Place, Person and Ancestry among the Temanambondro of Southeast Madagascar

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Abstract

This thesis is a study of the Temanambondro of southeast Madagascar and focuses on issues of place, personhood and ancestry. In particular it emphasizes the importance of space and place in Temanambondro concepts of relatedness, as well as arguing that the Temanambondro imagine themselves as a people different from others by emphasizing the importance of place in their conceptualization of self-identity.

The thesis begins by outlining a "spatial history" of the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. It then goes on to discuss the theoretical issues addressed in the remainder of the thesis: "kinship", space, and aesthetics. It is suggested that the Temanambondro possess an aesthetics of personhood, an issue explored through an analysis of gender, ideas about "nurture", and how a person's identity is constituted in terms of a "moral self" that is the basis by which people evaluate the actions of others. These aspects of the person and personal performance are supplemented by an account of how a person's identity is constituted in terms of Temanambondro concepts of relatedness, an issue explored through indigenous categories which differentiate between relations traced through men and those traced through women. Relatedness through men is central to the constitution of named Ancestries, and an analysis of local concepts also reveals how Ancestries (and the house-groups of which they are composed) are conceptualized in terms of houses, tombs, and space. The difference that gender makes in terms of relatedness is also central to the discussion of marriage, which is explored through images of the house, notions of fecundity emphasized in the marriage rites, and through ideas about space. Here discussion focuses on what Temanambondro refer to as "close" and "distant" marriages, a difference which is gendered in certain contexts, and this issue forms the basis of a discussion of the significance of gender in the tracing of relatedness among the Temanambondro and other peoples of Madagascar. Finally it is suggested that Temanambondro notions of relatedness make use of a number of concepts -gender, the house, space, images of "roots" - none of which is reducible to the other; and that images of "roots" are not only an idiom by which Temanambondro conceptualize social relations, but also one of the ways in which they conceptualize their "attachment to place".

Keywords: aesthetics, gender, house, kinship, Madagascar, personhood, place, space.

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Placing the Temanambondro in Time and Space

Place, person and ancestry

The people who inhabit the lower reaches of the Manambondro river in coastal southeast Madagascar refer to themselves as Temanambondro, "people of the Manambondro [river]".[1] In their self-appellation the Temanambondro therefore define themselves as a "kind of people" through the place they live, a place which is also significant with regard to the local conceptualization of personhood, for here the person's life-cycle is connected to the river in a number of ways. The umbilical cords of infants for example are thrown into the river soon after their birth, and upon death the relationship between place, person, and ancestry is vividly realized during funerary rites when the dead are taken by canoe for burial in the tombs that lie at the mouth of the Manambondro river.

The significance of the river in the conceptualization of place, person, and ancestry is one of the focuses of this thesis which is an attempt to analyse the Temanambondro sociological imagination through an exploration of the categories, images and idioms that people use in conceptualizing relatedness. In the following chapters I attempt to show how ancestry and relatedness are conceptualized, and of particular importance here are ideas about gender, houses and tombs, space and place, and images of "roots", "trunks" and "branches". In addition I suggest that there is an aesthetic dimension to personhood which centres on how people evaluate their own and other people's everyday practice, in particular how they try to live valued lives through acts of "nurture".

Whilst personhood and ancestry are in part defined through the river, it is also the case that people's sense of place involves feeling somewhat marginal within the nation-state of Madagascar. It is this aspect of place that concerns us in the present chapter, which is an attempt to write a "spatial history" (Carter 1988) of the Manambondro region, showing both how the Temanambondro have inscribed their presence on the landscape they inhabit, as well as how the process of marginalization that people sense is a recent phenomenon. In addition, it is an attempt to explain why the Temanambondro and their neighbours have been marginalized in another way, by being ignored in anthropological research in Madagascar, and as it will hopefully become clear, these two aspects of marginality are not unconnected.
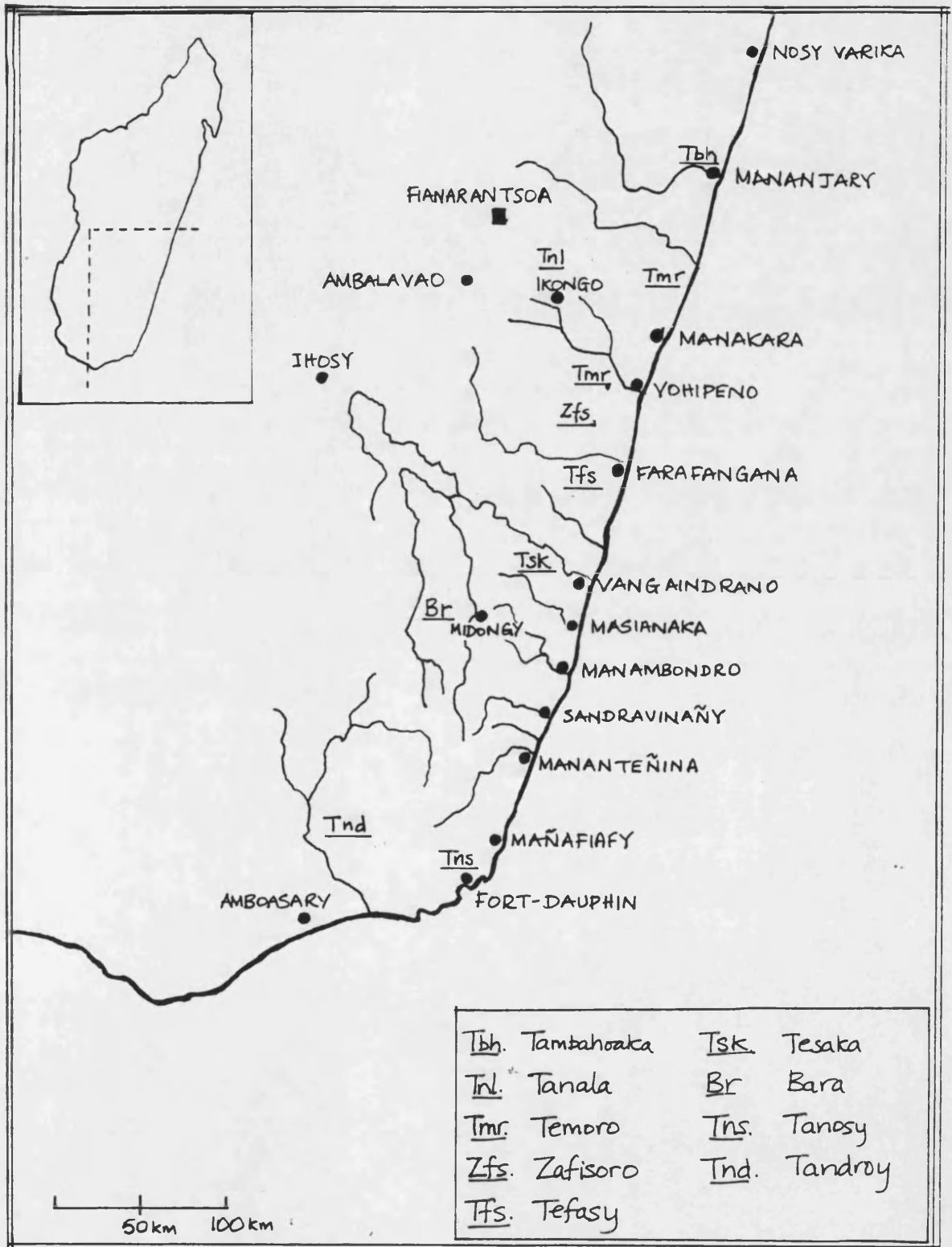
Figure 1: Map of southeast Madagascar

Legend:

Tbh.	Tambahoaka	Tsk.	Tesaka
Tnl.	Tanala	Br	Bara
Tmr.	Temoro	Tns.	Tanosy
Zfs.	Zafisoro	Tnd.	Tandroy
Tfs.	Tefasy		

Map labels: NOSY VARIKA, MANANJARY, FIANARANTSOA, AMBALAVAO, IKONGO, MANAKARA, IHOSY, YOHIPENO, FARAFANGANA, VANGAINDRANO, MIDONGY, MASIANAKA, MANAMBONDRO, SANDRAVINAÑY, MANANTEÑINA, MAÑAFIAFY, AMBOASARY, FORT-DAUPHIN

Scale: 50km 100km
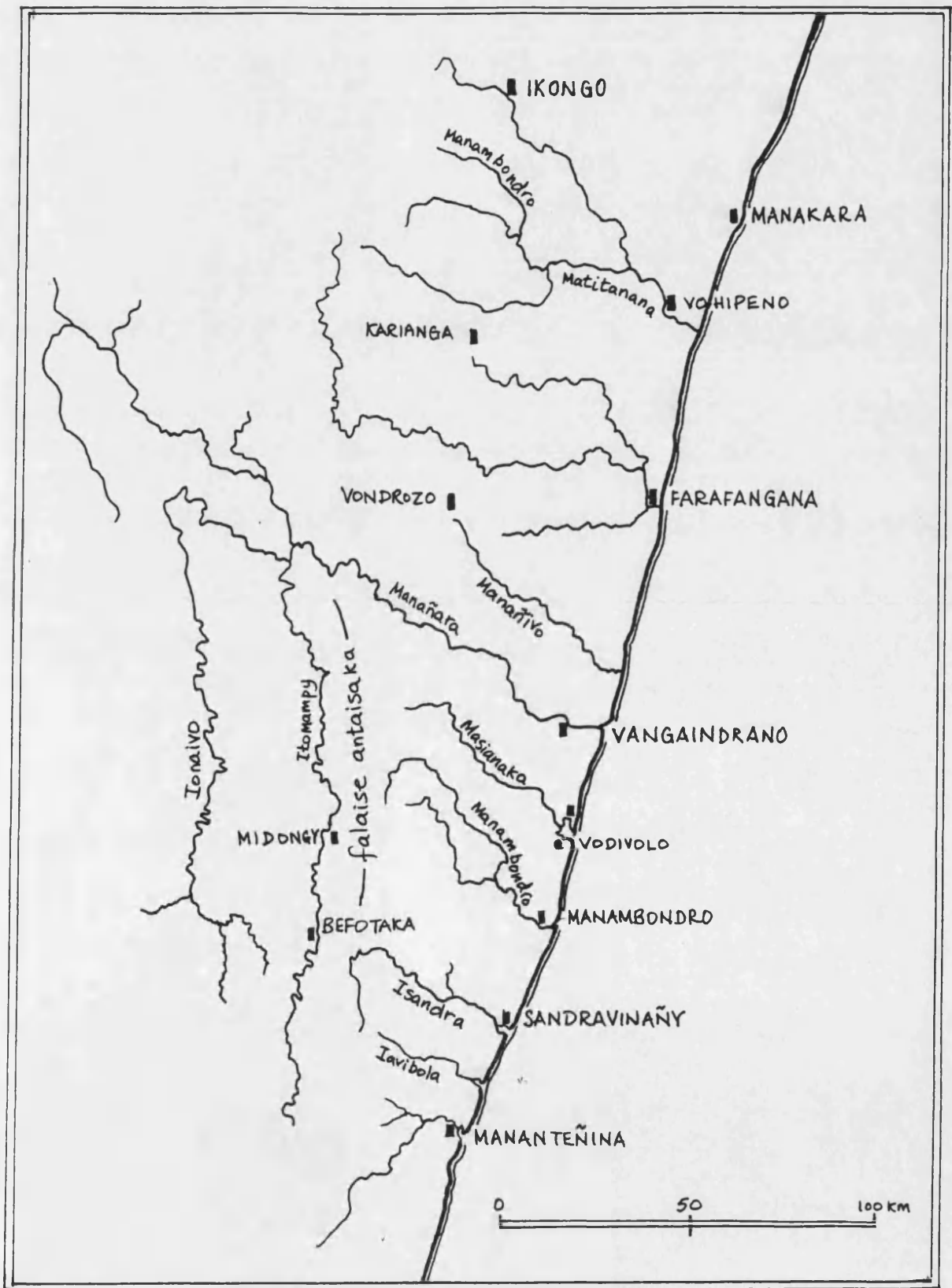
Figure 2: Map of southeast Madagascar (detail)

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A tale of two rivers

It seemed to me from asking people to recount it that there are probably as many versions of the story that tells of the origins of the Temanambondro as there are people prepared to recite it. Despairing of the different turns taken by every new account I heard, I suggested one day to Aban'Marozaza that there was no true "story" (*tantara*) and that they "all lied" (*mavandy aby*). Turning to look at me, his wry smile seemed to say "and now you see the nature of such stories". And of course he would know, respected as he was as someone who "knew how to tell stories" (*mahay mitantara*). He also knew that such stories where part of a political economy of knowledge, the basis of much politicking, and as such many "stories" were known to only a few, a situation actively kept that way. Where stories continue to live only through their telling they are apt to shift in the ebb and flow of memory. Yet whilst certain points altered with virtually every telling, there was much that remained the same, and the version of the story of Andriamaroary presented here would be recognizable to those Temanambondro who have heard it as a rendition of the main points.[2]

In the forested region of Ikongo lies a tributary of the Matitanana river named the Manambondro (see figure 2). This region was home to a man named Andriamaroary, and the place he came from was called Vatomivarina. The place name perhaps tells of the event that made Andriamaroary leave the region of his "ancestral water" (*ranon-drazana*), for a large rock (*vato*) is said to have fallen (*mivarina*) on the place where he lived after a thunder storm. Having fled this place Andriamaroary travelled southeast until stopping in the region of Ankarana on the north side of the lower Manañivo river; there he married a Tevato woman of the country, and together they had some sons, and a daughter named Rañombola.

Rañombola herself had three sons - Ratsimaniry, Ratsiazomosary, and Rafolo - but the father, a travelling musician, did not complete the marriage rites, and when he left Rañombola the children were not his to take with him and they remained with their mother and grandfather. Disputes between Rañombola's sons and their "mother's brothers" lead them to leave Ankarana and journey southwards. On this journey they were lead by their grandfather Andriamaroary, and accompanied by their mother Rañombola and some of Andriamaroary's followers. The group travelled along the coast until they came to the mouth of a large river. A "diviner" (*ombiasa*) with whom they were travelling had said that when the bull they had brought with them began to low then they knew that they had found the place where they would settle, and at the mouth of the large river the bull began to do so, the sign that their journey was at an end. But just as soon as this happened Andriamaroary noticed another sign, a bunch of green bananas floating past in the river, something that indicated that there were others already settled further upriver.

Moving upriver the group came upon an island which was already inhabited. Of those that were there, the only certain name to be remembered is that of Ramañera, although they were perhaps not the only inhabitants. The Ramañera were hunters of feral pig (*pangoron-dambo*) and strong and able fighters, but (perhaps aided by others already settled close by) Andriamaroary and his followers overcame them. Of

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the Ramañera, some died in the fighting, and some fled to the west (where they are still to be found it is said); however some survived and did not flee, and remaining on their island home, they were reduced to "waiters on the ruler" (*piambin-drondria*).

Having conquered the inhabitants of the island, which henceforth became known as Antokonosy, Andriamaroary took it for his own place of residence and there were settled those who had accompanied him on the journey from the north. Thereafter Andriamaroary divided the polity he had founded between his three grandsons: the oldest Ratsimaniry was given the lower Isandra valley, and settled in the village of Sandravinañy; the second eldest, Ratsiazomosary, was given the middle Manambondro valley and settled the village of Vohimalaza; and to the youngest Rafolo was given the lower river valley and the island of Antokonosy.

Of the old name of the river in which the island lies, no memory remains, for after Andriamaroary settled on Antokonosy it was to gain another. On the journey from the north Andriamaroary had brought with him a gourd of water drawn from the "ancestral water" of the Manambondro river from which he had come. Claiming the river in the midst of which he and his followers had now settled, he poured water from the gourd into the river, and so named it Manambondro.

So the name has remained, memorial to the ancestral origins of the arrivals from the north, although the inhabitants of the island of Antokonosy were moved to the mainland around 1905 not long after the imposition of French colonial rule, settling in the villages of Befeno, Fenoambany and Manambondro. Apart from its interest as a historical account of certain Temanambondro named Ancestries, the story is also notable for some of the themes it contains and which we will come across again, perhaps the most significant of which is that relating to the river. In fact the name Temanambondro itself means "people of the Manambondro [river]", and despite the dispersal of Ancestries within the three domains of the polity, and the different origins of Ancestries who arrived after Andriamaroary and those who accompanied him, the Manambondro river remains central to Temanambondro identity: it is the "great trunk" (*fotora be*) of which all Temanambondro Ancestries are "branches" (*sokazana*), and it is an "origin-root" (*fototra*), a concept which is basic to what is thought to attach people to place.

Questions of origins and arrivals

Temanambondro are not alone in their interest in stories about origins and arrivals, for the question of origins has been debated in the study of Madagascar since the beginning of academic scholarship about the island. An exhibition entitled "Malagasy: who are you?" (Neuchâtel 1973) sums up the concern that has produced much fanciful and fabulous scholarship, with stories as every bit political as that of Andriamaroary and his arrival

from the north (cf. Kent 1970:1-29).

Yet little can be said of Malagasy origins with any great certainty. Malagasy is a subject final language of the Austronesian language group whose closest relatives appear to be found in Kalimantan (Dahl 1951; cf. Adelaar 1989). At certain junctures the analysis presented here however suggests that Austronesian influences are to be found in more than language, although by pointing these out my intention is not to advocate a wholesale inclusion of Madagascar within the Austronesian world. Rather there are certain parallels with Southeast Asian ethnography that cannot be ignored, and comparative material from the latter region has proved most useful in analysing these. Of particular relevance here is the issue of botanical metaphors about roots, trunks and branches, as well as associated ideas about the importance of origins. Furthermore, recent work on so-called house-based societies, much of it coming from the discussion of Southeast Asian material, informs certain parts of the analysis of Temanambondro ancestry. As I argue, ideas about houses, as well as images of roots, trunks and branches, are central to people's sociological imagination - they are some of the basic categories with which people think and talk about social relationships. However, Temanambondro variations on these themes are recognizably Malagasy, and it is not my aim to speculate on the migratory path that these ideas might have taken.

