stagnated in the mid-1970s, the government sector and domestic service remained the two sources of wage income in which employment continued to grow.

Earnings from the sale of copper remained the chief source of both export and domestic revenues, since the economy had barely diversified after independence. In the absence of needed revenues the country has become increasingly dependent on foreign loans, the major ones for the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In connection with such loan arrangements a variety of fiscal measures were initiated: devaluation, removal of food subsidies, cuts in public sector employment, and reduction of production costs in mining. The inflation which followed in the wake of these measures, the lack of foreign exchange with which to buy essential commodities (including staples), and the government's concern to deflect

internal discontent within its own ranks have helped accentuate a sense of insecurity throughout society.<sup>10</sup>

By the turn of the 1970s the repercussions of these changes had filtered through most segments of society. Women of all ages and school leavers -- young women and men -- competed with adult men for shrinking wage labor opportunities at the same time as some tided over the worst economic adversity through income-generating activities ranging from home-based trades, hawking, marketing, and repair work to prostitution and theft (Hansen 1980b). Some of these women and the variety of their productive activities will be introduced next.

#### Married women and work in Lusaka 1971 and 1981

The central locus of my Lusaka studies has been a relatively recent, yet well-established, though in 1971 not yet fully legalized, squatter settlement of about 10,000 people on the city's outskirts.<sup>11</sup> By 1981 it had been granted legal status and comprised approximately the same number of plots as in 1971, even though its population had doubled over the intervening decade. In my 1971-72 research on married women and work, I combined the anthropologist's stock-in-trade, participant observation with a sample survey and topically oriented open-ended interviews. The sample survey comprised 100 households from whom basic information was solicited by myself and an assistant, a local woman resident. A structured questionnaire with focus on the households' socio-economic characteristics, occupational background, intra-urban moves, inter-urban migration was used. During the 1981 follow-up study, the same procedures uncovered that approximately half of the original householders were still residing on the very plots where we first had met them ten years earlier.<sup>12</sup> Changes in household composition and socio-economic situation, compared to 1971, were recorded in questionnaire form by myself and the same assistant. Based on these formal interviews, brief descriptions of the women's background and economic activities for each of these points in time follow below. Although not representative for all of Lusaka in a statistical sense, the range of activities described here is found throughout Lusaka's low-income areas (Jules-Rosette 1981).

Urban settlements in Zambia are very heterogeneous in ethnic terms. About 20 of the country's more than 70 ethnic groups are represented in my sample; ethnic groups from the eastern part of the country comprised almost half of that total. Most of these groups are matrilineal, but some, such as the Lozi, Mambwe, and Ngoni are patrilineal. Some foreign nationals lived there as well, mostly from Malawi, followed by Zimbabwe and South Africa. A quarter of the sample had lived in Lusaka for more than ten years, while the remainder had spent an average of seven years there. Yet more than one-third of the men had lived and worked in other urban areas before coming to Lusaka, some on the Copperbelt and others in Zimbabwe and/or South Africa. In most cases their wives had accompanied them or they had married while working abroad. Sixty-five of the women were married to men from the same ethnic group.<sup>13</sup> Of all the marriages, 55 had been contracted in the

countryside, and among those contracted in town several were inter-ethnic. Some were remarriages after divorce or death, and two were polygynous unions. Two of these 100 households were headed by women who received support for themselves and their children from their present consorts.

The women averaged 27 years old, but more than one-third of them were older than that. The average length of their marriages was nine years, and 19 of them had been married for 15 years or more. They had an average of four living children. More than half of the total sample population consisted of children below 14. Of the children older than 14, slightly more than half had left the settlement. In a quarter of all households additional residents were present, mostly relatives who were newly arrived job seekers or rural children attending school, but also visitors from the countryside who were staying for varying lengths of time.

The women had not received much education. Fifty-two of them had never gone to school, compared to 29 of the men. While a few had reached the higher grades, the rest of the women had an average school attendance of four years. More men had progressed farther in school and the average school attendance period for the rest was slightly more than five years. These parents sent their children to school, regardless of sex, provided they could obtain places in schools, of which in 1971 there were none in this settlement.

Twenty-five of the husbands were wage employed in the construction or related industries, 20 as domestic servants either in private homes as gardeners, house-servants, or cooks, and eight worked as servants in institutions. The balance was either white-collar workers, self-employed, or unemployed, the latter applying to only four of them in 1971. The 14 men who were self-employed worked within the settlement, were tending small market stalls, hawking clothes or produce, repairing cars, and building houses.

The average monthly income of husbands in this settlement was lower than the estimate given for expenditures on food items in an Urban Budget Survey (1969) of low-income families of similar size.<sup>14</sup> Crucially important is the question of how much money husbands allocated to their wives and for which purposes. Our investigation of household budgeting showed that while 18 wives claimed to be in charge of their husbands' salaries, the majority were dependent on their husbands for monthly allowances. Fifty wives thus received ration money with which to purchase food and clothing, and 20 received a small allowance while husbands bought the main staples; five received no money whatsoever. Most of them had insufficient resources to fulfill their dependents' consumption needs through the whole of the month (Hansen 1975:786-89).

