

Rising electricity consumption: Driving forces and consequences.

The case of rural Zanzibar

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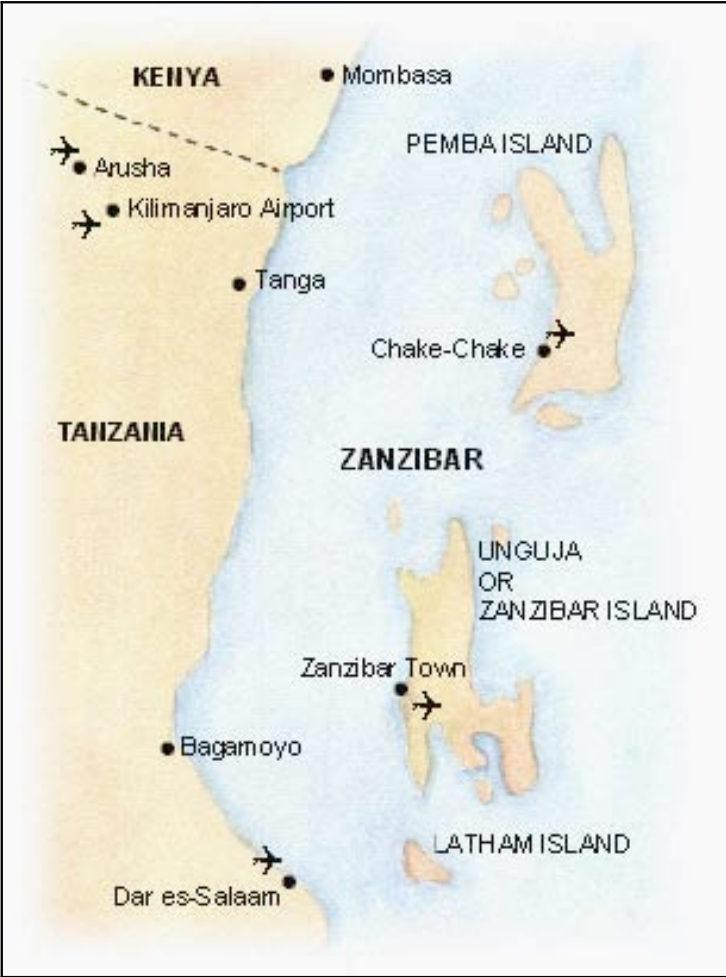
PhD Social Anthropology and
MSc Power Engineering



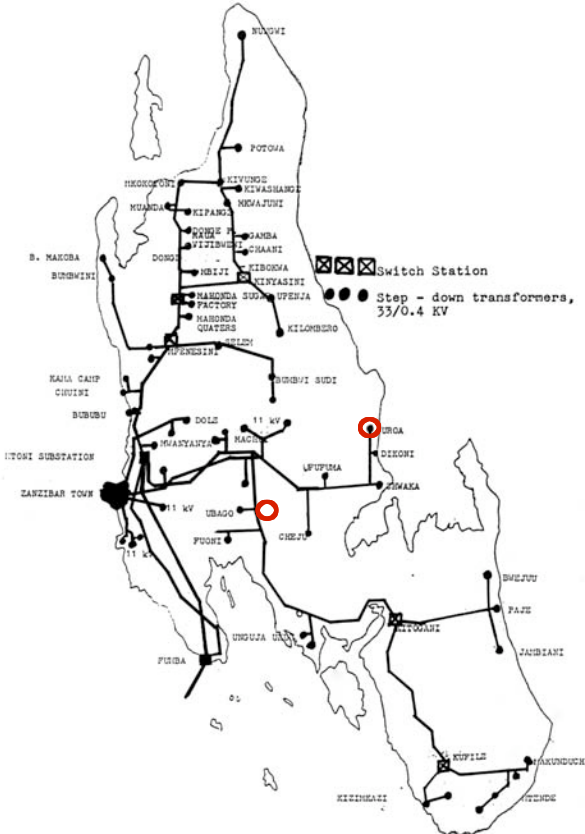
SUM

CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT
AND THE ENVIRONMENT

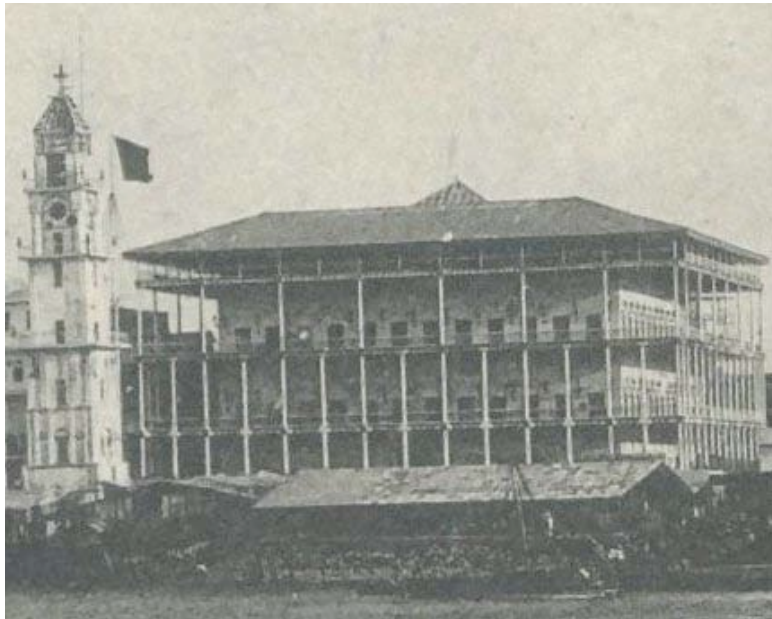
Zanzibar (Unguja and Pemba)