Whilst fantasies about Madagascar as a whole have focused on its link with Southeast Asia, it is also the case that the southeast of the island has been viewed all too often through its links with an "Arabia" more mythical than historical and geographical. This is most pronounced in work on the Temoro, whose past some have sought in their "great writings" (*sora be*), books written in Malagasy using Arabic script. But although the regional significance of these overseas arrivals has been somewhat overestimated (cf. Deschamps and Vianès 1959:9), it is true that certain aspects of ritual and political ideas and practice exhibit an Islamic heritage (cf. Raison-Jourde 1983:14). Some ruling Ancestries of the region claim "Arab" origins, and the basing of polities in the estuary regions of rivers or on islands is a practice found among Islamic trading peoples across much of the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, certain items of vocabulary and the right to slaughter animals by cutting their throats (*sombily*), which once rested with these ruling Ancestries, again highlight Islamic influences. However, Islam as a religion has never taken hold in the region, and as with links with the Austronesian world, the significance of ideas that can be seen to have migratory histories lies in how they are articulated within the ethnographic context, rather than in where they came from.[3]

Whilst scholarship of a speculative and conjectural hue has searched far and wide in its attempt to discover overseas origins for the Malagasy, interest in origins among the Temanambondro are much more circumscribed, and focused on movements and arrivals within the region they inhabit. Commenting as do others to the south of the Manambondro region that they themselves "arrived from the north" (*avy avaratra*), this interest in origins

takes the form of specifying from which direction others arrived after them. Of importance regarding the present chapter are the Europeans who came from overseas, establishing ports of call and trading posts along the southeast coast. Of nearly four hundred years of contact before the establishing of French colonial rule at the close of the nineteenth century these arrivals left little written evidence, but what little there is will prove useful, and traces of their activities remain besides their own texts. A later arrival from the south, the Lutheran Church, is long established in the Manambondro region, and its arrival pre-dates that of the French by a few years. From the south again came the first Frenchmen of the colonial era, but their most significant arrivals were from the north. Like the Merina before them, who also came from the north, the French are principally remembered for an act of great violence. Thereafter the Temanambondro became linked to wider things through another arrival from the north, the Route National 12 which connects the Manambondro region to the towns of Vangaindrano and Fort Dauphin, places where there are things going on (*misy maresaka*), and in people's perception quite unlike the "countryside".

Arrivals are full of intentions, and my own arrival from the north by the RN12 was no less full of intentions than any other, for I had chosen to conduct fieldwork among a people who I had read disliked strangers. The Temanambondro appeared only in the margins of what I had read on southeast Madagascar; but the southeast itself was marginal to academic enquiry in Madagascar as a whole. Until now little anthropological work has been carried out in the southeast, for reasons to be discussed below. This is in part because the region is seen to be inhabited by insular peoples who have isolated themselves from their neighbours and the passage of time. The reason therefore that I have chosen to give the arrivals just mentioned such prominence, perhaps more than Temanambondro themselves accord them, is that an account of them reveals the image of insularity to be a fiction whose origins lie in the ethnology written during the colonial period, and arguably in the earliest accounts of the southeast that Europeans produced.

The politics of colonial ethnology

In discussing the sources he used in his study of the Tesaka of coastal southeast Madagascar, the Administrateur des Colonies Hubert Deschamps remarks on half a dozen pages written by Louis Catat (1895:387ff.) that despite "some interesting information" they contain "ethnographic views [which] are quite fanciful" (1936:156). Although the ethnographic picture may have improved since then it is arguable that other "quite fanciful views" about the Tesaka and their neighbours the Temanambondro remain in place, and that these in no small part account for the fact that since Deschamps' own work no major anthropological study has been undertaken.[4] Ironically enough Deschamps is responsible

for some "quite fanciful views" himself, although he is not alone in this. These views are part of an image of southeast Madagascar and its peoples, sometimes discriminating among them, sometimes not, which has meant that in relation to the island as a whole, the region has been pushed to the margins of anthropological research.

A general picture emerges in accounts of the peoples of the southeast, and the Tesaka in particular, as difficult, obdurate and taciturn to the last. For myself this meant that I was advised by some in Madagascar (both academics and government functionaries) to reconsider my choice of research location as it was "too difficult"; it is a sentiment one finds in the earliest ethnographic reports we have. Resident in Vangaindrano early this century, the missionary Bjorn Elle (1905-6) made some enquiries into the origins of various groups in the region, and found that "they do not want their origin to be known, above all by *vazaha* [i.e. Europeans]"; "most ignore their origin, because their forebears fled their first country ... for some cause or another and have hidden from their descendants the real origin of their race" (1905-6:116). A similar situation confronts Deschamps (1936:83), who too finds knowledge hidden and lost in response to his questions about religion and custom (see also Raharijaona 1967:7).

Yet there is a political economy of knowledge here that does not easily fit in with the supposed impartiality of missionary and colonial scholarship. On the one hand there is the sociology of knowledge in such societies where elders and ancestors are assumed to be the keepers of history and explanations of custom, and as such questions from *vazaha* are likely to be treated much the same as from anyone else. But there is a much more insidious aspect to this traffic, for those who saw themselves as making impartial inquiries were in fact not simply outsiders, but agents of colonial rule and forms of imposed change whose aims were such that their enquiries would inevitably lead to the undermining of the system of power built on this sociology of knowledge.

A cursory look at those who produced the scholarship reveals them to be missionaries, such as Elle, and colonial officials, such as Deschamps. Their work comprises listings of the names of various groups, their village of residence, their historical origins, and their customs. The usefulness of this crude form of census taking and codification of indigenous law is noted by the administrators Marchand (1901:489) and Deschamps (1936:8), and along with many others their research was published in various colonial journals and through the auspices of the Académie Malgache, established in 1902 by the first governor of the island colony, General Joseph-Simon Galliéni. Within a few years of the annexation of Madagascar the ethnological landscape of the southeast had been mapped and carved up, a demarcation of "tribes" (*tribus*) to facilitate the *politique des races* that was the hallmark of early colonial rule in Madagascar.[5]

In the face of all this questioning, enumerating and codifying, it seems hardly surprising that such as Elle would find those they talked to to be reticent, for, as Feeley-Harnik notes with respect to the Bemihisatra Sakalava "Inquiry into the chronology of

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human affairs is essentially a political phenomenon" (1978:402), a point equally applicable to the peoples of the southeast. Yet this reticence was never taken as resistance (except to change), a political act in the face of new holders of power, and following its own logic the colonial imagination worked in people's silences to develop an encompassing image of society and mentality that remains powerful to this day.

One aspect of this image concerns temperament, and a disposition towards violence, rebelliousness, and independence. Julien for example tells us that the Temoro, Tefasy, and Tesaka "are of a bellicose temperament" (1908:46), whilst Deschamps says of the Temanambondro region "it is the classical country of insubordination" (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:95) inhabited by a people whose "history is replete with incessant fighting and massacres between brothers" Deschamps 1936:161). The stereotype that those of the southeast are easily roused to violence continues still, and in a recent discussion of "the tribal problem and regionalism" in Madagascar, we are told that "Nowadays, apart from some convulsions in the southeast, there are no longer armed conflicts between tribes" (Andriambelomiadana 1992:50), a statement which elides the distinctiveness of the region's peoples and the history of the particular conflict to which the author appears to be alluding. The image is perhaps born of the experience of both the expanding Merina empire in the early to mid-nineteenth century and the imposition of French colonial rule at the turn of the twentieth. During both periods resistance (and some collusion) was shown, and in 1904-1905 this emerged into a wide-scale anti-colonial revolt that began in the Manambondro region. But as it will become clear, elements of the image go back much further.

There is another dimension to this portrait of temperament however, another aspect of independence. The difficulty experienced by researchers is seen to be that of all outsiders; people here dislike strangers, and are, in the face of them, likely to retreat, either into silence or the forest that surrounds their villages, disappearing "like snails" as one well travelled Temanambondro friend caricatured the image. And although violence and retreat may appear contradictory, they are both forms of the independence such as the Temanambondro are said to display, something that has other manifestations.

The notion of independence is strongly allied in accounts with the idea of isolation of the people, from the world around them and from each other. Deschamps tells us that the Tesaka have a "closed economy" (1936:76) and "are not in permanent contact with any outside group [*population étrangère*]" (1936:80); similarly Marchand states that the "many small distinct tribes" of the region live "one beside the other without mixing together" (1901:481). The image is to be found in accounts produced outside the colonial period as well. Heseltine for example says of the "tribes" of the southeast that they "form 'closed' societies, open neither to intercourse with their neighbours nor to new ideas" (1971:250), and here "natural problems" are exacerbated by "the minds of the population" (1971:251). These "minds" are frequently portrayed as "irrational", such as in a discussion of

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agricultural production during the late colonial period (Anonymous 1957:340), and apparently slaves to tradition, for of the Tesaka we are told that "this tribe has a rigidly cohesive organization which enforces conformity to custom, and particularly to a fanatical and economically ruinous cult of the dead" (Thompson and Adloff 1965:263).

The image is clear enough. Isolated from each other, people are also isolated from the world around them and the modernity brought about by colonization, in the face of which people continue their irrational practices. For Deschamps, a "*religio*" based on ancestors leaves the Tesaka and Temanambondro in a "timeless" condition (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:100), fossils of an earlier age:

> the Antaisaka still live by their own means, isolated in a world apart which vigorously perseveres with its way of life far from all modern trends. It thus constitutes a living relic of an ancient Malagasy way of life (Deschamps 1936:185).[6]

Yet this image of insularity and a place out of time, of isolation from their neighbours and from the world around them, is a fiction that is contradicted in Deschamps' own work as well as that of others. Although Deschamps talks of a "closed economy" (1936:76), he alludes in places to the practice of intra-regional trade (1936:48, 186-7), something which had doubtless declined due to colonization but whose importance is evident in the accounts left by the European traders that called and settled along the southeast coast from the beginning of the sixteenth century. Furthermore, although the region is said to comprise "closed societies", all accounts reveal that the southeast was settled by peoples arriving from a variety of different places and at different times, and that despite this the people of the southeast display a great degree of cultural homogeneity. Not isolated at all, the region has been populated by people of diverse origins which have formed together in places as regional polities. In addition, rather than being a world apart from history, the southeast was part of the expanding system of European trade in the Indian Ocean since its inception in the sixteenth century.

Migration, polity and society in southeast Madagascar

The writings of colonial ethnology have produced a picture of the southeast as populated by "closed societies", isolated from the passage of time and others around them. Yet given what we know about the settling of Madagascar and the movement of peoples within the island it is surprising that such a view of the southeast has emerged, for it implies that peoples with different origins who migrated to the region formed hermetic communities. This certainly appears to be the view of Marchand when he states that "In few of the

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regions of Madagascar does one count so many small distinct tribes, living one beside the other without mixing together, than in the province of Farafangana" (1901:481). Deschamps (1936:80) too suggests the same, when he remarks that the Tesaka are not in contact with other peoples, a fiction reiterated by a later ethnographer, who comments that the Tesaka are a "cut off group and ... relatively isolated" (Edholm 1976:10).

In delineating these many "distinct" and "isolated" groups however the French nonetheless demarcated four "tribes" in the southeast, the Tambahoaka, Temoro, Tefasy, and Tesaka (see figure 1); the Tanosy of the southern tip of the east coast around Fort Dauphin, despite their obvious affinities with other southeast coast peoples, tend to be viewed in relation to the south of Madagascar with the Tandroy and Mahafaly. This "ethnic" labelling, now enshrined in stone on a monument in the highland town of Antsirabe, is part of the dividing up of Madagascar into its eighteen official tribes. This classification goes against the grain of Marchand's remark and reveals some of the difficulties the French encountered when trying to define units for the implementing of the *politique des races*. In fact what it did was to ignore the complexity of the situation in the region's hinterlands and assume that inland peoples could be defined as being the same as those who lived on the coast. The situation on the coast however was no less complex, and although the named groups bore some relation to coastal polities centred on the estuary region of rivers, designating them as "tribes" or "ethnic" groups assumes what the bases of such groups are, as well as eliding the divisions within them.

As we have noted, one image of the southeast is that it is inhabited by peoples of "Arabic" origin, although it appears likely that there were different waves of "Arab" settlement (see e.g. Kent 1970:93ff.; Raison-Jourde 1983:18-22; Hurvitz 1986), with later arrivals displacing those who came before them, or incorporating them within the polities they established. But as Deschamps points out, "the opinion ... that *all* peoples of the southeast are of Arab origin is largely erroneous" (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:9, emphasis added), and just as there have been different waves of "Arabic" settlement, so too have there been waves of arrivals from elsewhere. "Arab" origins are therefore only one among many, and several groups in the southeast claim origins in the west of Madagascar. In fact reading the various accounts of migration among the peoples of the southeast reveals that, apart from the Tambahoaka, each people which the French labelled a "tribe" is composed of a number of groups who claim a variety of historical and geographical origins.[7]

Nowhere is this diversity of origins clearer than among the Tesaka. Although a number of Ancestries claim origins in the west of Madagascar, and link themselves to the Maroserana dynasty of Sakalava rulers through their ancestor Andriamandresy (see Deschamps 1936:163-4; Raharijaona 1967:8-11), the Tesaka comprise a large number of Ancestries of different origins, and Deschamps himself concludes that "the word Antaisaka itself ... designates a political formation [...] a heterogeneous assemblage, the

unity of which is solely of a political and social order" (1936:205-6). In describing this assemblage (1936:77-80) he distinguishes between those groups who are Antaisaka "properly speaking" and those who are "assimilated tribes" (*tribus assimilées*): the former are those groups who once formed part of the kingdom founded by descendants of Andriamandresy, whilst the "assimilated tribes" Deschamps mentions are the Temanambondro, Temasianaka and Tevato (cf. Raharijaona 1967:22), groups to be found to the south of Vangaindrano, occupying the region between the Masianaka and Iavibola rivers (see figure 1).

The Temasianaka are again a diverse lot: some among them claim an "Arabic" origin and "kinship" with the Tambahoaka and Zafiraminia Tanosy, whilst others arrived from the Androy region of the south. Some Tevato groups also claim origins among the "Arabic" arrivals at the Matitanana river, whilst others claim to have come from the west of Madagascar, and they are a widely dispersed people, some found on the middle Matitanana river as well as further south, on the middle and lower Manañivo, and between the Manambondro and Masianaka rivers.[8]

If one were to enumerate the various Ancestries who refer to themselves as Temanambondro an even more complex picture would emerge, for as with the Tesaka, Temasianaka and Tevato, they are a people of diverse origins. For the sake of clarity we can therefore restrict ourselves to the eleven named Ancestries of Manambondro village whose migratory histories I know best. The "tale of two rivers" recounts how Andriamaroary and his followers were Tanala from the Ikongo region, hailing from a place called Vatomivarina. However, this is true of only a few Ancestries, and only two in Manambondro village, the Andonakavaratra and Vohindava, both of which stem from Andriamaroary's youngest grandson, Rafolo. Three other Ancestries are said to have either accompanied Andriamaroary or arrived very soon after he had settled on the island of Antokonosy, the Ambanihampy, Andrato and Nahireza; of their origin however, their is some uncertainty, with some claiming that they too hail from Vatomivarina, whilst others say they are from Ankara, the region where Andriamaroary temporarily settled and where Rañombola had her three sons. Things are clearer however regarding the remaining Ancestries, and they are all said to have arrived some time after Andriamaroary and his followers. Three of them - the Horanga, Mahanara, and Marofela - claim Tevato origins on the Manañivo river, whilst two others - the Zazamena and Tsihitatraño - originate from villages close to and to the east of Vangaindrano. Finally, the origins of the Anzoloky appear to be unknown, and they are said to have simply "arrived from the west" (*avy andrefana*).

What these stories of migration reveal is both the difficulty of delineating groups along the lines of "tribe" or "ethnic" group, as well as pointing to the diversity of origins found within the groups incorporated within a single polity. In choosing to call the Temanambondro, Temasianaka and Tevato "assimilated tribes" Deschamps explains

himself as follows:

> These peoples previously formed autonomous political units. But they are mixed in
> an intimate fashion with the Antaisaka, as much by their geographical situation as
> their history. Their customs are altogether identical with those of the Antaisaka
> (1936:79).

Given his emphasis on the Tesaka as a political grouping, it is odd that Deschamps decided to refer to these peoples as "assimilated" Tesaka, and the Temanambondro do not consider themselves to be "assimilated" at all. They form a distinct people who claim different historical and geographical origins to the Tesaka, and although they share many customs with them, they also share several of these with other peoples of the southeast as well (see below). On the other hand, Temanambondro also emphasize, especially regarding funerary rites, how certain of their neighbours' practices are *fomba hafa*, "different custom", and here the Temanambondro have more in common with peoples to their south than with the Tevato, Temasianaka and Tesaka who live to their north.