Although they were critically concerned with how to make ends meet, none of these women were wage employed in 1971. Only seven had been wage employed before they moved to this settlement, two in factories in Zimbabwe and five as "nursegirls" in domestic service prior to marriage. A few had

unsuccessfully sought work in the downtown tobacco factory and the brewery. Their wage labor opportunities remained few, given their limited education and the ready availability of a male labor supply which could amply fill the slots in the urban opportunity structure.

While some women felt that their husband's negative attitudes curtailed their work prospects, others had seized economic opportunities locally. Thirteen of them worked full-time from their own homes, yards, or streets--brewing and selling beer, fruit, vegetables, cooking oil, ready-made food, charcoal, and second-hand clothing. Eleven women undertook similar activities intermittently, including also handwork, such as sewing, needlepoint, knitting, or crocheting. A few others had done such work previously but stopped the activity in 1971. Hence, for these women, work was synonymous with trade. From their perspective, these were productive activities, the proceeds of which they used principally to secure their own and their children's daily well-being.

A comparison of two categories of women, those with work experience and those who had never engaged in work, showed that the former were relatively older, married for a longer time, and more often partners of mixed ethnic unions than the latter. They also tended to have more children, to have less education, and to have husbands who were unskilled workers, than the women who had no work experience. Relatively more of them had married in towns and had lived in Lusaka for longer periods of time than the other women.

Although these are only trends and tendencies, they did have bearing on work, that is, on the question of what it takes to undertake a trade and how it is organized and carried out. In the situational sense previously mentioned, processual analysis of the way in which these activities were established and actually undertaken was done, using Fredrik Barth's notion of entrepreneurship (1963).<sup>15</sup> The results showed that the execution of the women's trades depended on social and economic decision-making, involving risks and insecurities arising out of competition, lack of start-up capital, and illegality.<sup>16</sup> The chief asset brought to bear in successfully launching such an activity was a woman's knowledge of how to manipulate these factors; such knowledge was a product of the length and variety of her urban experience. Those women who worked were willing to take risks which other women were either unwilling or unable to attempt.

By 1981, many more women were trading. The overall economic slow-down and the accelerating costs of urban living had placed new pressures on the already scarce economic means in low-income households. About half of the householders in my original sample had remained living on the same plots on my return in 1981 (N = 46).<sup>17</sup> The women now averaged 37 years old, with 15 of them 45 or older, thus representing a cross-section of the previous sample in terms of age. Most had remained married to the same husbands. Two women were living as single heads of households. The major change in terms of marriage had been the addition of spouses; eight additional wives had been added to the two 1971-cases of polygyny.<sup>18</sup>

More children had been born, and some had grown up and left their parents' houses with different levels of education and varying work and marriage arrangements. Yet these households had been extended in diverse ways. In about one-third of these 46 houses relatives were living in: married offspring with children, unmarried daughters with children, householders' younger siblings sometimes with families, or aged parents brought to town from the countryside. In slightly less than one-fourth of these households, one or more children lived at home after "failing" grade seven. Scattered across other houses were relatives who depended on these households for food and occasional financial handouts or who themselves, in turn, contributed with cash or services.

A number of findings concerning employment stand out. In about half the cases, the husbands still worked for the same employers as in 1971. These were predominantly public sector employers such as the City Council, Zambia Broadcasting, Zambia Airways, the University, the hospitals, and various government departments, but they included as well a few private, long established firms in Lusaka. The jobs that showed this stability were in food service, cleaning, driving, and construction. In most of the remaining cases, husbands held the same types of jobs as in 1971 but had different employers. The shift had taken place from private to public sector employment. The only type of occupational change we encountered was from wage to self-employment: bricklayers who set themselves up in the settlement or men who had traveled through many jobs who sought to establish themselves locally in trade.

About five of these wives in 1981 administered their husbands' entire pay and, in turn, handed out pocket money to them. In a few cases the husbands bought all the staples and gave wives no ration money whatsoever. As in 1971 most wives continued to receive a monthly allowance from which to buy foods and other essentials. But the husbands' 1981 incomes were, as in 1971, insufficient in all cases to cover the needs of these urban households.

Altogether, in 1981 there were only eight wives in these houses who did not work in one way or another. Now, eight were wage employed, working as domestic servants, hospital attendants, or cleaners. The rest were involved in trade, some of them in the settlement's market and the others from homes, yards, and streets. Their range of activities had expanded to include such items of apparel as shoes, handbags, and clothing. These items are acquired on shopping trips which some women undertake in groups of two or three to neighboring countries where they buy commodities, including food staples, which in Zambia are in short supply, not available, or of poor quality.

Four of the eight women who in 1981 did not work, did so in 1971. They had all brewed and sold beer. Apparently, they had been unwilling or unable to shoulder the risks of illegal brewing in the face of occasional police swoops followed by payment of fines or arrest. Competition had also increased, as several more licensed beer halls had opened in the settlement since 1971. One of these women was a destitute widow in her sixties who

supported her household of a mentally retarded daughter and two grandchildren by begging and occasional church hand-outs. Most of the others complained that they had no "start," since their allowance was small. But two women in their thirties flatly stated that they did not want to trade, saying they had "no sense," that is skill for it.

In addition to proceeds from trade, 13 of these households now made money from leasing rooms to 26 separate households, some consisting of single persons, others of entire families. In three of the households where women did not work, tenants provided an additional source of income. Although subletting is illegal in Zambia, several houses had been extended for this purpose.