Unguja Island electricity grid



Electricity as guiding thread



1880s: House of Wonder
Zanzibar Town



2000: Electrified villages

Zanzibar, 2007

- 66% electricity access in rural areas (NORAD-financed intervention 1986 to present)
- Unguja: 20% (11 000) of rural households have obtained connection
- Uroa: 54% connected
- Appliances: from novelty (dangerous) to normal
- Only male owners of appliances

Evening gathering point



Driving forces

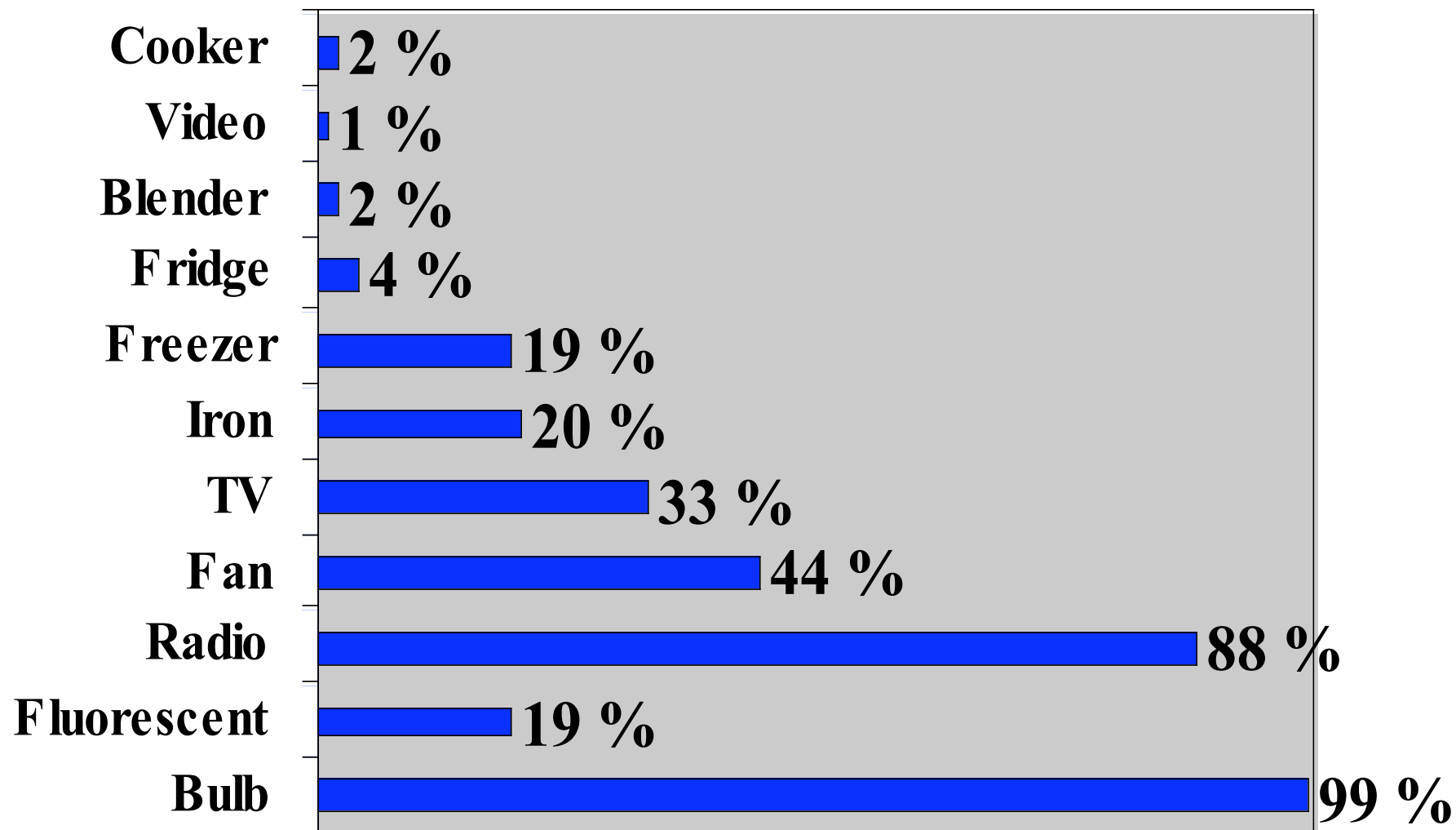
- Availability
- Light, information, education, entertainment ("to relax": new meaning)
- Cleanliness and convenience
- Reduced costs in the long term
- Safety
- Social differentiation and coherence
- External influences: people, objects, images, ideologies (Islamic and Western)