But in eschewing "tribe" and "race" as the basis for delineating groups, and choosing instead to focus on polity and "custom", Deschamps (1936:205-6) is surely right. As it will become clear in Chapter 5, Temanambondro are a political grouping of sorts, although the self-appellation is more complicated than this, and involves ideas about having the same "customs" (*fomba*) and living in the same "place". As a result Temanambondro self-identity is to do with place and practice rather than being to do with a notion of territory or inherent qualities as presumed by theories of ethnicity.[9]

As well as highlighting the problem of delineating collectivities along lines of "ethnicity" or territory, these stories also show how the image of "closed societies" is a misrepresentation. Out of the various migrations that have brought people to the southeast there has emerged a great degree of similarity in social and political organization, as well as in a variety of ritual practices.[10] Introducing his study of the Tesaka, Deschamps had a similar point to make about the regional context of his work:

> There exists ... along the southeast coast a certain number of peoples whose
> customs and language reveal numerous similarities. It is one of the points of the
> island where political divisions are the most numerous, without these implying
> considerable differences in customs (1936:8).

It is difficult to imagine how such homogeneity arose out of such an admixture of population if everyone who arrived set themselves up as a "closed society", "open neither to new ideas nor discourse with their neighbours". Migration narratives belie this view, as does the socio-cultural similarity among peoples.

Given the interest in origins and arrivals in the southeast that I have outlined, it

would be surprising if the distinction made between "autochthons" and "immigrants" reported elsewhere in Madagascar was not important here too, and such is certainly the case. In Manambondro the term for original inhabitants of the land is *zokitany*, literally "elders of the land", and throughout the southeast "autochthons" are frequently accorded special ritual prerogatives. Among coastal peoples the original inhabitants of the land are sometimes also known as "masters of the embouchure" (*tomponbinany*) and have the right to perform a ritual of purification at the river-mouth (cf. e.g. Deschamps and Vianès 1959:21, 45, 79; Chandon-Moet 1972:52-3, 71). It is not unusual however to find that these "elders of the land" are not the rulers of the domain, but instead hold an executive office. Rulers on the other hand held other prerogatives which were signs of their power and status.

The case of the Anteony and the Antalaotra, ruling groups among the Temoro reported by Suzanne Vianès (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:38), appears typical of the process of polity formation. In the expansion of the immigrant ruling groups up the Matitanana river valley, those already inhabiting the land became accepted as Temoro when they recognized the suzerainty of the ruler; this involved not only recognizing a ruler's "religious authority ... [but also adopting] a certain number of customs, in particular that of not being able to consume meat if it had not been previously killed according to Arab rites, a privilege reserved for the Anteony and Antalaotra and named *sombily*" (1959:38). The right to sacrifice cattle, or rather to make the first cut and blow to the animal's neck, was also the right of the ruling Ancestry among the Temanambondro until this century, and the restrictions placed on the consumption of meat in light of the practice of *sombily* is reported for other parts of the southeast coast.[11] Often along with this came the right to such things as being the first to sow the new season's rice, rights to parts of sacrificed animals, and the right to wear certain items of clothing and display certain items of finery and jewelry (cf. Marchand 1901:574-5; Deschamps 1936:171-5). All in all rulers employed a wide repertoire of symbolic devices to reinforce their position, and those that recognized this legitimacy were incorporated within the domain, whilst those that did not were forced to flee.

It is striking in fact that all ruling dynasties in the southeast claim ultimate origins from two places, among the "Arabic" arrivals at the Matitanana river, or from the Maroseraña, rulers among the Sakalava, who themselves also claim origins among the "Arab" peoples of the east coast (Lombard 1986:145; cf. Feeley-Harnik 1991b:71-3), and polities in this region were effectively based on a system where forms of ritual dependence amounted to political dependence, and vice versa. The symbolics of power and ruling are similar for all the coastal peoples of the southeast, and it seems clear how such a system established itself thus enabling rulers to carve out their own domains. Those autochthonous peoples already resident in a place were sometimes displaced by incoming rulers, although in some cases they became incorporated within the newly established

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polity and retained certain ritual privileges (cf. Hurvitz 1986). The ruler however had other prerogatives, and his subjects (for rulers were always men) were those who recognized the legitimacy of his right to perform certain rituals. The vanquished population, and those who arrived later in the domain, became subject peoples, incorporated within the polity through adopting certain "customs" (fomba), and, in the case of the Temanambondro, through the locating of tombs at the mouth of the Manambondro river.

This latter fact links into another aspect of the commonalities found among the peoples of the southeast. Along with broadly similar ecological conditions and a broadly similar agriculture, the peoples of the southeast share a wide range of social and ritual practices (see also Deschamps and Vianès 1959:12-16). Villages are nucleated, and within them are found several groups, described in the literature as "patrilineages" and known as tranobe or fatrange, which are arranged around a central open space where ancestors are invoked and where sacrifices are performed. These "patrilineages" are said to be localized branches of dispersed "clans", themselves sometimes part of a "tribe", and Deschamps notes that throughout the region the "essential unit is that of the people who have rights in the same tomb" (1959:15).

Apart from social organization, various ritual practices are common throughout the region also, such as life cycle rites. Birth is surrounded by little ritual, apart from the disposal of the placenta and umbilical cord, often placed in a river or interred in the ground. Male circumcision is universal, and the description of the rites reveal a great deal of commonality in even the smallest of details, whilst marriage between people deemed to be too closely related can only be permitted with the performance of the rite of fafy. Finally, the importance attributed to ancestors is widely reported, as is the practice of secondary mortuary ceremonies.

Any notion of "ethnicity" is therefore of little use in trying to understand the peoples of the southeast, for as Deschamps (1936:205-6) himself pointed out, what groups there are are political formations. Yet these political formations were based on a symbolic system of ritual agency and mystical power whereby a domain grew around a ruler deemed to have legitimacy by his subjects. The system of social organization of localized "patrilineages" (or as it will become clear, "great houses") allowed for easy movement, for one could move from one place to another and settle, setting oneself up as a new and separate "house". If one moved long distance then it was likely that one would end up within a different domain, but that was an easy move to make. One had only to recognize the legitimacy of the ruler of a domain on arrival to be allowed to settle, and given the wide similarities in life cycle rituals the move would not represent any great change in ritual practice. Once settled marriage and farming began to create among settlers an "attachment to place" reinforced by the birth of children and the attending of other's rituals. Finally death would come, and with it the establishing of a new tomb in the domain to which the settler had moved.

Given the ease of moving and settling it is not surprising then that we find certain named ancestries among different "ethnic" groups. The Andramira for example, an ancestry resident in Fenoambany on the lower Manambondro, can be also found living to the west of Befotaka among the Bara, in several Tesaka villages, and on the shores of the Masianaka (Elle 1905-6:123; Deschamps 1936:78). Rather than thinking in terms of "ethnicity" it is better to view the peoples of the southeast as political groupings recognizing (or having once recognized) a ruler of a domain who share among themselves a common set of social and ritual practices. It is this situation that has made possible the movement of peoples reported in the migration narratives, new arrivals welcomed only if they fully integrated themselves into the domain.

Migration then has brought people to the southeast from many places, and yet there has emerged a set of common socio-cultural practices among peoples of diverse origins. Migration narratives reveal there to have been a great deal of population movement and of people being incorporated into the places they arrived at. Any view of the southeast as an area of closed societies cannot therefore be sustained in view of the diversity of origins and movement of peoples within the region, and the socio-cultural homogeneity that they display. Why such a view might have emerged is another question, and one to which we next turn. Here accounts of the past reveal the southeast, and the Manambondro region in particular, to have been marginalized only within the last century. In approaching the past we have two sources, the written texts of Europeans who travelled in the region, and in oral accounts of the past collected during fieldwork. In analysing the latter one thing became clear to me, namely that the past is remembered to a great extent through places, and it is for this reason that an account of the past is also an account of the landscape.

A landscape of cultivated spaces

"Land is not land alone", observes V. S. Naipaul, "something that simply is itself. Land partakes of what we breathe into it, is touched by our moods and memories" (1987:301). But it is not just the most rootless of novelists who has noted how people become attached to land and place, for anthropologists too have noted how people make their mark on land through moving across, naming, clearing, cultivating, and settling it, such that the work invested in it becomes celebrated in the rich imagery of people's poetic imagination (e.g. Zerner 1985; Weiner 1991). Indeed, as a manual for research in economic anthropology notes, "Land is a space that is lived, not just perceived. People become emotionally tied to it and project their personality onto it; personal and group identity are defined with reference to it" (Gregory and Altman 1989:89). Such is certainly the case for the Temanambondro, and as we will see land as place is central to the conceptualization of

personhood and ancestry.

Land is also important for the way in which it figures in people's remembering of the past. The past has been left as traces inscribed on the land, part of an architectonics of memory, something that will become clearer in the next section when we look at the past through its relationship with places. But whilst part of the architectonics of memory, the landscape is part of the architectonics of purposeful activity engaged in by people making a livelihood. Through farming the land Temanambondro have transformed their environment, and despite the image of the traditional life the landscape, like tradition itself, has constantly been transformed and worked upon. The temporal rhythms of the of the agricultural year are associated with movement among landscape spaces, whilst the long durée manifests itself more in individual places. How Temanambondro apprehend their landscape as a series of places of action and intention can be seen through looking at the landscape categories they employ and which classify land in terms of the practices associated with it.

Even talking of the categories of landscape spaces can reveal changes wrought over time. From talking to two old men about when Andriamaroary and his followers first arrived in the Manambondro region, it became clear how the presence of people was marked on the land through the things they did there. The original inhabitants of Antokonosy are said to have been hunters of feral pig (*pangoron-dambo*) who were duped whilst their men were away to the south chasing their dangerous prey. At this time the river was narrower than it is today, something also said to be the case for the Isandra (see figure 3). South of Antokonosy lay the original inhabitant's fields: around the current village of Befeno they grew manioc on swiddens, and a little to the east (between what became the villages of Befeno and Fenoambany) they had some bunded rice fields. But rice farming did not take up the greater part of their life as it does for the Temanambondro now, and their staple is said to have been manioc.

Nowadays feral pig are scarce, although some hunting is still done, more for recreation than subsistence. These animals inhabit the space that Temanambondro recognize has grown gradually smaller, the forest (*ala*) that remains beyond the margins of village settlements and cultivated spaces. Along the littoral (*añ-ilan-dreky*) lies a gallery forest stretching along the whole of the coastline occupied by the Temanambondro, and continuing both to the north and the south. Close to the mouth of the Manambondro river part of the forest is "tabooed" (*ala fady*, "tabooed forest"; also known as *adidy kibory*, lit. "law of the tomb"), for here on both banks of the river are to be found the tombs that are an essential part of Temanambondro identity. Further inland other areas of forest remain, some preserved by state sanction, others further upriver and in the hinterlands by the absence of human habitation and cultivation. Here are found the forest products so essential to Temanambondro life, firewood for cooking, and other woods, vines and barks for house construction.
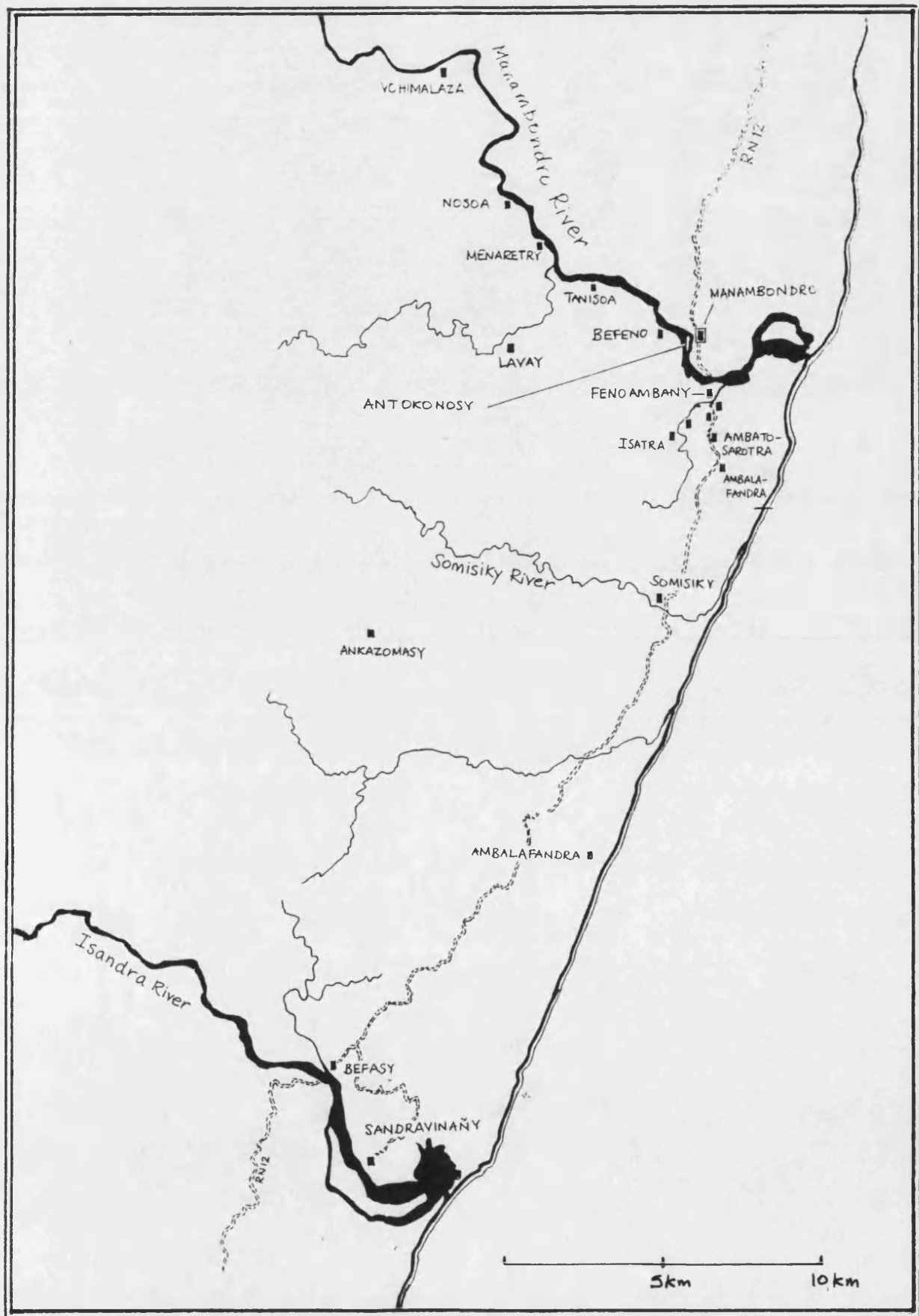
Figure 3: Map of the region between the Manambondro and Isandra rivers

Behind the littoral gallery forest south of the Somisiky river lies a rolling grassy landscape covered in coarse grasses displaced only by occasional stands of traveller's palm and various reeds and aloes. This is the *kizana*, pasture land for the dwindling herds of cattle Temanambondro still possess. For most of the year people leave their cattle here to roam freely; creatures of habit as they are however, herders often have a good idea of the whereabouts of their herd during their lengthy stays there. Whilst bordered by littoral forest and sea to the east, the *kizana* rolls on to the west until it ends at the edge of the forest that covers the foothills of the escarpment that stretches along much of the east coast of Madagascar. From the coast itself these foothills are not visible however, and the pasture lands end in a haze from which looms imperious and majestic the purple-blue mountains of the Falaise Antaisaka. To my sensibility there was a magic about these hills, quite unlike anything I had ever seen. But to those who live there they were simply *vohitra be*, "big hills" beyond which lived the Bara and where cattle were said to be cheap and plentiful.

Whilst I was distracted by this pleasing prospect, Temanambondro themselves were occupied by something much more close at hand, a concern which has as beauty all of its own as I was to learn. The cattle that roam the pasture lands are items of wealth and prestige, even animals of beauty to be aesthetically appreciated (cf. Wilson 1992:76-83). But they are also working animals, and twice a year they are brought back from the *kizana* to participate in that which occupies so much Temanambondro thinking and conversation, the work of growing rice. Whilst the forest and pasture land lie at the extremities of the land most Temanambondro are familiar with, closer to home lies a part of the landscape on which a great deal of work is expended, and of which people have much more intimate knowledge.

Temanambondro are wet-rice farmers, and they will never tire of telling one about it. Being a rice farmer is as important a part of their sense of self as any other, and although it took me a while to adjust to the idea, once I began to farm rice myself the attitude of many towards me began to change quite markedly. Now I could talk with some knowledge about the problems the work entailed, about how the rain is either too long in coming or too much when it arrives, about timing transplanting, about whether the earth of the rice field is muddy enough. From actively farming, the landscape began to take on new depth for me. It was not just a patchwork of rice fields and marshes interspersed with dry uplands criss-crossed by paths and planted with various crops and trees. It came alive as a place of action and intention, a landscape of social relationships mapped out on fields and plots, a landscape buzzing with stories about who farmed here, who bought this field, who first cleared it of forest. But it was also a landscape of everyday activity, the grind of work without machines, of trying to produce a livelihood from land whose better days many said had passed.

Where once forest stood, or so it is said, is now found marshland and rice fields,

and sandy and red laterite upland. On the former are planted the two varieties of rice the Temanambondro grow, whilst on the latter are grown the various other foodstuffs that they view only as supplements to rice, the most important of foods. Unlike the highlands of Madagascar, there are no terraced hillsides here, and clearing the trees from low-lying marshy forest has been the only way open to the Temanambondro for creating land on which to cultivate wet-rice. In some places the gnarled roots and stumps of long dead trees protrude from rice fields, testament to what once grew there, as are the place names - Fotsivavo, Hafatray, Efaho - names that commemorate the species of trees no longer to be found there.