It thus seems that the households who remained in this settlement over the intervening decade were those in which husbands had remained working in low-income jobs, mostly in the government sector, in the types of activities that have been Lusaka's mainstay regardless of economic ups and downs: service, distribution, and administration. More of their wives had taken on work activity than in 1971, and several gave the rising costs of living as the reason for seeking cleaning or domestic service jobs after the mid-1970s. The same reason was given by others who had begun to sell in the market or intermittently from homes and yards. They spent most proceeds from wage labor and trading on food and daily necessities for themselves and their children.

While this descriptive outline, drawn from formal interviews, sketches a pattern of increased economic activity undertaken by women in a situation of growing economic adversity between 1971 and 1981, it compounds analysis of the diverse and changing factors involved in bringing women to work. A processual analysis of how work is carried out does not get to the heart of that question either. To do so, at least three issues must be unraveled. One has to do with the local impacts of broad structural changes such as those affecting the Zambian economy. Another concerns the way in which thoroughly urbanized households have become structured at a stage of the developmental cycle when their heads are growing older. They may be termed the history of the economy and the life history of the household, respectively. They intersect with the third issue, human choice, which of course revolves around both household and economy.

### The work history

What I call the work history exemplifies an approach to account for the interrelationship between decisions taken by the individual and the restrictions which external factors place on work participation. I suggest that such work histories enable me to disaggregate the interplay of these factors in a way that reveals the sorts of choices made by the women I studied. While the relative influence on work opportunity of factors such as regional background, ethnicity, class, education, age, household size,

and length of urban residence probably can be pinpointed by means of conventional regression analysis, that method still leaves the choice factor unexplained.

The work history is a product of extended interviews topically oriented to retrieve details about the relationship of housework to trade and wage labor. Such sessions were arranged with the women who carried out income-generating activities during my research in 1971-72, and in 1981. These conversations often extended over several sessions and overlapped with participant observation. Thus--while observing activities connected with trades and their organization, shopping in the settlement's market, having tea in its "hotels," beer in a beerhall, or attending a church service, a funeral, or some family celebration or gathering, and informally visiting--more insights were gathered, sometimes corroborating but other times questioning what we already knew, but always adding more aspects. Data were collected throughout the days of the week, and we staggered our days of rest so that Sundays could be used to make calls on women who worked outside the settlement.

Four work histories collected from the same women in 1971-72 and 1981 are briefly paraphrased below. They all feature tertiary/service sector work which the great majority of urbanites have no recourse but to enter if they wish to find work at all. Yet, even within these constraints, people do make choices.

The first work history<sup>19</sup> introduces the wife in a household which is approaching the end of the developmental cycle:

Margaret Mbebe is a Sotho woman from Lesotho who in 1971 was 53 years old.<sup>20</sup> She and her husband, a Zambian Chewa, had recently arrived in Zambia when he was repatriated after 18 years employment in South Africa. They had met there and married in the 1950s. Before coming to this settlement where they lived only three months in temporary housing, they had stayed nine months with the husband's matrilineal relatives near Katete in Zambia's eastern province. Three of their four children had died; the only surviving child was a daughter of 11 for whom they had not yet found a place in school. They were in a difficult position because of the husband's age (55). The only income he had made in Lusaka was gained from hawking kapenta (dried fish) from his bicycle, and he could not count on continuing that activity, because of the erratic fish supply. Margaret had never gone to school. The only employment she could think of was the kind of work she had done in South Africa: domestic service. She had gone looking for such work but not found any. Her husband's sister's son had helped them out financially. With his help, plus some of their savings from South Africa (which were almost gone), Margaret had bought a sewing machine. In 1971 she had just started to sew clothes for sale, for example, South African style skirts and aprons, hoping there would be a local demand. She also wanted to take sewing orders.

In 1981 we found the Mbebe couple, now 63 and 65 years old, living in a house of their own. The daughter had entered school, but had failed grade

seven; she was now married to a medical orderly in Ndola and busy with her children. The Mbebes had been able to complete the house by both working. After his attempt to hawk kapenta, Mr. Mbebe had in 1972 found employment as a building hand in a private firm. That job had ended in the mid-1970s, after which he was unable to find any other wage job. Meanwhile, Mrs. Mbebe had worked as a domestic servant for an expatriate employer from 1974 to 1975. When the employer left, she felt too old and weak to seek other domestic employment, and anyway, she said, the salary had been too low.

So Mrs. Mbebe had taught her husband how to sew. Now the product, no longer South African style clothing, is children's clothes. They had been unable to get the right fabric for the South African style, but they are able to buy remnants from a downtown fabric store which they use for the children's clothing. Mr. Mbebe still has his hawking license and sells the clothes from his bicycle in the settlement, handing all proceeds over to Mrs. Mbebe. She hands him cash to shop for food and, because of her weak health, he undertakes most of the shopping, lining up in queues for scarce items they need.

The second work history concerns the wife in a household extended over two generations:

Mrs. Ester Phiri, a Chewa in her fifties, and her Ngoni husband have lived in this settlement since their 1967 arrival to Lusaka from the Chipata area. Mr. Phiri, first having done piece-work for a construction firm, is still employed within the construction industry. Mrs. Phiri never went to school, whereas her husband attended school for a couple of years. Three of their four adult children have left the Lusaka household, while a married son, his wife, and their five small children have shared the Phiri's two-roomed house for the last three years, during which time the son has worked as a garden "boy" on a very low salary.

