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A look behind the scenes of Lubumbashi's r

By Jeroen Cuvelier

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The Dire Straits song 'Money for Nothin' and No Love' from their 1985 album *Money for Nothing* offers an ironic look at the easy lifestyle of successful popstars. The song was written after overheard a man in New York complain about what he spends his money on. The man did not consider that popstars get *'their money for nothing'* and spend his days *'moving refrigerators'*.

I was reminded of this song when, in the early days of my PhD fieldwork in the Republic of Congo, I became the target of an unexpected and rather painful experience on the terrace of a bar in Lubumbashi's Makomeno neighborhood, close to the copper and cobalt tailings dominating the city landscape. Chit-chatting with a local man over a Simba beer and a shared plate of roasted goat meat, I remember feeling a mix of many directions with my research, and also very pleased with myself for a couple months of fieldwork. In addition to finding a nice host family, learning rudimentary Swahili and had also managed to find an excellent research assistant to accompany me on my journeys to the rural interior. The euphoria about my situation quickly, however, when I suddenly heard a bar visitor at the table behind me say: *the friendliness of this rich white guy, he's just here to collect cheap information back home... now he pretends to be your buddy, but after the end of his project*

Keith Hart once stated that *'most anthropologists don't like money and that's why they have rejected for something more authentic elsewhere. This lines this* boutade was primarily meant to criticize the relative lack of theoretical engagement with money-related issues. Yet, at the same time, it also hides an uncomfortable truth: on the one hand, the image anthropologists try to convey of themselves towards their hosts; on the other hand, how they are actually perceived by them. The widespread tendency to portray themselves as being detached from money is probably in large part a product of a disciplinary culture. Ever since the legendary fieldwork of Bronislaw Malinowski in 1918, long-term participant observation has become the hallmark of true anthropology. For one's career, doing such fieldwork is considered as a rite of passage. A good anthropologist is expected demonstrate to her/his academic peers that s/he has lived and cultured life from the inside, "to blend in", and to share people's joys but

In line with this disciplinary culture, I have always tried to maintain a sober and honest attitude. This has been due to declining levels of research funding, which sometimes forced me to be honest, it has also been the result of a deliberate choice on my part, a preference for honesty towards the people I was working with and to gain their acceptance. For them, I obviously had their own ideas and expectations about my presence in the field. I am pretty sure that most of them did not suspect me of having the same financial goals at the same time, they clearly realized that Western fieldworkers like myself

In the early 1970s, Harold Schneider cynically remarked that anthropologists 'whereby one social exchange system is played off against another: '(...) where he has high status because he comes from a dominant society; the contacts is then published in his own system, increasing his status there' type of calculative and extractive behavior that the critical bar visitor in the As much as I liked to think of myself – and present myself – as a well-int unfamiliar life-worlds and meeting new people, I could not avoid being advancing my own professional career at the expense of the Congolese amidst.

While, since the publication of Sanjek's essay on anthropology's "hidden co give greater scholarly recognition to the crucial contributions of rese Schumaker 2001 and Bank & Bank 2013), the debate about the roles and m still in its infancy. One of the great things about the workshop in Ghent compare our respective experiences with money in the field, and to take money-related matters. If I have learned anything from the incident in this Lumbu Maliba, it is that we can no longer allow ourselves to treat moneta fieldwork collaborations.

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