Despite being areas for growing rice, marshland and rice fields are differentiated in various ways. Marshland (*rokana*) is land that has yet to be bunded and remains used under a regime of short-term shifting cultivation. Here people grow *vatomandry*, rice which thrives in shallow water and whose roots are strong and able to thrive in the fibrous mulch of marshland soils. Rice fields (*horaky*) however are bunded and clearly discernible, most planted annually (some even bi-annually), and typically used for growing *vary hosy*, although in recent years this rice variety has been displaced to a great extent by the hardier but lower-yielding variety of rice known as *tsimikitra*. Apart from preferring deep water to grow in, *vary hosy* also requires soft muddy earth as it has "soft" roots. The difference between marshland and rice field is one of degree. Rice fields are basically areas of marshland selected because of the quality of the soil, and through bunding and repeated use their soil takes on a quality quite unlike that of marshland, free of all fibrous matter.

Other differences between the two rice growing areas are important apart from that of soil. *Vatomandry* and *vary hosy* are grown in two different seasons: *vatomandry* is transplanted or sown direct in November through to March, then harvested in late May and June; *vary hosy* however is transplanted in July through to mid-September and harvested in late December and January. Production of the two different varieties also requires different techniques, and the move from working *vatomandry* to working *vary hosy* and back again sets up one of the important rhythms of the agricultural cycle, both in terms of the work performed and the places where it is done, a movement from marshland to rice field and back again.

The counterpoint to the rhythm of rice is the less intensive but in the end no less important work on the dry upland (*am-bohitra*). Frequently grown on low-lying sandy soil (*lemoky*) is manioc (*kazaha*), harvested eight months and upwards after planting in August and September. At about the same time the manioc is planted, sweet-potato (*vorondra*) becomes available, having been planted the previous March and April. Both these crops, the main supplements to rice, are also grown on "*concessions*", plots whose name reveals much. *Concessions* are upland plots of land that were demarcated by the French so that they could be recorded in a land registry, and are characterized by a land-use pattern that

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transformed the previous pattern of shifting cultivation to the permanent occupation of particular plots of land.

Before the arrival of the French all upland was cultivated under a system known as *tany haroana* or *tany kambana*, "mixed" or "twinned land". This followed a system of rights by first clearing whereby all those recognized as "children" in successive generations (*taranaka*) of a group of people who first cleared a stretch of land were entitled to use it. This raised few problems due to the nature of the crops grown, all ones whose growing cycle was of a short-term duration of one or two years, and this system of planting was known as *voliavotry*, "trans-planting". One simply cleared a stretch of land to which one had rights of access, farmed it for one or two years, and then went on somewhere else. With the French came crops with far greater growth cycles than manioc, sweet-potato, dry-rice and groundnuts, crops which transformed the pattern of land use from "mixed land" to *tanin'i Iano*, "Iano's land", that is land belonging to Iano. Whereas one planted and moved on after a year or two on "mixed land", the introduction of species such as coffee, cloves and eucalyptus meant that land became permanently planted, a practice known as *fotoboly*, literally "trunk planting".

Whereas *lemoky* and *rokana* tend to be farmed as "mixed land" under a regime of short-term shifting cultivation in which several people have use rights, *horaky* and *concessions* are owned by a more restricted group of people who farm the same plot on an annual basis. But on all these tracts of land can be traced relationships between those who farm them. In the past large stretches of marshland and upland were cleared by a group of men, and use-rights in this cleared land remained with them and their "children" (*taranaka*), proprietorship following a system of first clearing. These groups of men were invariably of the same named Ancestry, and so the landscape began to consist of various plots associated with particular Ancestries. Later clearing of other land means that an Ancestry's land is now to be found scattered all over the landscape. On the best marshland bunded rice fields were made, and so the marshland became transformed into a patchwork of rice fields where proprietorship rested with the person who first bunded the land. Similarly on upland, the introduction of *concessions* has produced the same effect as rice fields, dividing large tracts of land into smaller parcels.

The colonial origins of these *concessions* remains evident in the names of several of the crops grown there: coffee (*kafe*; Fr. *café*), the shade tree *bonara* (Fr. *bois noir*), pineapples (*manasa*; Fr. *ananas*), mangoes (*manga*; Fr. *mangue*), cloves (*zorofo*; Fr. *girofle*). Other French introduced crops are found there too, such as two species of eucalyptus (*kininy*), trees often used as boundary markers, as well as older crops, such as bananas, yams, manioc, sweet-potato, and varieties of beans and groundnuts. For some the *concession* is also a place to set up residence, and several people set up a house here and are said to live "home in the bush" (*mody añ-ahitra*), returning to the village when they need to.

All of the above spaces - forest, pastureland, marshland, rice fields, dry upland - are collectively known as "in the bush" (añ-ahitra), categorically separate from their opposite, "in the village" (an-tana). However, despite this stark lexical differentiation the two spaces are not reinforced by a division between "nature" and "culture", the wild bush and the cultural village. The whole landscape is cultivated to some extent, especially that which is regularly farmed. But in the main the difference is one of the prototype images of the activities performed there, "in the bush" being a place where one farms, and "in the village" where people live and where rituals are performed.

Although there is around and within the village an area of cultivated land, it is lexically separate from being "in the bush" and is "in the village". This land, known as *zoloky*, is used for various things: cultivation of coffee, bananas, seed-beds (*varibo*) for *vary hosy*, the growing of various leguminous and leafy vegetables and so on. In some places *zoloky* separates village from bush, a liminal cultivated space; in others rice fields abut the "the bottom of the village" (*ambanitana*) itself.

From the furthest spaces, the sea to the east and mountains to the west, through forest, pastureland and cultivated bush, one arrives in the social space of the villages that are home to around some 10,500 people on the lower Isandra and Manambondro rivers. It is these regions that are home to the Temanambondro I met, and it is those of the lower Manambondro valley with whom I am most familiar. Its several villages are to be found on or close to the bank of the Manambondro or one of its tributaries, and it is from data gathered in these villages that the present work is based. But even though the analysis of place found here concerns itself mainly with personhood and ancestry, it is important to remember that the cultivated landscape is very much a part of people's sense of place, and at various times it will be necessary to draw on images of places and things outside the village in the analysis that follows. Cultivated through time, the landscape has been susceptible to the change brought about by work. The traces of this work of long dead ancestors are found in the patchwork pattern of contemporary land use, but this is only one aspect of how Temanambondro remember the people and events from the past through their relationship with places.

The past in places

Whilst Temanambondro identify themselves on an everyday basis with the land they work and the place they live, to a great extent they also remember the past through places, the locations associated with particular events. In doing so the Temanambondro are not unique, and various other studies have shown how a variety of peoples view aspects of the past in terms of land, place and landscape (cf. e.g. Fox 1979; R. Rosaldo 1980; Basso

1984; Kuipers 1984; Weiner 1991; Hoskins 1993:24; Küchler 1993). Indeed, as Edward Casey puts it, places are often "time saturated" (1993:320n.41), and the significance of certain places frequently stems from their past-ness, their ability to harmonize spatial and temporal dimensions of events in particular localities.

The place-ness of the past can also be seen in the accounts of others working in Madagascar, and in this context references are frequently made to the importance of tombs (e.g. Baré 1977:97; Kus and Raharijaona 1990:22; Feeley-Harnik 1991a; Graeber 1995:262; cf. Bloch 1995a). However, although Temanambondro also tend to view certain aspects of the past from the perspective of place - thus making the past 'place saturated' - tombs play only a minor role in remembering the past. Instead the past is recalled through much more mundane places - areas of cleared forest, bunded rice fields, planted trees - and in certain contexts notable events become remembered through the place they occurred, such that the name of a place becomes synonymous with the event that occurred there.

To walk about the cultivated landscape with someone who farms there opens one's eyes to what at first appears to be nothing more than so many shades of green and brown, a lichen covered rock, a small dip in the land. But there are stories and there are names:

These eucalyptus that straddle the hill in a straight line -I planted them in 1959 just before the French left. They said plant them at the edge of your land so they will be signs of where its limits are. Soon others will come, they said, and want to take your land, but with these trees you will know where your land starts and ends. So I planted them and there they are. These other people though, they never came.

You know that place just near the crossroads of the path that goes to N and S. That's where my grandfather R cleared a swidden with his brothers. The French caught them though. They told us we couldn't cut down the forest there and made us build a fence round it. We took our cattle there and let them graze in the forest for a few days before going to find them again. But you couldn't make swiddens there and they caught R and his brothers. The French sent them to gaol in Vangaindrano for three months and my father's sisters had to go there one at a time to cook for them because the French didn't give them any food. When the French went home they said that the land belonged to us because R and his brothers had been the first to clear it. That's where T [speaker's FZS] has his manioc now.

He used to keep the cattle there, my grandfather. There was a pen and when we brought them back from the forest we kept them there. He had 80 and there was so much dung in the pen you sunk up to your knees in it! But they've all gone now.

This is a landscape alive with stories, places imbued with memories. But the past is not just to be found in narratives, for places act as mnemonic devices and participate in what could be called an architectonics of memory. In what follows I have tried to keep in mind this way of viewing the past, and when referring to historical accounts produced by Europeans I have emphasized the spatial dimensions of their own narratives in an attempt to draw out similarities and differences in Temanambondro perceptions of the past and

European perspectives on Temanambondro "history".[12] The ultimate aim of this sections however is to show that the Manambondro region and the southeast more generally was part of the "World System" whose arena expanded to include the Indian Ocean in the sixteenth century, and that the region is far from being a place out of time as colonial ethnology suggests.

Accounts of European traders

A List of the Fleets of Portugal for 1510 notes that of 14 *nāos* the "last three, João Serrão captain major, were being sent by the king to discover the island of São Lourenço and to establish the trade of pepper with the natives thereof in the port of Matatana" (Documents 1963ii:407). The phrasing is odd, given that Diogo Dias had, driven by a storm when rounding the Cape, landed on the island some ten years previously, naming it after the saint on whose feast day it was discovered. This was not to be last time that European presence was recorded in naming parts of the landscape of Madagascar.

In the words of the historian K. N. Chaudhuri "the arrival of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean abruptly ended the system of peaceful oceanic navigation that was such a marked feature of the region" (1985:63). A thousand years of trans-oceanic migration and settlement that had brought the "Arabs" to the place they called the Island of the Moon ended, and now a new group of arrivals began to make their presence felt. Portuguese interest in Madagascar soon waned however, and although a trading post on the *fortaleza e feitoria* model (Chaudhuri 1985:84) was established on the southeast coast at Saint Luce (close to present day Mañafiafy), by 1513 it has already been noted that the ginger in Cochin was of a better quality (Documents 1963iii:488-493).[13]

The interest of the French was not so easily diverted however, and after initially setting themselves up at Saint Luce, they moved in 1643 to found the post of Fort Dauphin, named after the future Sun King, a name which remains in use to this day in its locally corrupted form of Faradafay. It is from his period there, from 1648 to 1655 as Directeur Général de la Compagnie Française de l'Orient, that Etienne de Flacourt wrote his Histoire de la Grande Île de Madagascar and that we get our first sighting of the Manambondro landscape, located in the region Flacourt refers to as Vohitsibanh, which stretches between the Mananteñina and Manañara rivers and "is plentiful in honey, cattle, sugar cane, yams, rice and other crops" (1913:31); in addition there are "mines of iron and steel" (1913:32), and Flacourt records that gold is to be found in one or two places (1913:33).[14]

Flacourt's description of Vohitsibanh (1913:31-3) is full of intentions, full of information on what items of trade may be found there, and how easy a ship may call for it. Three leagues north of Mananteñina lies the Iavibola, "which is never blocked [and] where a small boat may enter" (1913:32); to the north however, at the Andrangita, Isandra

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and Manambondro, the rivers are all "blocked", and here Flacourt refers to the sandbars that frequently form across the mouth of these and several other rivers in the southeast.

The Manambondro, a "blocked river". Barely a mention, but it is enough to establish one thing, that the Manambondro was so named by the mid-seventeenth century, and so it appears that Andriamaroary's own arrival must have preceded that date. And although Flacourt himself never arrived there (his information was gleaned from others) he has little to say about the people that would endear them to his audience. The region is "commanded by several lords" he tells us, and the people are "in continual dissension and distrust one another"; they have "no religion" and fear the charms and sorcery of the "Whites" [i.e. "Arabs"] of the Matitanana because of the "writing" they know (1913:31-2). Finally, they are "thieves and abduct their neighbours children as well as their slaves to sell them far away, and sometimes their close kin also" (1913:32).

Where these far away places were Flacourt does not say, but the Matitanana had been an important port of call for European vessels since the three *naos* of João Serrão had been sent "to establish the trade of pepper with the natives thereof". In Fort Dauphin and Saint Luce, as well as such places as the Bay of Hunger and Cape Treachery (Brown 1978:33-5), Europeans left behind names like calling cards, their presence inscribed in the toponyms of the mapped landscape. The inhabitants of Vohitsibanh were too to commemorate these overseas arrivals, for as an one local etymology of Iavibola has it, the name means "where the money comes" (*I-avy-vola*). And like Matitanana, Iavibola was to see frequent visitations, as part of the expanding economy the Europeans controlled in the Indian Ocean.

Whether or not people sold their close kin, southeast Madagascar was a source for the market in slaves that expanded greatly from the sixteenth century, many destined for the plantation economies of Reunion and Mauritius, and although the French pulled out of Fort Dauphin in 1674, their boats and others continued to call on the region. Deschamps (1936:188) mentions a trade in ebony at Iavibola in the eighteenth century, and it is from someone involved in trade that we get our next description of Manambondro, almost two centuries after that of Flacourt.

The arrival on the 12th of April 1827 of Leguével de Lacombe on the south bank of the Manambondro had been afforded by land rather than sea, and he records initially a certain amount of disappointment;

> The shoreline of the Manambondro is no more attractive than the adjacent land; one only sees there arid sands and filaos with sorrowful leaves.... nevertheless when we had gained about a quarter of a league, the country offered us a more pleasing aspect; the hills covered in villages announced that the population was numerous; the beautiful rice fields and several plantations made me presume that cultivation was more advanced in this country than I had believed on arriving there (1840:229).

Leguével de Lacombe's intention was to establish a trade store and he had heard that Manambondro would be a good place to do so (1840:178). From the local ruler Morabe he secured a position close to the embouchure and although the picture Leguével de Lacombe gives us is a little vague in places, it is invaluable nonetheless.

From it we learn that the people of the Manambondro possessed guns if little powder, and that although he is little coy about the fact, despite the supposed cessation of slave trading in 1815, the practice still continued (see e.g. 1840:241, 246-7). Indeed he says that "When the trade in slaves was permitted, Manambondro was the most convenient place for this traffic, because it was situated in the middle of the peoples who supplied the most to the colonies of Mauritius and Reunion" (1840:247). This market in persons was however a different practice to domestic slavery and servitude, and from contemporary oral accounts it seems to be the case that selling someone into slavery emerged as a form of punishment for certain crimes (such as sorcery) and was used politically and economically when a market made the practice worthwhile.

Unwitting participants in the growth of empire, the Antaraye (as Leguével de Lacombe refers to the people in the Manambondro region) participated in trade beyond that of persons. The store bought among other things cattle, rice, honey, bees wax, turtle shell, and tobacco, items paid for primarily with glass beads and cloth (1840:227, 279), although people nowadays also remark that the *misisipi* (as the river-mouth trading stations were called) also sold metal cooking vessels and munitions. Just how widely trade was carried out between the people of the region themselves is difficult to tell. Leguével de Lacombe reports that "teal oil" (*mass-siririri, oeil de sarcelle*) is used as a form of money in the south of Madagascar (1840:179), and Flacourt's description of commerce reveals there to have been a developed system of barter, using cattle, foodstuffs, and metals, and a trade in amulets emanating from the feared "Whites of the Matitanes" (1913:38, 130-4, 166). Descriptions of metalworking too suggest that this provided a basis for intra-regional trade (1913:209). Later authors have also commented on the importance of regional trade in cattle (Deschamps 1936:48) and salt (Linton 1933:125-6).

What little we know about the pre-colonial economy suggests therefore that rather than being "closed", during the period of European expansion in the Indian Ocean the region was in fact rather "open". Not only was there trade between people of the region, but the Europeans who arrived from overseas were permitted to establish colonies and trading enterprises bringing the coastal and interior peoples into the orbit of the plantation economies of Reunion and Mauritius and their need for slave labour and foodstuffs. As part of this the coastal people themselves allowed settler traders into their midst who brought with them a range of commodities to be exchanged for much needed local produce.

Ambaniandro: the Merina

Although people allowed European boats and traders into their midst, it was not always done under terms of their own choosing. Mistrust of European intentions must have gone back at least to the fated relationship between the French post at Fort Dauphin and the local population, and when Leguével de Lacombe requested land on which to build his establishment he finds that the ruler Morabe asks him if his aim is not "to one day seize [their] land" as his compatriots "have already done at Fort Dauphin" (1840:230). Worries about the seizing of land were doubtless on the minds of others too, but not directed at this paranoid trader. Leguével de Lacombe's stay in the Manambondro region coincided with the attempts of the empire of the Merina (or Ambaniandro as Temanambondro call them) to extend its hegemony over southeast Madagascar as a whole, and he reports that on trying to secure workers to help him build a house he finds that many men are away guarding against Merina incursions.

Under the monarchs Radama I and Ranavalona I (the two ruling consecutively between 1810 and 1861) the Merina empire had extended itself from the central plateau to several parts of the island, but one of the various pockets of resistance to be encountered was that in the southeast. Although they had arrived in Fort Dauphin in 1824, Leguével de Lacombe's account suggests that their control of the surrounding area was weak at best (1840:195; see also Sainjon 1901). The Antaraye, Leguével de Lacombe tells us, "have not yet been conquered by the Hova [i.e. Merina]" (1840:216), and he describes a village of blacksmiths, most of whom were Merina and Betsileo "slaves" taken prisoner during an attack by the Merina that had been repulsed the previous year (1840:239, 254).