Mrs. Phiri brewed beer in 1971 and does so today in spite of occasional police check-ups. For she says, brewing is easy, does not cost much, and will give profits if you watch whom you allow to drink on credit. She sells her beer from the house and has a good clientele for she is well-known for the quality and consistency of her beer. She brews around weekends when she is sure to sell out. Only once has she been arrested and had to pay fines. As in 1971, she gets a monthly allowance to buy staples in the market. She uses it also to purchase cooking oil which she sells from her yard, but only intermittently, because of the erratic supply. She has done so for the five last years. She and her husband jointly discuss how to allocate the money she makes. After setting aside a sum to purchase supplies for the next batch of beer, the rest is spent on household needs. To further contribute to the household economy, the daughter-in-law cultivates a small garden on the settlement's outskirts, from which they get occasional food relishes.

The third work history features the wife in a household which had returned to Lusaka after a failed attempt to resettle in the rural area:



When contacted in 1971, the Mwanza household lived on another plot in a house they had built themselves. They are both Nsenga, she from Chipata, he from Malawi. The husband, with form one education, worked as a plumber for one of the banks. They had five children, and Mrs. Mwanza, who never went to school, contributed to the household economy by selling kapenta and vegetables in front of their house. From 1974 to 1975 she worked as a domestic servant in an expatriate household. In 1975 they sold the house and left for Malawi, intending to farm on the husbands' relatives land. But they spent only one year in Malawi, for the husband "wasted" all the money from the sale of the house on drinking. In 1976 they returned to Lusaka whey they since have lived as tenants in a house they share with another tenant household. Mrs. Mwanza, now 37 years old, has a total of eight children between 15 and one and a half years of whom the oldest, a daughter who has dropped out of school, has a baby child.

On returning to Lusaka Mr. Mwanza found work with a plumbing company for which he has continued to work. Mrs. Mwanza took another servant job which she recently had left when we met her again because of complications after an operation. She wanted to resume work and was getting news from friends about jobs in domestic service. She used to administer the wage she earned from her servant job and was responsible for their monthly rent payment and the purchase of food and clothing. Now, her allowance is too small to cover these expenditures. They need her added income for they have applied for a plot and wish to build a house of their own again. In addition, there are the children and constant expenses to be met. But really, she said, she would rather trade; for in trade, you are independent. This conversation took place toward the end of the month. A few days later we found Mrs. Mwanza selling dried fish in front of the house, using part of her husband's paycheck for a "start." We checked up on the progress of her sale daily and by the week's end, the fish was gone. When asked about her profits she told us that they had "gone into the pot," that is, they had been spent on day-to-day food purchases.

The fourth work history presents a polygynous household:

In 1971 Mrs. Simpemba and her husband, both Mambwe, had lived in Lusaka in this settlement since 1967. Mrs. Simpemba, now 34 years old, then had four children and now has five. Her husband, a bricklayer, has worked for various government departments throughout these years. They both have grade four education.

In 1971 and until about a year ago, Mrs. Simpemba sold eggs, kerosene, cooking oil, and dried fish in front of the house. She stopped doing so, she said, because her husband took all of her profits. He married a second wife in 1975 by whom he now has three children. The junior wife does not engage in economic activity. Each wife gets a small monthly allowance with which to buy staples for themselves and their children. One of the senior wife's four children is attending school in the rural area while the junior wife's children go to school in Lusaka. In addition to the husband, the two wives and their respective children, the 21 year old brother of the senior

wife has lived with them for two months. He is a typist at the Tobacco Board and is looking for housing while his wife "waits" in the rural area. He hands his sister money off and on for his keep.

The two wives do not get along well. The senior wife accuses the younger one of witchcraft. She is not healthy, has had five miscarriages, and has sought help in the hospital as well as from African doctors. She has also complained to the local UNIP branch about her troubles with the younger co-wife but did not receive a sympathetic hearing.<sup>21</sup> When asked why she stayed put in the marriage, she told us she did so because of the children. In case of divorce, they would belong to the father's side and would most certainly be mistreated by the junior wife.

Some eight months before we met her again, Mrs. Simpemba had sought work as a domestic servant. Her husband had agreed with her plan on the condition that she spend some her wage on household goods. The rest she could spend on her children, as she wished. She sends money every month to her relatives in the countryside where her oldest child attends school. She is employed in a Zambian household but said she would be looking for a job as a cleaner in an institution, since work conditions there would be preferable to those in domestic service.

### Discussion

The Zambian labor force is an institution in flux in which women and men have played roles that have varied in relation to changing market demands and diverse socio-cultural expectations. For gender roles are not given; they evolve out of people's social and historical experiences. At the time of my 1971-72 study, hardly any of the women in my sample had ever been wage employed. What work they knew was trade. But as the labor market has changed, so have people's expectations of what they can do. As that market has become increasingly pressed in Lusaka over the decade of the 1970s, married women are among the many who seek entry, with or without the approval of men.