Uroa by night



Keeping electrical appliances

(among accessible homes with electricity, n=131)



Electric lighting inside



For reading, working,
socialising at night



“Brighter”, nicer, cheaper –
but higher installation costs

The scripts of technologies: Electricity, heat and building materials



State: Increased control

The trap of spiraling
consumption
patterns



Use of freezers



Not in use



Photograph (c) Tanja Winther

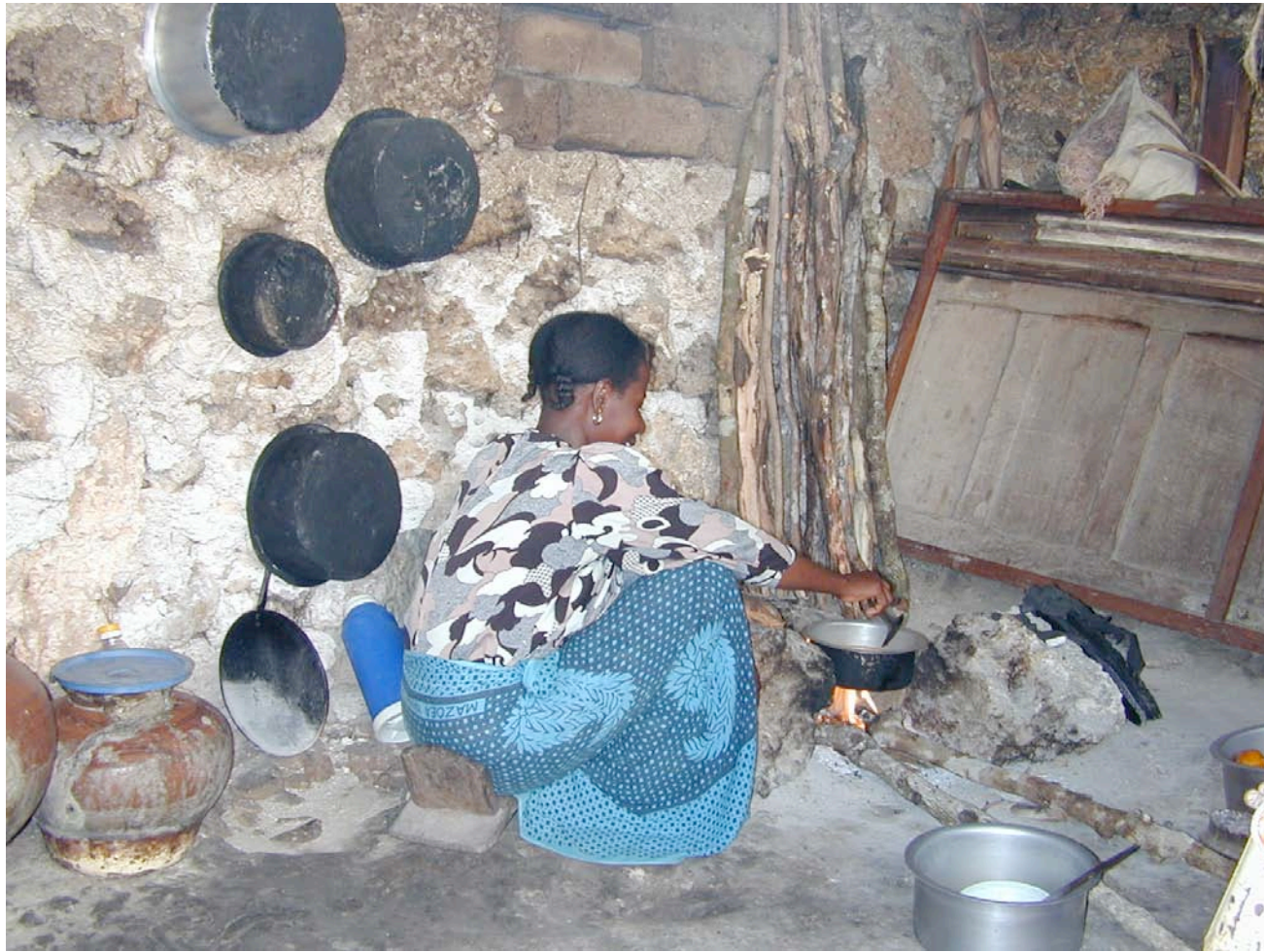
Consequences of electrification (realm of food)

- ❑ More choices, time is speeding up
- ❑ To relax: new content
- ❑ Number of meals prepared daily: from 3 to 2

- Less fuelwood consumed
- Women's work load reduced

**Electric light and television indirect causes
for reduction of meals**

The negotiations continue



Consequences

- Despite a turn towards 'clean' energy: environmental challenges
- Electricity used for consumption (rather than production)
- New media and communication: el a driving force in itself
- In line with local perceptions of 'moving forward', but notably on people's own (negotiated) terms





Information meeting, Uzi village, Unguja, Zanzibar, July 2005



Explaining the benefits and the challenges related to the use of electricity, Uzi village, July 2005