Unlike Leguével de Lacombe and the journey of imagination taken by Flacourt in his geographical description, the Merina arrived not from the south but from the north. After first arriving in 1824, a permanent garrison was established at Vangaindrano around 1828, and Deschamps tells us that not long thereafter the Temanambondro were subjugated for after a fierce battle at Vohimalaza on the middle Manambondro (1936:168). This presumably occurred after Leguével de Lacombe's permanent departure in December 1830 as he does not mention it; but by 1852 Merina control south of the Masianaka was virtually non-existent (1936:171n.1).

For contemporary Temanambondro (particularly those of Manambondro village) the period is however remembered less in dates than places. At a place along one of the deep creeks that cross the marshy lands in the estuary region, a Merina attack was repulsed and many of its troops drowned or were speared to death. A collective secrecy surrounds this location, but it has not produced amnesia, for although the name of the place has been changed, the old name is known to many, if rarely spoken. A few years later the Merina returned, better prepared and better informed of the region, and this time they did not fail. But this second arrival is less imprinted on the collective memory than the first. It is as if the repercussions of the event are too fearful to contemplate, the real order of things

having been somehow undone.

Perhaps the first attempt by the Merina to subjugate the Temanambondro lies in part behind the problems faced by the English missionary Sibree when, in 1876, he tried to travel from Vangaindrano to Fort Dauphin. Although he was told by some that the people along the route were "friendly and acknowledged [Merina] authority" (1876:39), the Merina governor clearly thought otherwise and prevented Sibree continuing on his journey. Sibree tells us that the reason given as to why his way was blocked was that "some of the tribes were unfriendly", something Sibree believes "to be untrue from the testimony of many well-informed persons" (1876:48). The governor's sentiment however is the more commonly held view, and it is a refrain that echoes down the centuries.

Missions and Christianity

As others of their country had before them, the first French to arrive in Manambondro after Madagascar had been declared a French colony in 1896 came from the south and the town of Fort Dauphin. They had been preceded by a few years by another stranger, now well established among them, the Norwegian missionary Thorbjörnsen who had by then founded a church (*leglizy*) a couple of kilometres south of the village of Fenoambany at a place known as Ambatosarotra.

Referred to by the name Nosikely (perhaps a corruption of Nikolas) Thorbjörnsen is remembered mainly for his role in the fighting that took place in the mid 1890s on the lower Manambondro between the ruling Andrafolo and the collective of subject Ancestries who took the name Zafimananga. In the last years of Merina rule (up to 1895) there erupted among the Temanambondro, Tesaka and Temoro uprisings of subject groups against those that ruled over them, although the period is one about which nowadays few Temanambondro wish to speak at length, and questions about it were usually brushed aside with a reply of "it is in the past" (*tamin'ñe taloha*).[15] After the end of the fighting the Andrafolo no longer held any sway over the villages of its domain on the lower Manambondro, and those aspects of ritual practice and privilege that had constituted so much of ruling ended: Zafimananga were allowed to perform *sombily* (sacrifice) for themselves, wear items of finery and jewelry and so forth, practices previously restricted to the Andrafolo.

One of the missionary's roles in all this was to arbitrate in the division of land between the two groups, an event known as the *kanahoma* ("eating of the ducks", i.e. everyone "eating" from the same plate), whereby land on either side of the river was redistributed among the two parties such that Zafimananga had all their land on the south side, and the Andrafolo on the north. Even today the sense that the Zafimananga are "on the other side" (*añ-ila*) of the river remains strong for people of Manambondro village, part of a sense of place brought about within the last one hundred years, for up until the French forced people to relocate to the mainland, Andrafolo and Zafimananga lived side-by-side

on the island of Antokonosy.

For nearly a century the Lutherans were the only ones to have a church in the Manambondro and Isandra valleys. They now have a church of some description in most villages, run by local catechists, with a trained pastor only in the villages of Manambondro and Sandravinañy. The Lutheran church itself has been "decolonized" and all pastors and catechists are Malagasy, the pastor in Manambondro village during fieldwork being from Vangaindrano. Although in 1993 it counted a larger number of baptized members (something over 1000 in Manambondro village) than the Catholics (c.750), church attendance was often lower. The Catholic Church receives a larger amount of overseas financial aid, and many of their priests are themselves European; whilst the Lutheran church in Manambondro village was an ageing wooden affair, the Catholics possessed a new brick building, and the Catholic mission, established in the village in 1976, was staffed in 1993 by two priests, one European and one Malagasy, whose parish extended to churches in Sandravinañy, Manambondro village, and Nosoa. Of the two Churches, the Catholic was the most animated, and as well as being involved in "community" (*fokon'olona*) affairs, it also ran a nursery school and a pharmacy.

What is perhaps remarkable however, especially in the light of comparable examples from other parts of the world, is the minimal impact that a century of missionary activity has had on local ritual practice. The Church has had no affect on marriage practices (although a few people additionally consecrate the relationship in church) nor on wider kinship practice, except to forbid "ritual blood siblingship" (*fanange*) on the grounds that the oath it involves calls for the death of either person should they betray the relationship. I have never heard Christian eschatology discussed, even in the context of funerary ceremonies, and a belief in the power of ancestors and spirits of the dead remains ubiquitous. Funerals for practising Christians contain all night singing, and hymns are sung as the corpse is taken to the river on its way for burial; for the most pious a small mass may be held also. But all this new religious practice has been easily accommodated within what appears to be an older ritual structure and for virtually everyone there is no contradiction between *fomba Temanambondro* (Temanambondro customs) and Christianity.

The Lutheran church remains the most zealous in some respects. Its members are not meant to call the ancestors in an invocation nor drink locally brewed rum (*katratro, taoka*), but many disregard the edict, and occasional exorcisms held ny the Church have if anything only enhanced people's belief in spirit possession (*tromba*). The Catholics however, with a priest who takes a very liberal line in post-Vatican II theology, could hardly be more different. At the inauguration of the new church at Mahabe in 1993 he asked that the senior male of his congregation make an invocation to the ancestors to explain to them what was going on, and donated a zebu for sacrifice to ensure their blessing.

The impact of Christianity has then produced no great change in ritual practice, particularly as far as funerary ceremonies are concerned, and virtually everyone views the influence of the Churches in a positive light. For some the Churches are seen as having "developed" (*nampandroso*) things, an idea which is sometimes extended to include people's thoughts, such that a regular churchgoer may be said to have a "clear mind" (*mazava saina*) rather than being "still dark" (*mbola meza*); however, the idea of "development" and "progress" is more usually restricted to the context of health and education. But on the whole people have not rejected on a large scale one set of practices for another, nor one set of beliefs; rather the two have been grafted together.[16]

Images of colonial rule

Like the coming of the Merina, the imposition of French colonial rule is primarily remembered through a place and an event remembered for its violence, something which was to create a lasting impression on the French also.

French presence after the establishment of the colony of Madagascar in 1896 was profound in its first few years (see Deschamps 1936:177-8). One of the first things the French attempted was a "delimitation of tribes", so establishing the limits of "territories" through such "precise frontiers" as rivers, a practice which assumed that there was such a thing as a "tribe" with a "territory", and that rivers marked the boundaries of these domains, rather than laying at their centre.[17] Colonial officials additionally involved themselves in trying to end the state of enmity that existed between the Zafimananga and Andrafolo who had been sporadically fighting throughout the 1890s. At the same time as trying to create unity, politically and administratively, the French also sewed seeds of discord by banning the practice of swidden agriculture (*tavy*), and introducing a number of taxes, some of which increased four-fold between 1899 and 1904. Although the Manambondro region had been "pacified" by 1900, the "political situation" which was described in 1904 as "very satisfactory", rapidly deteriorated and in the same year local disputes were put aside in pursuit of a common enemy.

Although from Deschamps' (1936:177-182) we learn the general sequence of events (see also Augagneur 1927), one in particular is absent from his account. It is a place name, and to mention it sums up for the Temanambondro the whole of the uprising of 1904-5 and much of their subsequent relationship with those that were to govern them until national independence in 1960. Within a month of the beginning of the uprising in mid-November 1904, which spread up and down the coast from its beginnings in the Manambondro region, French and Senegalese troops had gained repossession of lands close to the Masianaka, on whose southern shore lies Vodivolo, the site of the fateful encounter that was to signal the end of concerted resistance to colonial rule.

Conflicting oral accounts of the events all agree on one thing: that the French and Senegalese lay waste many Temanambondro in a single volley of rifle fire. Wounded

survivors took to the water at the river's edge, keeping themselves alive by breathing through hollow reeds whilst trying to hide from the thrusts of the soldiers' bayonets. Some still recall the names of the dead whose bodies could not be retrieved for burial; those who survived straggled home and returned to their villages defeated.

The event was to leave a lasting respect for firearms among the Temanambondro, if not always those that bore them; when I asked why they had not participated in the widespread uprising in 1947 one elder replied "we had already seen what rifles can do". The lasting effect on French images of the Temanambondro was equally indelible. For Deschamps the region "was the classical country of insubordination" (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:95), and he saw reasons for this in the landscape the people inhabited:

> The chaotic and hilly character of the country, the forests which cover it almost entirely, the isolation of valleys prevent all unity, but gives [to those of] the region shelter from invaders. These physical characteristics, as much as the incessant wars between petty chiefs, contributed to giving the Antemanambondro their pride and sense of independence which is still evident among them up to this day (Deschamps 1936:161).[18]

Here we find the images described above - closed societies, isolation and sense of independence - woven together in a new way. But these threads stretch back far in time. For Flacourt the people of the coast whose lands he had settled and pillaged were "devoted to betrayal, under-handedness, cruelty, lying and deception [...] the most vindictive nation in the world" (1913:125-6). Two centuries later Leguével de Lacombe cannot hide his pleasure that in Manambondro "with merchandise of little value it is possible to realize considerable profit if the anchorage [of boats] is sure" (1840:241); of the people thereabouts he remarks "they are remarkable for their courage and their love of independence" (1840:235). It is presumably on this love of independence that the Merina governor based his opinion when telling Sibree that some of the "tribes" south of Vangaindrano are "unfriendly" (Sibree 1876:48).

Through experience Temanambondro have found that relations with various outsiders have rarely been conducted on their own terms, except in their relationships with missionaries. The reaction of the Temanambondro to these frequently hostile outsiders, has never been seen as resistance and a will for self rule, the desire to be able to "carry oneself" (*mitondro teña*). Rather, as James Carrier has commented with regard to a similar situation, resistance has been portrayed as passive, "a surly withdrawal, not a creative process or interaction" (1992:15). As a result the colonial encounter and colonial ethnology produced an image of a people who take an unwelcoming and obdurate stance when faced with outsiders. From the remarks of Flacourt and those who wrote after, and the resistance shown to two imperial powers, a picture has been drawn of a people who have removed themselves to the margins of history. Yet the written texts of history and

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people's oral accounts reveal marginalization to be a recent phenomena.

The creation of a margin

Under colonial rule the Temanambondro landscape was to be transformed in new ways, and it is arguable that the marginalization of the Manambondro region only began at this time. Along with the introduction of taxes and a new all purpose money to pay them with came new crops and new land use patterns. Taxes could only be paid with money, and as was common practice in colonial situations, the French introduced cash crops to encourage participation in a controlled market economy. The major crop was coffee, introduced in the early years of French rule (see Deschamps 1936:188), and at a later date this was supplemented by cloves and pepper; in addition, a number of fruit species were planted, such as mango, lychee, and bread fruit. Along with the suppression of shifting cultivation (*tavy*) these new species transformed land use from "trans-planting" (*voliavotry*) on "mixed land" (*tany haroana*) to "trunk planting" (*fotoboly*) on individually owned (and taxed) "*concessions*" (see above).

However, the involvement of Manambondro in the market for these products has always been slight. As throughout much of the southeast (Anonymous 1957:337) plantations run by *colons* were never established in the area and the planting of cash crops was and remains minimal; indeed the French appear to have tried to restrict the amount of coffee planted by people so as to limit their cash earning potential. The small scale involvement of people in cash cropping is also due to the absence of adequate markets and poor communications, the latter limiting the production of cash crops to non-perishables.[19]

Although Manambondro village has a small daily market (*bazara*), trade here is entirely locally based and there are no full-time market traders in operation. In the absence of a weekly market (*tsena*) such as is to be found in some of the larger towns, the market in cash crops is controlled by local "Chinese" shop owners and traders. There is therefore little to encourage Temanambondro to turn over their energies to growing cash crops, and they are acutely aware that to do so would be foolhardy in the extreme. They comment with resignation on the rise and fall of coffee and clove prices, and note that just as the price of the coffee they sell goes up, so too does the rice that they need to buy.

The absence of a market to promote involvement in cash cropping is compounded for those in the Manambondro region by poor communications. Whilst the landscape was transformed by new crops and new land use patterns during French rule, it was also traversed by the Route National 12. Completed around 1936, the RN12 runs from Vangaindrano to Fort Dauphin, covering a distance of some 240km, a journey which involves crossing eleven rivers by pontoon ferry. Those who worked on it remember well

the experience, in particular the French organization of corvée labour groups, in which men laboured all day without being fed by those for whom the work was being done (an unthinkable practice were a Temanambondro in charge) and under threat of incarceration should they not turn up on the allotted days. Those arrested got fifteen days in gaol at the post of Amparihy Est 45km away and fed on dried manioc. It is notable that people's memories of road building focus on food of all things - not providing a meal to the workers, and feeding gaoled inmates on manioc rather than rice. For many this simply confirmed them in their suspicion that the French were "animals" (*biby*).

With few still alive who worked on building the RN12, the significance of the road has changed from the experience of having built it to how it signifies the Manambondro region's place in the national context. Few would agree with Deschamps' assertion that "the creation of ... roads has had no influence on the people of the ... region" (1936:76), and one woman's remark that "the road has changed the town" (*ñe lalana nampiova ñe tana*) sums up a general sense of what constitutes change and where it has come from. Once as modern as any highway in Madagascar when it was completed, the RN12 has seen only decline, and travel by motor-vehicle along its entirety is usually impossible. The road is now only a dirt (and often muddy) track, and usually at least one of the ferries along its route is out of action. For most people travel to the towns outside their "ancestral lands" is therefore a great expense either in time (if walking) or money (if taking a lift in a trader's lorry). For most the 60km walk to Vangaindrano takes a day and a half, whilst the 180km journey to Fort Dauphin usually takes the best part of five days.

Despite their geographical proximity these towns however remain remote, and if the road can be said to have "changed the town", it is also the case that it has left those of the Manambondro region feeling at something of a remove from the larger towns that they view as "developed" (*efa mandroso*) and having benefited from what is taken to stand for modernity.[20] Although there is schooling in Manambondro village from the age of five years, secondary education can only be completed in one of the towns on the coast, and despite there being a hospital people know that serious medical conditions must be dealt with in Vangaindrano. The actual involvement of the state in the region too is minimal. Although there is a gendarmerie in Manambondro village, its officers confine most of their activities to making half-hearted attempts at stopping the traffic in illegally traded tobacco and the production of and trade in locally produced rum; political meetings run by village male elders (*kabaro*) remain the means for adjudication in disputes and accusations of wrongdoing, and they also impose fines. During the electoral campaigns and vote on a new constitution in 1992 and 1993 it became clear that many (mostly but not always women) had little idea of the issues involved; this would have been more worrying if the state actually impinged much on people's lives. But the state is typified for many by those people who "know how to do politics" (*mahay politiky*), a euphemism for manipulation, and an ability not admired. Finally, development projects and agencies are entirely absent

from the region, being confined within Madagascar as a whole almost entirely to national parks (!) and other protected areas.

Indeed people's ideas about "development" are not at all to do with development projects and agencies, but take the form of a spatialized distinction between "in the countryside" (*ambanivolo*) and "at the post" (*am-positra*). Places that are "developed" are by definition "at the post" and seen as possessing those things that villages "in the countryside" lack. By comparison with villages "in the countryside", places that are "developed" have larger stores and a bigger market, where what people have to sell can be sold for more, and what they desire to buy can be purchased for less. Here educational and medical facilities are better, water is "clean" and available through taps, and electricity means that one can see television. In short "at the post" there is *maresaka*, "things going on", and people's lives are said to follow "the way of Europeans" (*fombambazaha*). Some in Manambondro village were less sanguine about what life "at the post" offered however. Opportunities were limited, and one could not always trust one's neighbours; "at the post" one had to be ever wary of "burglars" (*pamaky traño*, lit. "house breakers"), and although women "in the countryside" were not adverse to receiving presents from lovers, they made it clear that this was very different to money made by the "prostitutes" (*makorely*) that one found "at the post".

If the spaces of "in the countryside" and "at the post" are marked by what might be crudely described as different moralities - between respectively "liking friends" (*tia nama*) and "liking oneself" (*tia teña*), a difference we will encounter later - they are also relatively defined. Manambondro village for example is seen by people in Vangaindrano as "in the countryside", whilst those who come from villages people in Manambondro village describe as "in the countryside" will refer to Manambondro only half-jokingly as "at the post". And apart from the obvious economic dimension to people's ideas of "development", there is also a notion that those from the "countryside" are in some way backward, still following the "ways of the past" (*fomba taloha*).

In the face of the spatialization of "development" some choose to migrate to other parts of Madagascar. For some this involves continuing their education perhaps as far as university, but for most the decision to migrate is based on economic reasons, and the belief that money can be had by working "at the post". The length of migrants' stays in other parts of the country varies, but all return to their "ancestral land" in one form or another. Many who come from Manambondro village try to return there for the birth of their first child, and the umbilical cord of all Temanambondro children is returned for disposal in the ancestral waters of the Manambondro river. Many who find wealth invest it through buying cattle and land, and almost all have the aim of building a house with a concrete foundation and zinc roof. When talking to migrants however many emphasized how they were not *tama* ("attached to place") where they lived, and how they felt a "longing" (*manina*) for their "family" and "relatives" back home. In the end everyone

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returned home however, either because things did not turn out for them "at the post" or because they retired from their work there. And for those who could not make it back alive there was always the option of returning for burial in the tomb, their bones packed up in a box "like sardines" (akao sardiny) as I one heard it described.