Although they continue to act in a sluggish labor market and within the restrictions posed by their limited education and class background, women in this settlement made choices, different from those in 1971-72. Some had sought wage work and had done so typically in the mid-1970s when the impact of declining production in mining and manufacture had spread across all levels of society. Out of these women's social experience of growing economic insecurity over a span of ten years, new gender roles are evolving. The one highlighted in the work histories is that of the female domestic servant. This role, and cleaning jobs in private institutions, now figure prominently as one of the two alternatives between which women make their choices. In both of these occupations which until recently were predominantly male, women receive lower wages. Their second alternative is trade, which comprises anything sold from the home or yard to the sale of produce and goods in the market. Almost everyone in my follow-up study was involved in one or the other.

These women see their alternatives as 1) economic activity based in the home, or trading in proximity to the home, and 2) domestic service, or cleaning work in public institutions. When they choose the first, they can decide their schedule and work setting for themselves and accommodate them to their own housework. In domestic service they work daily in an asymmetrical power situation. This contrasts with cleaning work in public institutions which has less strenuous time schedules and less demanding work regimens than domestic service and takes place in settings where supervision is less direct. In both of these, they still have to contend with the other half of their double burden: the minding of husbands' needs and desires and the caring for children, which made them busy in the early morning hours before leaving for work as well as on their return at night.

The choices these four women made between housework, trade, and domestic service were timed in relation to the life history of their households and to the pattern of economic growth as currently shaped within the existing economic structure in Zambia. In general, they all pursued work in order to secure a livelihood for themselves and those within their closest circle. Few of the households in my study resembled that of the Mbebes where the end of the developmental cycle was within view and on whom the presence of dependents apparently placed no strain. Most of the others were extended in various ways, and many individuals, including these wives, played parts in securing the household's viability.

But beyond these general characteristics, which today for most women in low-income urban households make gainful activity an economic necessity, there were considerable differences. Although they all were poor, their location within the working class varied. The four women's experiences illustrate a spectrum of past and present economic and household arrangements, ranging from wage labor and full or part-time trading to housework or uniquely different combinations of it. Even within their households there were differences as to arrangements in housework and its organization. Other factors accentuated these differences. From the four work histories presented here, at least the following are striking. For also influencing the women's decisions were considerations of the level of income to be gained, the nature of the work environment, the perceived extent of control in the work setting, and their own degree of control of the fruits of their labor. Their resolve to work was further colored by intra-familial relations of affect or animosity, some of which were shaped by cultural meanings. Past and present experiences were thus fed back into their decisions to pursue a given line of work, and they arrived at these decisions by drawing on these experiences in unlike ways.

Economic participation is thus a complex outcome of all of these factors. Since they do not co-vary, neither across the history of the economy, that of the household, nor across the life of the individual woman, their joint impact varies between different persons. The work history, I suggest, brings to the fore its unique mesh. For in spite of external restrictions, decisions made by these women were central in affecting the well-being of those around them. Although they all seemed poor in terms of conventional

economic indicators, I see these women's choices and their timing as a result of a balancing act between 1971 and 1981 in which they could and did take action on both the economy and themselves to readjust the relationship of households to economy.

### Conclusions

A statement made by a colonial official in 1949 seems to characterize the situation in Zambia today: "it is apparent that in no town are African women employed in appreciable numbers" (1946-Census 1949:69). To remedy this static interpretation of the division of labor by gender in urban Zambia, I described in this paper an approach: the work history, which I claim on the one hand introduces a time perspective into stale attempts to understand the workings of the gender division in the urban labor force and on the other provides a change from statistical anonymity and categorical classification by permitting the human actor to enter into analysis.

I suggested in the beginning that ongoing attempts to bring the human actor into the center stage of analysis also have theoretical implications. The work histories paraphrased above and the subsequent discussion provide a link to introduce the notion of change, on which I shall first comment and then turn to the factor of choice and its theoretical significance.

Even the scant source material offered in this paper informs us that women have played different roles in Lusaka's changing economy. A dynamic analysis of how, when, and why will help modify the static view of Lusaka's labor force as a male institution against which women's opportunities have been negatively measured. Times changed and so did the terms governing people's entry to work. Although, compared to 1971, slightly more of the women of my study were involved in wage work in 1981, the rest engaged in trades conducted from or in proximity to their homes, and most proceeds were spent on the day-to-day demands of household consumption. Their productive activities were certainly conditioned by the high cost of urban living, the overall depressed levels of their husbands' incomes, and for most of them, also by the size of their monthly allowances. Given the male authority pattern in these households, women's dependence on husbands has not lessened since 1971. They remain appendages in an economic sense. But the factors that make them dependent are not identical to those of 1971. Thus, as suggested at the outset, what looks "the same," namely their general lack of wage labor prospects and continued participation in trades of the small-scale sort, must be accounted for differently.

Regardless of whether these women concentrate their efforts on their own housework and/or trade or domestic service, they all live in a market economy which affects their needs and their decisions about economic activity. The gender divisions in both household work and in wage labor are shaped by factors that structure the overall economy, which is to say that any one of these domains must be viewed in its interrelationship with the others. Since the early decades of this century, household conditions in Zambia have accommodated themselves subordinately to the needs of the market

economy, as women's household work helped subsidize the costs of reproducing a male labor force on substandard wages. Working class wives continue to do so today, but because of the accelerating costs of urban living which have eroded the purchasing power of working class wages, they have in addition sought to respond to growing economic needs by extending household production into trade. Their range of economic action revolves around choosing between domestic service, cleaning work, housework, and trade, not because these represent activities that belong to women's domain, but because adverse economic circumstances have made these activities assume a larger importance that ever before for purposes of securing the well-being of urban households.

The deepening division between women's and men's productive opportunity in urban Zambia has implications beyond the realm of gender. In the wake of the recent economic stagnation, accentuated divisions are being carved out within the working class along the lines of already established divisions based on skills and gender, yet they are further extended in new ways. The extension of an already established pattern is exemplified in the gradual move of women into domestic service, an occupation which for a long time was a male preserve. Similarly in trade, women are now almost monopolizing the vegetable and fruit trade, an area in which their numbers have increased from a slow trickle during the colonial period to thousands today.<sup>22</sup>

Factors such as race and gender significantly structured who could do what in colonial Lusaka; they continue to do so today, but in an altered combination, where new differences are making their imprint on the relations in production. While the chief difference discussed here is that between women and men, there are other differences to reckon with: those between age and ethnic groups, and those who are more, or less, linked to power. I shall briefly review the age factor which, given the age distribution of the urban population, is likely to become critical for the future.

The married women I studied twice were adult and barely literate at independence. Their options are different from those of the first post-colonial cohort of educated women. Their choices also differ from the new cohorts of school leavers -- both young women and men -- who are finding their educational credentials to be of little use in Zambia's urban job market today. The latter, although they take domestic service jobs and some do engage in trade, still hope for upward mobility. Many consider such work temporary, and they speak of taking typing and stenography, and correspondence courses in bookkeeping and accounting; while waiting, others take courses in dressmaking or furniture production, attend a variety of workshops as stop-gap measures, or "just sit"<sup>23</sup> hoping for a way up (Hoppers 1981).

Given the decline in the development of productive forces in Zambia, these young adults in all likelihood misperceive their own work prospects. By contrast, the women I studied have a perception of work opportunities that more accurately reflects their objective class position. They still have some room for action as they make work choices within the restrictions

of a system of structured inequality. What these choices are and how they are made can be captured by means of the work history which provides a methodological bridge across two conceptual levels: that of the individual with her personal biography and that of society with its structures of inequality. But here lies the central theoretical issue around which this paper's problem revolves, that is the question of how to reconcile the view of women as social actors with the reproduction of a class society in which at one analytical level these women are appendages to men. While this is an ambitious question which the contents of this paper cannot alone answer, I shall at least offer a suggestion about how to explain this apparent paradox.

The action these wives took to seek work was validated by what they viewed as their central concern: the securing of livelihoods for themselves and those within their closest circle. Their choices sprang in part from their experience of economic insecurity, which can be seen at the same time as much a source of initiative as restraint. For with their work, most of these women also played a part in reproducing household power relations characterized by gender inequality. Therefore, at one level of analysis, these wives remain appendages to men.

By "explaining" how the paradox is mediated, I have not resolved its inherent theoretical contradiction. My interpretation is nonetheless consistent with the texture of everyday life, the very structures of which are based on contradictions, as they are in society at large. No interpretation can solve such contradictions. They can only be solved through social changes to which new choices made by women and men may contribute. But as suggested in this paper, by ignoring the role of the human actor in the analyses of the changing division of labor by gender, anthropologists also factor out what women's experiences can tell us about the workings of gender and class inequality.

TABLE 1

Estimated number of Africans employed  
in industry and services, 1951-57

	1951		1952		1953		1954		1955		1956		1957	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
Agriculture	34,000	3,882	39,500	1,290	40,000	4,150	36,000	4,250	31,700	4,000	28,215	3,400	28,820	6,520
Butcheries	250		600		900		1,000		1,085	5	1,295		1,330	
Bakeries	650		600		700		800		750		850		720	
Brickfields	5,000		3,000		4,000		5,000	5	5,170	5	5,050		4,530	5
Building	17,000		17,000		21,000		22,500		29,700		26,610		22,600	
Civil Engineering							3,500		1,930		2,500			
Cordwood cutting	7,000	105	12,000		8,500	70	8,000	120	3,100	50	1,515		1,170	
Factories	10,200	50	4,500	50	3,900		5,250		5,700	50	5,900	65	6,800	30
Domestic service	30,000	250	31,000	600	35,000	700	30,000	800	32,800	850	33,600	855	33,000	800
Flour mills	750		800		800		800		900		950		1,085	
Garages	2,000		2,000		2,250		2,500		2,500		2,500		1,950	
Government (exc. roads)	7,700		11,080		32,000		31,725	275	33,700	250	38,850	260	34,100	300
Hotel & catering	1,000		2,148	5	2,200	10	2,500	10	2,560	10	2,500	10	2,310	30