Only in the present century then has the Manambondro region been marginalized, both economically and in terms of its links with the nation state of Madagascar: people of the region are only linked to the national economy to a small degree, both as producers and consumers; and in terms of communications and state institutions the region remains somewhat peripheral. Indeed, the Manambondro region remains a marginalized part of the southeast, itself a marginalized part of Madagascar, and this is certainly part of the sense of place voiced by people. But this marginalization is in the main a product of the economic and political changes that have occurred since the beginning of colonial rule, a process which has lead to some areas becoming "developed" whilst others, perceived as not having changed, have been categorized as "in the countryside".

Conclusion

Certain aspects of the image of the peoples of the southeast of Madagascar found in the works of colonial ethnology can be seen to go back much further, at least to the first detailed account of the region produced by Flacourt in the seventeenth century. From this time on people are described as treacherous, deceitful, fiercely independent, easily roused to violence and so on, ideas which remain present to this day.

Whilst certain of these ideas have a long genealogy, it is however the case that the image of the southeast that remains dominant is most fully developed and articulated in the works of colonial ethnology produced in the first half of this century. One aspect of this image is that the peoples of the southeast form "closed societies", isolated and isolating themselves from the passage of time and progress, and from those around them. As we have seen however, this idea is contradicted by what we know about the migration into and within the region of peoples with diverse historical and geographical origins, and the emergence of a set of relatively uniform socio-cultural features which have allowed migrating peoples to be easily incorporated within established polities, as well as allowing other peoples to establish polities of their own. Another aspect of the image is that of the "closed economy". Accounts of European colonizers, traders and travellers however reveal that this too is a misrepresentation. Although the accounts we have are somewhat sketchy, an intra-regional trade in cattle and the products of metal working appears to have existed, as well as a market in goods with magical properties which emanated from the Matitanana river and found their way as far as Fort Dauphin in the south.

The recurrent noting of Temanambondro "love of independence" seems to me the most significant aspect of the colonial image, whereby resistance to the political aims of those considered more "developed" than the Temanambondro - the Merina, and the French - was seen as an irrational rather than a political act, a resistance to change conceptualized as "progress". Those aspects of "progress" introduced by the French however were minimal in comparison with other parts of the country, and Manambondro remains marginal within a marginalized area of Madagascar, a marginality which informs their sense of place with respect to the national context.

Given the educational opportunities in Manambondro it seemed ironic to some that I, a *vazaha*, would journey from a "long way overseas" (*lavitra an-dafy añy*) to "study" in a place that all those who lived there would have to leave if they wanted to complete their own schooling. Whilst this in part informs their sense of place as a people "in the countryside", it would be wrong to assume that all Temanambondro feel themselves entirely peripheral to where things are at. For some, the towns "at the post" are better visited than lived in, and many prefer being *topontany* of the place they grew up in, having "mastery of the land" in a world of which they have knowledge born of everyday practice. Instead of being an ethnographic account of people's feelings about marginality, this thesis is therefore about something rather different, about the lives of people in a place that is at once familiar and familial, and as it will hopefully become clear, people's sense of themselves as persons and as part of collectivities is intimately related to their sense of place, as Temanambondro, or "people of the Manambondro river".

Afterword: fieldwork

Towards the end of my stay in Manambondro it seemed to some that I asked too much about the past, and I came to realize that I was not the first Englishman in the region, for there had been others before me, traders in goods and persons, and for some my questions linked me to these previous arrivals, compatriots of mine who had lived and traded at the mouth of the Manambondro and other rivers. How well they spoke the Temanambondro dialect of Malagasy I never asked, but my own ability was a persistent cause of the disillusionment I felt regarding the work I struggled to do for many of the twenty-two months I spent in Manambondro village. A few days after having being set up in my own house, a gathering was held in the house-group to whom I was affiliated to explain to others in that part of the village the purpose of my visit. Despite my communicative incompetence I sensed a certain amount of approval expressed when it was explained that my desire was to learn about Temanambondro "ways" or "customs" (*fomba*), and to speak the Temanambondro dialect of Malagasy. In the end it was to be fifteen long months

before I could conduct a descent conversation with someone, and until then I had to rely on talking with a small number of people to seek explanations of what I had seen or turns of phrase that had heard and which seemed to be of relevance to what I thought I was doing. I could not have imagined beforehand how painful and frustrating a process learning to converse with people would be.

My arrival in Manambondro village in December 1991 coincided with an intensive period of work in the rice fields, and during the day the village appeared mostly deserted except for children and the infirm. Within a few days of arriving I set about deciding where to live, helped by the Catholic priest to whose compound I had been taken on arrival. Being like me a *vazaha* ("foreigner", especially white European) it had been supposed that we would have a kindred affinity, and despite the different intentions that had brought us there we got along well. Up until my departure in October 1993 Mompera Tone was to be a valued friend, someone to go to for a break from things and an afternoon pick-me-up. Once I had begun to enjoy doing fieldwork (and it took me most of the first six months to learn how to do so) and because of the vagaries of local transport, I kept my visits to Vangaindrano and Farafangana as infrequent and brief as I could, a few days once every three months or so.

After a month of looking for a place to settle and "do fieldwork" as I imagined it should be done, I was given an offer of a house to live in that I accepted because I liked the view of the river from behind it. By then I had searched around for a village to live in, a thoroughly demoralizing process, and I had begun to wonder why I had ever considered leaving behind the comforts of library scholarship; it was now plainly obvious why Malinowski had spent so much time reading novels. Finally I settled on Manambondro village, the path of least resistance, and although I felt I had failed to make a choice in accord with the notion of fieldwork as I then understood it, I felt I had made the right choice. There was much to be said for staying in the largest village in the region; there was a small market, three shops, and perhaps most crucial of all, cold beer.

The result of making this choice was that I spent most of my stay in the field in one village. Despite a population of a little under 3,000, Manambondro village is still a village, although a large one. Most of my data comes form here, but on a few occasions I went to nearby villages on the lower Manambondro in which my adoptive family had relatives to attend and participate in such things as roofing houses, circumcisions, marriages, and funerals. In early 1993 I walked with a friend to Fort Dauphin, and during the five days it took to get there I got a better impression of the generalizability of what I had learned in Manambondro in the villages we passed and stayed in along the RN12, especially in those between Manambondro and the Iavibola river, reckoned to be the southernmost region occupied by the Temanambondro. In total the journey took me away for five weeks, and in Fort Dauphin and the towns of Toliara and Bezaha in the west of Madagascar I met Temanambondro migrants - students, teachers, and those who worked "at the post" - and

from our conversations I began to understand what it is that produces the "longing" (manina) that they feel when away from their "families" and "relatives". A couple of months later I spent a few days in the villages of Befasy and Sandravinañy on the lower Isandra river, but on this and other journeys I too was soon "longing" for Manambondro and kept my periods away from it to a minimum.

In retrospect I realize that I was perhaps especially lucky during my fieldwork: most of the time I actually enjoyed it. The view behind the house I chose to live in was not the only thing that helped me choose where to live, for I felt a "kindness of spirit" (tsara fañahy) among the people of the house-group who adopted me when I first visited them. Despite my sometimes antisocial behaviour and lingual ineptitude they showed me exceptional patience and kindness. They taught me what I know about what it is to live as "one house" and to have ancestors, the value of having relatives, coping with the grief induced by death, and what incredibly hard work a subsistence livelihood is. The word "subsistence" does an injustice to the inventiveness and play people bring to their lives, but it does not hide the monotony of it nor the fact that it is something that almost all do without having chosen to do so.

The house in which I lived had been offered to me by a man I met on first arriving in Manambondro, and it was with him and as a "child" of his house-group that I first began to attend various rites which were pointed out to me as being particularly important as Temanambondro "customs". This was a part of the work that was done in the company of men, for men comprised nearly all those present at such events. I was lucky to find that many of the people I ended up wanting to question about these events were related in some way to the house-group I had fortuitously happened on. My enquiries about ancestry and the past very rarely caused disquiet (except sometimes for questions on land tenure histories), and it was among men who were related to the house-group in which I lived as "mother's brothers" and "children of women" that I pursued my enquiries. People not so related were sometimes not so forthcoming; Manambondro village is large enough that there were some who saw me infrequently enough to feel considerable unease about my presence.

The house-group in which I lived was unduly blessed with daughters, something its members viewed with a great degree of ambivalence, men in the long-term often being valued more than women. But in two generations of sisters I found a group of women with whom I spent a great deal of time, mainly because it was they who spent most time in the village and in the vicinity of their own homes. With them I learned a great deal, including almost all I know about rice farming, perhaps the most rewarding activity of all that I undertook during fieldwork. From sprouting seed through iridescent green shoot to red panicle, growing rice was something the rewards of which were ever present to the eye. I often could not feel this about the notebooks that slowly filled up when I felt the inclination to sit at a desk and write in them.

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For the first year or so my fieldnotes mainly comprised description and caught remarks. I would hear a woman tell her children what it meant to live as "one house" when they fought over food; I would hear a man described as being "bereft of spirit" for having swindled his daughter of money she had put aside to buy a blanket; I would be told by a man that the sacrifice that completed marriage rites was a "fine willingly paid". Most of the time I did not carry a notebook around with me, and instead wrote things down when I returned to my house; occasionally I jotted brief notes on a scrap of paper or on my hand, and only twice did I use a tape recorder, on both occasions to record ritual speeches. At almost every formal occasion I felt uncomfortable, and if I had a fieldwork motto it was "Be Inconspicuous". Being white and a few inches taller than most people this was plainly ludicrous, but nevertheless it informed my practice as participant observer.

As I began to piece things together I started to ask those of the house-group I lived in and some other friends about what I had seen or heard, and they helped me as best they could, often more than they realized.[21] If I were to single out some of these people then I would have to mention my friend Fotsara; two women who were neighbours of mine, Endrin'Lavavolo and Endrin'Zanatelo; and two men with whom I spent a great deal of my time during the latter stages of fieldwork, Aban'Betongatra and Aban'Marozaza. They were not the only people I turned to for help with the work I was doing, but it was sometimes the case that they explained things to me in such a way that my understanding of an issue was greatly enhanced.

Although his name does not crop up many times in what follows, the help of Fotsara was inestimable, and his friendship more valuable still. We met soon after I arrived in Manambondro and subsequently saw each other most days if only for a short chat over a cup of coffee. Already of an enquiring mind Fotsara helped me find out about "customs" and the past; he too enquired about my own life and the place I came from. Sometimes some of the things I wanted to know seemed to him plainly stupid; sometimes they seemed that way to me too. But in the work I did I was greatly helped by Fotsara, less a research assistant than a research companion.

Temanambondro do not value "women's minds" but in Endrin'Lavavolo and Endrin'Zanatelo I met two women who showed how unjust the slight was. Throughout my stay there were those who found my version of the spoken dialect difficult to comprehend, but with Endrin'Lavavolo and Endrin'Zanatelo I found I could converse reasonably easily, and they had an unerring ability and patience to explain to me what I did not understand of what other people had said. In addition Endrin'Lavavolo helped me see connections between things that I could not piece together, and she always amazed me with her knowledge of how people were related. Always demure in the presence of those who were meant to know better than her, she would frequently suggest where something I had been told might need checking; aware of the limits of her own knowledge, she often pointed me in the direction of those who might be able to help me.

In the last few months of fieldwork I began to check through my fieldnotes and compose a list of specific questions and issues about which I wanted to know more. Up until then I had spent much of my time writing down what people said and did, and what questions I had were addressed to those of the house-group I lived in and a couple of friends. Realizing that on specific points of "custom" and questions about the past I would need to turn to people considered knowledgeable about such things, I decided to conduct some semi-formal interviews based on the questions that had arisen from a re-reading of my fieldnotes. When I asked who I should turn to with these questions I was directed to a number of *rangahy*, men in their sixties. Of these Aban'Betongatra and Aban'Marozaza were particularly helpful, sharing with me their knowledge of "custom" and the past, and with them I began to realize that "stories" only tell partial truths at best. They, as much as anyone would understand the positionality of the present work.

Fieldwork is ultimately about living with people, something that it took me a while to realize. There were some people who I did not like nor always get along on with, and I am sure that there were some who felt much the same about me. It would be naive to expect otherwise. The task of fieldwork was not always something I enjoyed doing, and there were times when the weight of it seemed too much to endure. But for the most part I was happy during the period I spent in Manambondro, and a sense of enduring involvement remains with me. If this work succeeds in giving a sense of what Temanambondro ideas and images of place, personhood and ancestry are about then I feel that the achievement is more their doing than mine. They helped me understand these things by accepting my presence among them, rather than retreating "like snails".

When I first arrived in Manambondro village I sensed that among some there was a feeling of being in some way marginal within the current nation state of Madagascar, whilst others told me that if I wanted to learn about the "ways" or "customs of the ancestors" (*fomban-drazana*) I would have to live "in the countryside", in villages deeper in the bush than Manambondro village itself. But in time I came to realize that marginality was not a dominant feature of people's sense of place, nor had the "ways of the ancestors" been wholly abandoned (although that is not to say that they had remained wholly the same either). In fact these were two perspectives on the issue of "development" or "progress" mentioned in the last chapter.

As my work progressed however it became clearer that people's concern with place was not overly global - neither an attempt to situate Manambondro village within the national or international context, nor particularly to see it in terms of neighbouring villages - but was instead much more localized, and people's sense of place was focused on where they lived, where they farmed, and who they were related to. In addition, people lived meaningful lives not by constituting themselves as persons through acts of consumption and appropriation, but rather through the work they did and the nurture they gave to and received from those around them. An investigation of place therefore became inseparable from an investigation of personhood and ancestry, for as it will hopefully become clear the concepts are mutually implicated and constitutive. During my time in the field, and more especially whilst "writing up", I came to think about these issues - place, relationships, valued and meaningful lives - from the perspective of particular debates within anthropology - concerning "kinship", space and aesthetics. As these debates could be said to form the "roots" of the analysis to follow I briefly outline them in the present chapter before moving on to the ethnographic case at hand.

Problems with language and problems with '"kinship"

Without hint of irony, Henri Lavondès begins his account of "kinship" among the Masikoro of west Madagascar by stating that "Some difficulties of a terminological order

introduce a certain confusion into French language works on kinship" (1967:37). But it appears that the French are not the only ones who have problems with language. Having stated that "The lineage is the basic unit of Masikoro society" (1967:106), Lavondès finds himself faced with a paradox:

> when one wants to give an exact definition of this unit whose existence is evident, one comes up against a serious difficulty of terminology. No word exists in the Masikoro dialect which strictly designates the concept of lineage (1967:106).

Whilst the Masikoro have lineages without words to designate them, they also have words that resist being designated by the language of kinship theory. Thus the word *foko*:

> On the one hand it is a question of a restricted group of real kin who inhabit a definite portion of the village, on the other, the village community as a whole, of which the members are for the most part related by marriage [*apparentés*] (1967:109).

Perhaps it is because these words exhibit a "fundamental ambiguity" (1967:106) that we are finally told "It should not surprise one that ... the Masikoro prefer to avoid them when it is a question of making reference to a particular lineage" (1967:110), something they presumably do in French. Great indeed are the benefits of *l'assimilation*.

This is not the only time when anthropologist and people studied appear to have been talking at cross purposes. Whilst Lavondès finds French difficult, it appears that English is no better. Thus Huntington tells us that the "Bara view the *tariky* primarily as a group of individuals related patrilineally to a common tomb", and then adds that "A precise referent for the word ... is difficult to locate" (1988:62). For Huntington the *tariky* appears to be a "local kin group", but one based as much on residence as descent, and "Because descent groups and residence groups do not always coincide, the word *tariky* is used by the Bara with some ambiguity" (1988:63).

No surprise then that for the peoples of the southeast Deschamps should comment that "Social groups are difficult to define exactly" (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:14). This difficulty notwithstanding, he makes a valiant attempt:

> At the bottom one finds the extended family (*trano raiki*) of which the head is the patriarch; further up, one finds the lineage or clan (*foko, troki*), and above [this] the tribe (*karaza*). But this is only a sketchy picture, too precise: the meaning of the words *foko, troki, karaza*, is often vague. The essential unit is that of the people who have the right to the same tomb (*kibori raiki, fatrange*). Lineages themselves are, in the course of time, divided between several tombs of which the members still feel themselves [to be] of the same collectivity. One can, for the convenience of nomenclature, call the clan a unit of the tomb ... and the tribe the group of clans of the same origin (1959:14-15).

Although Deschamps finds their meaning elusive, some of these words reappear in later chapters: *trano raiki* means "one house", *kibori raiki* "one tomb"; the term *karaza* has a wider semantic field, meaning "kind", "type" or "species", and is used to refer to named "Ancestries"; finally, *fatrange* refers to the central plaza around which house-groups are built. But as with all these accounts, it appears that problems with language create problems for talking about "kinship". On the one hand it is difficult to locate the groups and concepts posited by kinship theory; on the other, the words people do use to talk of social groups and relations are "vague" and "ambiguous".

Rather than continue to use the analytic terms and concepts of kinship theory which appear to actually misrepresent how people themselves conceptualize their relationships, perhaps a better approach might be to explore the terms and concepts used by people themselves, the images and idioms of their sociological imagination. Such is the practice adopted here in an attempt to give an ethnographic account of Temanambondro conceptualizations of ancestry. However, I cannot claim the approach as my own, for it is derived from the work of others who have themselves encountered problems with language and "kinship".