	1951		1952		1953		1954		1955		1956		1957	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
Municipalities & local authorities	4,500	62	4,300	40	5,400	50	5,500	60	6,650	50	7,035	55	6,975	85
Mines (all)	42,000	150	42,000	190	46,000	100	45,000	100	44,700	100	45,540	450	44,250	500
Quarries & lime works	2,400		3,000		3,300		3,000		2,750		2,250		2,330	
Road work	5,000		5,000		4,500		1,200		2,250		2,895		3,050	
Railways	4,400	5	4,600		4,650		4,815		5,250	5	6,410	5	6,300	5
Saw mills	4,000		3,200		3,500		3,500	35	2,530	25	950		2,480	
Transport companies	3,000		3,000		3,500		3,750		3,850		4,675		4,775	
Wholesale & retail distributive trade	10,000	10	6,500	5	6,800	10	7,500	15	7,950	15	8,800		9,400	75
Native authorities, African employed, self-employed, etc.	11,000	200	34,000		35,000	10	30,000	15	21,000	15	21,000	50	20,000	50
Unified African teaching service							3,500	1,000 <sup>a</sup>	3,850	1,050 <sup>b</sup>	4,125	1,455 <sup>c</sup>	4,500	1,350 <sup>d</sup>
Miscellaneous							1,000		3,000	30	3,600	40	5,000	40
TOTAL	201,850	4,714	229,828	2,180	263,900	5,100	258,340	6,685	255,375	6,510	257,615	6,615	247,475	9,790

Source: Annual Reports of the Department of Labour, 1951-57, Table 1(b).

<sup>a</sup>includes 500 part-time teachers.

<sup>c</sup>includes 300 part-time teachers.

<sup>b</sup>includes 500 part-time teachers.

<sup>d</sup>includes 700 part-time teachers.



TABLE 2

Africans employed by broad occupational groups  
(excluding government, large mines and railways)<sup>a</sup>

	1961		1962		1963		1964		1965		1966		1967		1968	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
Agriculture, forestry & fisheries	21,852	579	24,384,	649	23,899	753	23,307	709	26,071	827	26,561	817	27,110	608	22,782	332
Mining & quarrying	2,635	4	39,636 <sup>b</sup>	482	2,034		2,650		2,639	7	2,162	7	3,585	2	3,076	2
Manufacturing:																
food processing	3,753	28	4,016	7	6,144	102	6,139	171	6,860	122	5,683	169	7,085	191	7,291	188
clothing & apparel	787	30	902	27	882	8	1,224	42	2,428	177	2,961	115	4,415	201	3,715	170
furniture, leather paper & chemicals	1,415	1	1,400	2	1,457	1	1,814	9	2,664	17	2,477	22	3,844	18	3,637	33
bricks & cement	2,576		2,489		2,337	1	2,238	4	3,383	7	1,607	1	2,705		2,705	11
metals & machinery	3,945		3,990		3,968	1	5,167	5	4,943	2	4,683	5	6,264	12	7,854	11
Building & construction	15,457		13,175		12,717	1	15,189	106	22,460	597	21,617	5	22,558	9	26,132	21
Electricity, water & sanitation	1,933	5	1,087		1,069		1,154		1,349		1,072		1,223		795	
Wholesale & retail trade	7,681	52	7,502	68	8,027	86	8,753	275	8,573	266	8,875	344	8,466	299	10,922	490

	1961		1962		1963		1964		1965		1966		1967		1968	
	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men	women
Finance & real estate	401		369	1	378	1	483	2	777	7	754	9	955	15	1,042	36
Transportation	3,236	1	3,593		3,594		3,304		3,432	7	3,346	14	5,016	13	5,352	46
Local government, education, health, community service	6,611	256	8,517	353	8,386	356	11,603	457	12,342	604	9,347	480	13,698	435	7,515	389
Recreation & entertainment	1,155	10	1,078	56	996	50	1,117	42	1,018	1	1,037	54	829	21	929	48
Domestic service					27,240	708	26,800	700	31,500	800	31,231	1,498	31,508	1,549	36,491	1,758
Restaurants & hotels	2,683	82	2,632	127	2,503	177	2,429	208	2,610	258	2,696	252	2,564	336	2,316	359
Personal services	402	5	382	12	498	4	473	9	605	7	552	9	523	25	867	17
TOTAL	76,522	1,053	115,152	1,784	106,129	2,249	113,844	2,739	133,654	3,706	126,661	3,801	142,348	3,734	143,421	3,911

Source: Annual Reports of the Department of Labour, 1961-63 and 1964-68, Table 1(b). Some eighty occupational groups have been merged for use in this table.

a This table covers a less extensive regional scope than Table 1. Thus, the 1961-62 figures are confined to areas on the line-of-rail in the Southern, Central, and Western Provinces; the 1963-64 figures exclude North-Western Province and the Barotseland Protectorate; the 1965-66 figures exclude North-Western Province and Barotseland Province; and the 1967-68 figures exclude North-Western Province.

b The enumeration of men and women under the mining & quarrying category in 1962 is conspicuously larger than in previous or later years. I suggest that some employees in larger mines are included in the 1962 figures.

### Notes

This is a revised version of a paper, presented at a panel entitled "Reconceptualizing the lives and work of African women through personal documents held at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association, November 4-7, 1982, at Washington, D.C. I owe thanks to many persons for inspiration, to Susan Geiger in particular for reviving my interest in personal documents, and to Angeline Haugerud and Maria Grosz-Ngate for stimulating comments and advice.

1. The 1971-72 research was undertaken for a thesis for the degree of Magisterkonferens at Aarhus University in Denmark (1973), during which time I was a research affiliate of the Institute for African Studies, University of Zambia. I resumed my affiliation for three months during the summer of 1981 with funding from the University of Minnesota's Graduate School, Office of International Programs and McMillan Fund. The employment data presented in this paper for the colonial period were collected during archival research at the Public Records Office in London, August 1982, with financial support from the University of Minnesota's Graduate School.
2. I am not suggesting that this approach is novel, but rather that I am using it to ask new questions. In this I am inspired particularly by Anthony Leeds' notion of occupational careers (1964), to which he, however, attaches theoretical implications which have ramifications far beyond the issue discussed here.
3. This question is not unique to social anthropology but a fundamental one in all social scientific inquiry.
4. This is evidenced, for example, in the discussion of the time frame for the "fall" of the Southern African peasantry in the wake of studies by Bundy (1979) and Palmer & Parsons (1977). Some of the major comments and criticisms are contained in Cooper (1981), McCracken (1979), and Ranger (1978). The criticism of over-categorization is partly in reaction to Althusser (1970) and Hindness & Hirst's (1975) deterministic rendering of Marx (Law 1981), as well as to the determinative character of Anderson's theorizing about social change (1974a; 1974b). Anderson (1980) and Thompson (1978) exemplify the confrontation between a Marxism of structure and one of human action.
5. Before this time, the educational system was geared toward the needs of an essentially static colonial milieu where the African never was expected to compete with the European and in which the government only reluctantly supported educational efforts, most of which were undertaken by Missions (Mwanakatwe 1974:8-35).
6. From the early 1950s the mines offered training courses for women nursing assistants, and modified nurse training leading to a government

certificate was established in three of the country's hospitals and later in several others (Annual reports 1954:8). In 1958, midwifery training began in some of the hospitals. Before that time, the only preparation available in Zambia for entry into nursing was offered at the Salvation Army hospital at Chikanata in the Southern Province, a scheme with which the government had cooperated since the late 1940s. During those same years, both mines and municipalities began training women welfare workers, many of whom taught homecraft classes in cooking, home-economics, and dressmaking, designed to make urban wives, especially of "advanced Africans," improve their management of domestic affairs (Annual Reports 1957:5).

7. Some of the first African clerks were Lozi men of royal descent or from Malawi, both places where schools were established early. And many of the early women teachers and welfare workers had been trained at Mindolo in a girl's boarding school established in the late 1940s; the school was designed to give two-year post-Standard TV training, in domestic science and home hygiene (Wincott 1971:149-153).
8. During 1963-69, the urban male and female populations increased at an annual rate of 7.6 per cent and 10 per cent respectively, as compared with a total population growth rate of 2.6 per annum (Second National Development Plan 1971: 50).
9. The 1963 and 1969 censuses do not provide detailed distributions of employed persons by gender. Cross-sectional categorizations by gender have not been available since 1968 (the last year which is included in Table 2) in the Monthly Digest of Statistics, the Statistical Yearbooks, or the Annual Reports of the Labor Department. The final report of the 1980 census, presumably categorized by gender, has not reached me at the point of this writing. Domestic servants have not been included in the enumerations in any of these sources since 1968.
10. Between 1971 and 1980 the consumer price index in Zambia's urban areas almost tripled, disproportionately affecting the low-income groups who spend a large share of their small incomes on food items. The consumer price index for the low-income group rose from 75.1 (1971) to 205.8 (November 1980), while that for the high-income group increased from 74.5 to 192.6 over the same period (1975 = 100) (Monthly Digest of Statistics 1980:44-45).
11. Although begun as a site-and-service resettlement scheme in 1967, formal developments of this settlement were stopped within a year of its opening, by decisions from within the highest ministerial level. It functioned as a squatter settlement until 1972, when the government officially changed its hostile attitude towards squatting. For details on urbanization policy in Zambia, see Hansen (1982) which provides more background information about this particular settlement.

12. Not included in this discussion are the data collected from new residents on plots vacated by the other half of the sample who also were interviewed using the same procedures. We attempted to trace the whereabouts of the householders who had left after 1971, but were able to identify only about one third who had moved to other parts of this settlement or to other Lusaka low-income areas, or who returned to the rural areas. In addition we did survey in the settlement's market with a focus on the gender and ethnic division of labor in trades. The results of this survey are not dealt with in this paper.
13. Because of the small size of the sample, I am presenting actual numbers.
14. More details on the budget study are contained in Hansen (1973; 1975).
15. The analysis and its results are discussed at length in Hansen (1973; 1975).
16. The independent government has retained many of the colonial laws that restrict where which products may be sold. Thus, it is illegal to sell products from yards and streets without having a license. And home-brewing of alcoholic spirits is prohibited by law.
17. We were able to identify 90 of the 100 plots on which the households in the 1971 sample had resided. Some of the ten "missing" plots may have disappeared over the intervening years due to regulation of roads and common areas in the settlement.
18. These were cases of polygyny which were publicly recognized. In addition, several wives told us that their husbands had wives "on the side" and in other cases we learned about that practice not from the wife but from her neighbors.
19. The 1971 part of this work history is described in Hansen (1980a:841).
20. All names are fictive.
21. The governing party, United National Independence Party (UNIP), has branches in all urban settlements. In addition to political mobilization, the local branches also hear and advice on residents' trouble cases.
22. This statement refers to my summary of the various studies of Lusaka's markets and their division of trades by gender, undertaken during and after independence (Hansen 1980b:208, 211-16).
23. "Just sitting" means having no wage labor. It does not mean idle, as a young woman who "just sits" may well sell goods from the home or help her mother do so in the market. Parkin reports a similar usage of this phrase among the Giriama on the coast of Kenya (1979:327-29).

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