The need to base accounts of "kinship" on indigenous concepts and understandings has long been advocated by David Schneider (1968, 1972, 1984). "Kinship", he argues, "is a non-subject. It exists in the minds of anthropologists but not in the cultures they study" (1972:51). Although shocking to some Schneider's point is a simple one: he is not arguing that people do not have relationships or form collectivities, but rather that they may do so in ways other than the anthropological theory of "kinship" presumes.

For Schneider the problem with "kinship" is that it has been studied primarily as a social or normative system rather than as a cultural system, focusing on what "kinship" does rather than what it is (1976:208), something that derives from the fact that the cultural aspect of "kinship" is merely seen as an elaboration of the perceived facts of sexual reproduction (1984).[1] Furthermore, the theory of "kinship" produces accounts of social relations in its own terms, for the language of description is a language of analysis (1984:71).

The problem is then that analyses of "kinship" render people's concepts of relatedness in the metalanguage of kinship theory as if this theory merely described the way things are, and despite encountering "vague" and "ambiguous" terms, ethnographers in Madagascar still talk of "kinship", "descent", "clans" and "lineages" as if these glosses represented people's own concepts. But as Schneider points out, the use of such terms "hardly exhausts what needs to be said, it leaves all that is culturally significant unsaid" (1984:78). If one is to take a cultural approach to the issue of social relations, Schneider suggests that we need to ask more fundamental questions than are usually posed:

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what are the units, how are they defined in the native culture itself, how does it postulate their interconnections, their mode of differentiation, by what symbolic devices do they define the units and their relationship, and what meanings do these have? (1972:58)

One cannot therefore assume that relations between persons that kinship theory posits as "kin" can be simply glossed as "consanguinity", nor that such relatedness through generations can be glossed as "descent", for such terms are inherently loaded and already presume the way in which people themselves conceptualize relatedness.

For Schneider then there is a flaw in the very conceptualization of "kinship" which is allied to a problem with language such that studies of "kinship" do not fully explore the terms used by the people anthropologists study. However, if one is to adopt a cultural approach there is also a risk of misrepresenting people's concepts by misunderstanding how they think, and Schneider's definition of culture as a "system of symbols and meanings" (1976:197 et passim) is perhaps too vacuous to be of much use. Leaving aside the problem of how symbols and meanings are related - if at all (see Sperber 1975) - it is beginning to appear that what anthropologists mean by culture cannot be treated as a meaning system in any simple sense.

The latter point has been cogently argued by Maurice Bloch (1991, 1992) in a critique of the anthropological conceptualization of culture. For Bloch the problem of misrepresenting the concepts of the people anthropologists study stems from a false theory of cognition which in turn leads to an often implicit conceptualization of culture as in some way language-like (1991:184; 1992:127-9). Taking his lead from recent work in cognitive science, particularly the theory of connectionism, Bloch argues that much of what anthropologists understand as culture - such as concepts and knowledge - is not language-like at all, but takes the form of mental models built around "small networks of typical understandings and practices concerning the world" (1991:185).

It is because anthropologists assume that culture is language-like, Bloch suggests, that they end up producing "ethnographic accounts [that] almost always seem alien, bizarre, or impossibly complicated to the people [studied]" (1992:127), and one could cite here the accounts of Malagasy "kinship" mentioned above. The way out of this problem, Bloch proposes, is to write "ethnography in such a way that actor's concepts of society are represented not as strings of terms and propositions [i.e. as language-like] but as governed by lived-in models" (1992:130), models that derive from sight and sensation as much as from language, and are based on the experience of the material and practical world (1992:144).

Although arrived at by different means Bloch's approach bears some resemblance to that of James Fernandez (1982), especially with regard to the idea that many concepts do not take the form of words but instead are highly visual and adaptable, although under

certain circumstances they may be taken up in narrative form (1982:252; see also 1977b). Indeed Fernandez also finds inspiration in cognitive psychology, albeit of an older variety, in Vygotsky's notion of "thinking in complex", but whereas Bloch uses the concept of mental models, Fernandez (1982:522-5) talks of a variety of "images" related by forms of association.

At the risk of being accused of ignoring some fundamental differences between the positions adopted by these three theorists I have tried to find some way of linking the arguments of Schneider, Bloch and Fernandez together in a productive manner as a means of thinking about Temanambondro conceptualizations of ancestry and notions of relatedness.[2] As Schneider (1972:58; 1984:197-8) suggests, it should not surprise us if people conceptualize their relatedness in such a way as to force our analysis out beyond the confines of the domain of "kinship" as usually understood, and in so doing necessitate that we pay more than mere lip service to exploring people's own concepts. What Bloch and Fernandez provide us with is a way of imagining what form these concepts might take, for they both emphasize how models/images are frequently derived from the everyday noumenal world, and grounded in such things as the body and the process of maturation, the growth of cultigens and trees, and the spatial and material world of houses, settlements and the environing landscape.

There are striking parallels between Bloch's analysis of Zafimaniry society and my own picture of Temanambondro ancestry, such as the importance of the house for example. But this should hardly be surprising, given that the Zafimaniry live only some 300km north of the Temanambondro, in a region quite near to where the Temanambondro claim their origins. Yet I want also to extend the analysis beyond that of Bloch, and to look at relatedness in terms of the interconnections, differentiations, and relationships mentioned by Schneider; as well as wanting to explore the usefulness of Fernandez's arguments about the importance of expressive culture and aesthetics. In the end, if we are to take Schneider's and Bloch's critiques seriously we can no longer simply talk of "kinship" or "descent" without fully explaining how people themselves conceptualize their forms of relatedness.

Constituted by my own *bricolage*, the perspective I have just outlined informs the analysis of Temanambondro ancestry presented in the following chapters, and takes as one of its starting points the idioms and images through which Temanambondro represent relatedness. Of particular importance here are images of "roots", "trunks" and "branches", as well as ideas associated with gender, houses, tombs and rivers. In the end I conclude that although gender is an important element of people's sociological imagination - relatedness is invariably gendered, and in a variety of ways - so too is space. Furthermore, spatial aspects of relatedness cannot be seen simply as a reflex of gender, for as I argue gender and space are two elements of the sociological imagination, neither being logically prior to the other.

However, the subject of space in the present work extends beyond spatial aspects of relatedness, for it is also argued that place, person and ancestry are mutually constitutive: personhood and ancestry are in part constituted through places, just as the character of certain places stems from their association with aspects of personhood and ancestry, and it is to the issue of space and place that we next turn.

Space, place and landscape

Although the concept of "territory" in anthropological explanations of the polity contained an implicit model of the relationship between social and spatial organization, it was not until the work of Durkheim that an anthropology of space was formulated as part of a theory of collective representations. Drawing on the work on classification undertaken with Mauss (Durkheim and Mauss 1963), Durkheim proposed that, along with religious ideas, categories of space and time were the product of society. Commenting on the relationship between clan organization and the spatial layout of Zuñi pueblos, Durkheim makes his well known proposal that social organization is "the model for spatial organization and a reproduction of it" (1915:12). The origins of spatial differentiation therefore lay in social differentiation, such that spatial categories are reflections of social categories. Thus for Durkheim society becomes the measure of all things.

The influence of Durkheim's model was profound, spawning structuralisms of different hues. Much of this work has focused on highlighting correspondences between social organization and symbolic classification, with analyses of spatial categories often concentrating on the house as a microcosm of collective representations. The method is common to structuralisms of both Durkheimian and Lévi-Straussian persuasion, the main difference lying in the latter's denial of the ontological priority of society as the basis of symbolic classification.[3] An alternative approach has been to focus not on spatial categories as part of a system of symbolic classification, but rather to focus on language and spatial deixis (e.g. Pinxten et al. 1983; Hanks 1990; Weiner 1991; Gell 1995). Whilst taking its cue from linguistics, some of this work has tended to move away from a focus on the structuring of space through language and symbols, and has instead tended to focus on the relationship between deixis and lived space, and thus is part of the move toward a practice based anthropology more attuned to history, process and change (see Ortner 1984; S. Moore 1987).

Part of the problem with the structuralisms mentioned is that spatial categories do not always match social distinctions, and furthermore, such categories may actually misrepresent the distinctions as actually lived. Spatial categories and their values thus do not necessarily reflect actual social relations, but instead are recreated through practice

(Bourdieu 1977). Furthermore, the values of spatial categories may be challenged, subverted rather than recreated. Adopting such an approach, Henrietta Moore (1986) for example has analysed space as a text that people interpret, and emphasised how the act of interpretation takes place within a spatial process in which identity is constituted through time and lived experience.

As with much previous work on gender, Moore takes as the focus of her analysis the domestic domain (cf. e.g. M. Rosaldo 1974; Ardener, ed. 1981; Yanagisako and Collier 1987:16-20), highlighting the space of house compounds as an important site for the constitution of gender identity and ideology (H. Moore 1986:73-120). But identities may be spatially constituted in other ways, through places as much as domestic space, and such is the case among the Temanambondro.[4] Interestingly, Moore notes that the tripartite division of Marakwet lands into highlands, escarpment, and valley floor gives to the region a distinctive topography "which powerfully constructs [people's] sense of place" (1986:27). For the Temanambondro the topological imagination focuses on a different if equally prominent feature of their own landscape, the river from which they as a people take their name, and along with others this image of place is evoked in the various life-cycle rites that are of fundamental importance to personal and collective identities.

The issue of place is therefore central to the understanding of Temanambondro personhood and ancestry. In addition it is a subject which has gained some recent anthropological attention, sometimes subsumed within the current flurry of interest in landscape (see e.g. Bender, ed. 1993; Hirsch and O'Hanlon, eds. 1995). The terms themselves are not without problems, and along with some I am suspicious of "landscape" as an analytic rather than a descriptive term. The idea of landscape has a long and difficult history in the West, but one common theme that emerges from much work on the subject is the inherent visuality of landscape.[5] The archaeologist Julian Thomas for example has suggested that "the modern West has developed a particular and distinctive way of looking [i.e. landscape], which is deployed against place" (1993:20). Although more reserved, other commentators make a distinction between place and landscape akin to one of hierarchical encompassment (Relph 1976:122-3; Casey 1993:24-5), stressing the diffuse nature of landscape and the centredness of place.

Places thus exist within a landscape, but the two are not coterminous. Within the wider space of landscape places are focuses of action and intention, and it is this aspect of places that give them their place-ness. Place however is not a spatial setting for social processes, a stage where they occur and unfold; nor is it simply a text left by the inscriptions of bodies and agents. Place is rather the differentiated spaces that such processes bring repeatedly into being through everyday and ritual practice.[6]

One of the few extended ethnographic studies of place is that of Fred Myers on the Pintupi, inhabitants of the Western Desert of Australia (Myers 1986; cf. Basso 1984, 1988; Turner 1988). Along with other Aborigines the Pintupi have created their own

theory of place and landscape in The Dreaming, one that Myers skilfully elicits. Relationships to place are made through The Dreaming, "a projection into symbolic space of various social processes" (1986:47). The actions of ancestors from The Dreaming are to be found in Dreaming tracks across the landscape, and the events and actions of people's lives take on meaning within this context. Thus where a person is conceived and born, initiated and buried, all link the person to the Dreaming spirits that inhabit these places. Furthermore, through the polysemic term *ngurra* ("country") persons become attached to place through "camps" and named Dreaming sites.

To some extent Pintupi interest in landscape *is* visual, landscape features being iconic markers of the actions of Dreaming spirits, and this interest is vividly realized in complex paintings (see also Munn 1973; Morphy 1991). Furthermore, the length and breadth of Dreaming tracks makes it sensible to talk here of both landscape and place as Pintupi concerns, for places exist as part of the wider symbolic geography and landscape of Dreaming tracks. However, we should be aware of the power of our own metaphors to misrepresent the lives and interests of others, and heed Julian Thomas's remark that "landscape is not a universal concept, applied in the same way by all people at all times, and thus cannot represent a definitive way of apprehending the world" (1993:20).

Unlike the Pintupi and other Aboriginal peoples of Australia, Temanambondro interest in place and landscape is highly un-visual, concerned as it is with the everyday practice of producing a livelihood, the location of houses and fields, and with life cycle rites. Their landscape is not one of mythical geography, but a more prosaic space inscribed in different places with their own work and that of their ancestors. What I would argue however is that both Pintupi and Temanambondro share a spatial aesthetic. This is not the aesthetic of the landscape idea in bourgeois Western culture, of pleasing prospects and panoramic views, a vision of nature. Rather this aesthetic focuses on the social aspects of places, and a concern with the spatial aspects of temporality, persons, and collectivities.

If landscape is an idea that "has taken on many meanings but left few behind" (Relph 1981:58), this is perhaps also true of aesthetics, another term that has lurked for some time in the margins of anthropological discourse. That Temanambondro possess a spatial aesthetic, and that there is an aesthetic of personhood and everyday life, are two ideas that I pursue in the remainder of this thesis, ideas which in part derive from debates within the anthropology of aesthetics.

Anthropologies of Aesthetics

In a highly thought provoking paper James Fernandez (1966) comments that "aesthetics ... has as one of its primary concerns the manner in which values ... are formally arranged

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in space" (1966:53), an idea he relates to Durkheim's (1915:12) discussion of Zuñi pueblos. Of Durkheim's proposal that we view social organization as the model for spatial organization, Fernandez (1966:53) suggests that we can draw one of two conclusions: either aesthetic preference in spatial organization responds to social structure, or social structure is to some extent an expression of aesthetic preference.

Opting for the latter, Fernandez (1966:59-61) links the aesthetic appreciation of reliquary figures to an analysis of Fang spatial organization, kinship, and personhood, remarking that "what is aesthetically pleasing to the Fang has ... a vitality that arises out of a certain relationship of contradictory elements" (1966:54). The form of reliquary figures, the layout of village and domestic space, the seating arrangement of and practice of dispute settlement (see also Fernandez 1973:207-9); all display aspects of this central aesthetic. Similarly, an analysis of the different valences of male and female in dual classification and the lineage system reveal a "complementary opposition" that gives rise to vitality. Finally, a mature man is said to be "an object of aesthetic appreciation" (1966:61). In Fang culture Fernandez concludes, there are two basic oppositions - one spatial, the other the qualitative opposition of gender - and "Both the social structure and aesthetic life elaborate on these basic oppositions and create vitality in so doing" (1966:63).

Despite feeling sceptical about positing any causal relation between the two, my sympathies lie with Fernandez to the extent to which he brings an idea of aesthetics to bear on the issue of social and spatial organization, personhood and gender. Like Fernandez I am interested in aesthetics in the sense of "notions of preferred form in object and action" (1966:54), or as Hardin (1993:3) puts it evaluations of preference and value, and thus in the idea that aesthetics goes beyond the domain of "art" to which it has in the main so far been restricted in anthropological discussion. Temanambondro arguably possess a spatial aesthetic, and like the Fang they liberally use gender as an aesthetically satisfying way of conceptualizing certain objects, actions and qualities. But before these issues are addressed, it would be useful to look a little more closely at the use of the term aesthetic in anthropology.

Anthropological analyses of aesthetics have mostly concerned themselves with the domain of art, although the most innovative examples of this work has tried to link the interpretation of art objects to the use of aesthetic criteria in other domains. Robert Farris Thompson (1973) for example highlights the complex of ideas concerning line as an aspect of visibility in Yoruba aesthetic criticism, remarking that "linear connoisseurship is highly developed" (1973:35) among the Yoruba, and points to the importance of line in carving and other areas. Cicatrization for example is of great importance to the Yoruba, and as well as being a marker of lineage membership, the practice is also a marker of "civilization", both of the human face, and the earth, through such practices as opening roads and paths and defining boundaries in the forest (cf. Hardin 1993:127). Thompson concludes that "the basic verb to cicatrize ... has multiple associations of the imposing of

human pattern upon the disorder of nature" (1973:36).

This plotting of aesthetic criteria across domains has been pursued by others, some moving away from the very traditional and formal notion of aesthetics employed by Thompson. Taking avowedly structuralist perspectives, Marie Jeanne Adams (1980) for example has looked at parallels between Sumbanese textile patterns and the organization of village space, marriage, and gift exchange; whilst Adrienne Kaeppler (1978) has traced out the presence of "melody, drone and decoration" in Tongan dance and song, bark cloth patterns, and social organization. More recently, and from a phenomenological perspective, James Weiner (1991) has described the ubiquitous interest in movement and stasis among the Foi as a "central ... aesthetic" (1991:116), most eloquently realized in the "moving images" of Foi poetry (cf. Feld 1982; Gell 1995).[7]

Whilst these works and others have taken the analysis of aesthetics beyond the confines of art, they have however linked other domains to that of art - Yoruba carvings, Sumbanese textiles, Tongan dance, Foi poetry - as the basis of their analyses. However, it is arguable, as Warren d'Azavedo suggests, that by concentrating on such subjects as "focal expressions of ... aesthetic values" they have been given "arbitrary emphasis by observers for whom they represent familiar and particularly attractive creative forms" (1973:13). A similar point is made in a recent review essay where Toni Flores notes that the restriction of the analysis of aesthetics to the anthropology of art has impaired work in the area, thus ignoring "virtually all of the very most basic, life-sustaining and aesthetic bearing activities of human life" (1985:36). There is a telling point in Thompson's analysis of Yoruba "composition" where, regarding a statue, one critic shows pleasure in the placing of a child in its mother's hands and its twin on the mother's back. Thompson remarks that it is unfortunate that the critic "did not qualify [his] remarks. It is possible that a cultural factor [!], namely the Yoruba intense appreciation of motherhood and children, guided his remarks more than aesthetic discernments" (1973:46). Motherhood clearly has no aesthetic qualities for Thompson, although given the "intense appreciation" they show it, this is perhaps not the case for certain Yoruba. If this is the case then the formal criteria of traditional aesthetics are of little use, and we can talk of aesthetics among peoples where no domain of art as usually understood exists, ideas which more recent work has addressed.

Given that "we characterize art as a ... pattern of feeling" as Clifford Geertz (1983:95) has remarked, we must remember that "the feeling a people has for life appears ... in a great many other places than in their art. It appears ... even in the way they organize their everyday practical existence" (1983:96). Geertz's point is an issue implicit in John Forrest's analysis of "everyday aesthetics" in North Carolina. Noting that not all aesthetic forms are art works, Forrest boldly states that "to define aesthetic anthropology in terms of art is to narrow the scope of investigation to the point of excluding the majority of aesthetic experiences" (1988:26). This boldness notwithstanding, Forrest's definition

of aesthetic form (1988:21) and his analyses of patchwork quilts and duck decoys surely remains too close to the traditional view of aesthetics he criticises, although he usefully extends the notion to people's work preferences and how they conduct their relationships (1988:100-115, 192-232). Perhaps more successful is Kris Hardin's (1993) work on the "aesthetics of action" among the Kono of Sierra Leone. Here Hardin links aesthetics to the production and reproduction of "paradigmatic associations" in action and evaluation through looking at such things as agricultural production and the exercise of authority. Whilst Hardin is rather good on the question of evaluation, like others she includes in her analysis what she calls "crafts", weaving and pottery.

Although these two works have to some extent fallen in with the tendency to fetishize objects (whether art or craft) in the discussion of aesthetics, to my mind their main import lies in the ways in which they attempt to develop aesthetic analysis outside the study of art and move it into a less rarefied domain.[8] As Forrest points out "The everyday world is filled with aesthetic experiences" (1988:19), and these are present in the way people evaluate their own and others' practice and experience, and in the effective and affective use of images and metaphors (cf. Hardin 1993:266-7). The aesthetic imagination is thus not confined to art, but is to be found in everyday life, in object and in action, and in ways of thinking and feeling.

Although developing his ideas in a context different to my own, Donald Brenneis's (1987, 1990) notion of "social aesthetics" comes closest to the broad idea of aesthetics I am here proposing. Outlining his theory Brenneis notes that "Such an aesthetics necessarily involves domains often considered distinct within Western intellectual traditions ... [as it] fuses intellectual, sense-making activity with local aesthetic criteria for coherence and beauty ... [along] with ethnopsychological notions of personhood, emotion, expression and experience" (1987:237). Brenneis has applied the idea primarily to verbal and musical performance, discursive strategies, and the language of emotions, but his ideas appeal to my own sensibility, and seem to me crucial to an understanding of culture. Culture, as Fernandez points out, "is qualitative experience as much as it is a utilitarian bag of tools" (1973:194), as much a way of feeling as knowing how to. The elements of Brenneis's notion of social aesthetics seem to me to provide a way of thinking about such issues, and relating them to Temanambondro conceptualizations and experiences of place, personhood and ancestry.

The aesthetic dimensions of sense-making activity are touched on by different authors in discussions of classification, and the use of images and metaphor.[9] In his discussion of la pensée sauvage for example, Lévi-Strauss more than once alludes to the role of the "aesthetic imagination" (1966:156) operating within classificatory systems, systems which are at once both aesthetic and logical (1966:74). Here Lévi-Strauss seems to infer that there is an aesthetic dimension in those things which in his felicitous phrase are "good to think", the images and metaphors people use to make sense of the world and

through which social life is constituted and given meaning.

It is in this vein too that Marilyn Strathern (1988:180-190) appears to use the term "aesthetic" in her discussion of gender in Melanesia. For Strathern gender is both a "limiting aesthetic" and an "enabling condition" (1988:182) of relationships. The objectification of these relationships she says is performed through "the appropriate aesthetic" (1988:181), such that there are "aesthetic conventions" (1988:190) to the form that objectification takes. Thus in Melanesia gender is fundamental to the conceptualization and constitution of all social relationships, a way of thinking and acting that takes many forms, both within and on the surface of the human body, as well as in other animate and inanimate forms. Although Strathern herself chooses not to define her use of the term, she appears to me to be talking about aesthetics in a sense similar to that of Lévi-Strauss, that is gender as a basis of epistemology and imagination.

Although she strives to avoid doing so (see 1988:187-8), Strathern would seem to be suggesting that gender is a central Melanesian aesthetic, and in this she displays a certain affinity with those discussed above who trace out aesthetic principles across various domains of life. However, rather than seeking to highlight the presence of a central aesthetic or "focal principle" (Brenneis 1990:118) in different domains, I want to suggest that there is an aesthetic quality to a variety of images and metaphors used by Temanambondro - such as spatial images, houses, gender - and that this derives from their ability to make sense of different things in different contexts, thus, as in the case of gender in Melanesia, providing an aesthetic basis for understanding, intuition and imagination. Furthermore, it is the very imagability of certain metaphors, along with their everyday matter-of-factness, that enhances their appropriateness and aesthetic quality. In short, images as organizing metaphors possess aesthetic qualities because they make it possible to understand one's own and others' experiences and utterances despite differences of context; or in Brenneis's terms they make sense of things and in so doing fulfil aesthetic criteria of coherence and relevance.[10]

In an exploration of the process of sense-making in metaphor, Ricoeur (1979) makes the point that metaphors make "Things or ideas which were once remote appear ... as close.... reveal[ing] a generic kinship between heterogeneous ideas" (1979:145). In this "work of resemblance" images "set before the eyes" (1979:142) similarities; but Ricoeur also notes that in imaging and imagining we not only "see" this congruence, we "feel" it too (1979:148, 154; cf. Fernandez 1986a:7-8; 1986b:52). This affective dimension of metaphor exists alongside the fit-ness or appropriateness of images and metaphors, alongside their sense-making ability, and thus affect and effect are mutually implicated. Furthermore, the fit-ness of particular metaphors leads to them becoming conventionalized, as in the manner of proverbs, such that they become commonplace images and idioms that can be used in various contexts. But despite being conventionalized they may still be used in innovative ways, so making the inchoate

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comprehendible, or as Temanambondro would say, they make things "clear" (*mazava*), a notion which for them possesses aesthetic qualities (see Chapter 3). Images and metaphors can thus "feel" right, and success in their use lies in their being "felt" to be appropriate by others.

There is one aspect of Ricoeur's argument that is worth returning to again however, the idea that metaphors make that "which [was] once remote appear ... close" (1979:145). It is noteworthy that the images and metaphors commonly used by Temanambondro require no great leap of imagination to the extent that they are grounded in the commonplace of everyday experience and practice, and are to some extent already "close" in a very real sense to the subject seeking metaphoric predication. Thus whilst the aesthetics of images and metaphors derives from their sense-making capacity - what they do rather than what they are - their ability to make sense comes from the matter-of-factness of the objects and practices from which they are derived.

A similar idea underlies Gillian Feeley-Harnik's (1986) discussion of royal funerals among the Sakalava of northwest Madagascar, where she comments on "the sensual foundation of metaphor" and its relation to the "corporeal commonplace" (1986:171-2), and how the performance of ritual metaphors in royal service "transposes the difficult, even unspeakable ideas contained in the ... funeral onto objects which, because of their apparent commonness in every sense, lend themselves far more to open discussion and reflection" (1986:170). Funerals are "difficult" for the Temanambondro too, and in their commemorative monuments perhaps they too find tangible form for the unspeakable. In other contexts Temanambondro images and metaphors used in the conceptualization of place, personhood and ancestry also draw on the commonplace. Thus for example Temanambondro spatial images draw on the local topography, whilst images of "roots" and planting used in the context of ancestry and marriage draw on the everyday practices of farming and handling of wood. Similarly, the idiom of the "house" utilizes as an image of relatedness the primary place where relatedness is practised.

What I am suggesting therefore is that in their sense-making capacity certain Temanambondro images and metaphors possess aesthetic qualities. But like Brenneis and others I am also arguing for an aesthetics of personhood and everyday practice. The appreciation of motherhood and children among the Yoruba, and of male elders among the Fang find their echoes among the Temanambondro. Being valued as a person, having a "good spirit" (*tsara fañahy*) and being recognized as someone who "nurtures" (*miteza*) are ideas present in people's everyday practice and their evaluation of the practice of others, ideas which find further aesthetic elaboration in commemorative mortuary ceremonies. To some extent the aesthetics of personhood is an idea that has been around for some time, one that appears to be implicit in Edmund Leach's comments on the "socially desirable" and the relationship between aesthetics and ethics (1954a:36-8; 1954b:12). With the advent of studies of personhood per se such work has gained in complexity and

sophistication, such as in Jane Guyer's (1993) discussion of "self-realization"; here and elsewhere we find aesthetics present in personal style and social grace, in a person's potency and selfhood manifest in performance, and in the evaluation of people's practice against local concepts of the person (see Chernoff 1979; Harrison 1993:120-5; R. Rosaldo 1993; Rasmussen 1995).

To sum up I am arguing for an aesthetics of images and metaphor, as well as for an aesthetics of personhood. Perhaps to some such a notion of aesthetics appears itself to be "luminous but not really illuminating". If I insist on its use it is because I think it is a useful term for thinking about how people evaluate their own and others' lives, and the ways in which they make sense of experience. Furthermore, in the ways people imagine their being-in-the-world the creative use of images should not be overlooked, for they underlie people's conceptualization and understanding of themselves as persons, and are the basic vocabulary of their sociological imagination. How one might use this notion of aesthetics to understand Temanambondro ethnography is a subject returned to at various points in the chapters that follow.

Conclusion

An ethnographic study of Temanambondro concepts of place, person and ancestry, this thesis draws on anthropological debates about "kinship", space and aesthetics. However, it is not a study of one of these issues in particular, and I have highlighted them in the present chapter so as to clarify what lies behind certain aspects of the analysis that follows. With reference to discussions of "kinship", I adopt a perspective that a cultural analysis of Temanambondro ancestry and concepts of relatedness must proceed from an investigation of indigenous categories, rather than attempting to gloss those categories in the metalanguage of kinship theory. As for the anthropology of space, the analysis does not stop at an account of representations of spatial relationships, but rather focuses on space and place as aspects of the process by which social relationships and identities are both represented and constituted. Finally, the issue of aesthetics interposes itself with regard to the use of metaphors and images, as well as in the area of personhood and how people as moral selves evaluate their own and others' actions in light of ideas about what constitutes a valued life. And it is the latter of these issues - how aesthetics relates to Temanambondro concepts of personhood and gender - that frames the discussion of the next chapter.

Personhood and Gender:
An Aesthetics of Everyday Life

Perspectives on the Person in Madagascar

In concluding his extended analysis of Merina social organization, and in particular the rites of secondary burial known as *famadihana*, Maurice Bloch (1971:220-2) points out that his account is only a partial one, focusing as it does on the sociological. There are, he suggests, alternative perspectives to be considered, and here he briefly mentions the concept of the person, something that he discusses in the context of the importance of ancestors and the fate of the "soul" at death. In spite of their elaborate mortuary rituals however, Bloch tells us that "the Merina are not interested in particular ancestors, but in 'ancestors' as an undifferentiated category" (1971:45), and up until recently the concept of the person which Bloch introduced at the end of his study had suffered a fate analogous to Merina ancestors, entombed within the collectivities that have been the focus of sociological ethnography. Unwittingly echoing colonial ideas about the Malagasy as people who are dependent on others for their sense of themselves as persons (Mannoni 1956), various ethnographers frame their argument in such a way as to agree with the sentiment of Beaujard's remark, that "The Tanala do not apprehend themselves in the first place as individuals, but as members of a family, a group of kin" (1983b:148; cf. e.g. Huntington 1988:48; Middleton 1988:138-143).

Whilst persons have long been represented as members of groups, changes in the analysis of social organization have led to changes in the analysis of the person. As for the former, Southall has remarked that arguments about whether Malagasy "kinship" systems are cognatic or agnatic have been "misconceived" (1986:417; cf. Baré 1986:390), and although some have chosen to word the point differently much recent ethnography appears to be in broad agreement with Southall's remarks on "cumulative kinship" where he notes that "what seems distinctive about all Malagasy kinship systems is ... their emphasis on kinship and descent status as something achieved gradually and progressively throughout life, and even after death, rather than ascribed and fixed definitively at birth" (1986:417). The point is similar to one made by James Fox (1987:174) for the wider Austronesian world, and one which phrases the issues in a distinctly processual form.

As "kinship" has come to be viewed processually, so too has the person. Indeed,

much of the ethnography reveals a processual conceptualization of the person among the Malagasy, perhaps the best known instance being the transformation of living persons into ancestors. But even before death Malagasy stress the malleability of the person, even within the womb (Lambek 1992:264n.2; Bloch 1993b:125), and in local concepts of the body and ageing (Huntington 1988:29-30; Bloch 1992:133-6). The contingency of gender has also been emphasised by some. Bloch (1987) for example has argued that among the Merina there are a number of conflicting discourses of gender, whilst among the Zafimaniry gender gains its greatest salience during the years of married life, being of less importance during childhood and old age (Bloch 1992). Others too have argued that the relevance of a person's gender is contextual (Astuti 1993), whilst some have shown how gender is used to encode political values (Middleton 1988; Feeley-Harnik 1991b).

Alongside the processual picture of "kinship", recent analyses also stress the shifting aspects of the person's social identity. Regarding the Malagasy speakers of Mayotte in the Comores, Lambek (1992) has analysed how the practice of taboo relates to a person's status, and how the adoption and shedding of taboos can be seen as "a kind of retrospective account of [a] person's moral career" (1992:254). In a similar vein, Bloch notes that "for the Zafimaniry the birth of a child does not mark its entry into social life, rather it is part of a wider process of the entry of its parents into that life" (1993b:131). As with other Malagasy peoples, the Zafimaniry do not consider infants to be fully human; becoming "living people" (*olombelona*) is a gradual process (cf. Dubois 1978), and, as Astuti (1995b:467) points out, one could even say that the ethnography suggests an island-wide model of "cumulative personhood".

This shifting moral status of persons through their life echoes another aspect of the person, the gradual emergence of their group identity. In the highlands it is through participation in funerary rituals and the building and upkeep of a tomb that a person comes to be associated with the tomb they will be buried in, and the group to which they belong (Bloch 1971:41-50; cf. Kottak 1980:165-182). This association between tombs and group membership has been noted elsewhere, and although speaking of inhabitants of the northeast coast, Hurvitz's remark that as "a person can only be buried in one cemetery, so burial becomes a final designation of ancestry" (1980:37) seems equally apposite regarding the Bara of the south (Huntington 1988:35-6), whilst Gardenier for example notes that Sakalava "say that to which lineage a child belongs ... is totally irrelevant during its lifetime and only becomes important at its death" (1976:86), a point more fully developed by Astuti (1995a). The repeated emphasis on burial as the important marker of a person's group affiliation rather than birth would seem to question the usefulness of the term "descent" in analysing social organization, although many authors continue to use the term, if somewhat ambivalently. Rather the performative dimensions of the process of affiliation seems a notable aspect of Malagasy social organization, and one that is stressed in what follows.

If these shifting aspects of personhood seem to capture local understandings and social processes better than the concept of "descent", then they are worth pursuing, and such is the basis of the analysis presented here. In what follows Temanambondro notions of personhood are explored through ideas surrounding birth, the body, concepts of folk biology and folk psychology, as well as through notions of selfhood. What is emphasized is that the person's moral status is emergent in what they do, and here there are aesthetic criteria for evaluating the practice of others, in the work they do and the nurture they give others. Gender is also important, and Temanambondro images of "strength" and "softness", respectively male and female, crop up in a variety of contexts. But although gender is a significant difference throughout a person's life, it is not the only aspect of their person that is emphasized, for more important still is their ability to provide "nurture" for others.

Conception, gestation and birth

For Temanambondro, and many other Malagasy, conception remains a realm for ideational and often scientific speculation (cf. e.g. Huntington 1978:51-5, 1988:23-8; Kottak 1980:311n.20; Middleton 1988:300; Astuti 1993:280-2; Bloch 1993b:124-5). But this is not mere ignorance of the "facts", about which Temanambondro seem not to speculate a great deal because they do not particularly interest them. What ideas they do have about conception in fact tell us more about the relationship that results in the birth of children (conceptualized as marriage) than they do about the physiological processes themselves. Those who have anything to say about the subject are usually women, and why this should be so can be seen in a proverb which vividly captures women's plight: *an-troky mahafaty, an-tany mahafaty*. Literally meaning "in the stomach kills, on the earth kills", it highlights the hazards and uncertainties that women face in a situation of rudimentary medical care, and that children can be as problematic after birth as before. Their experience leaves them with much to reflect on.[1]

It is obvious to all that a woman must "lay" (*mandry*) with a man to become pregnant, and to a woman it is plain that she has conceived when her "time" or "the moon has not arrived" (*tsy tonga fotoana; tsy tonga volana*). And so it seemed likely to some that the blood that no longer issues forth each month is in some way involved in the forming of the child in the womb. As far as the man is concerned intercourse produces semen (for which there are various names) and this too is probably involved when it enters the "child's house" (*trañon-daza*), the mother's womb. What often received comment however was the fact that intercourse did not always lead to conception, something which was viewed in terms of the difference in kind between the woman and the man.

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Why this should be so I discussed with two sisters who expressed their thoughts on the subject in terms strikingly similar to those used for talking about what makes a successful marriage. As did many, they both agreed that for a woman to become pregnant "the man and woman must be the same" (*tsy maitsy mitovy ñe lelahy sy ñe apela*), they must "follow one another" (*mifañaraka*).[2] This compatibility is something thought of in terms of "kinds" (*karazana*) of things. Ideas about blood grouping have entered people's conceptual universe through State and Church medical services, and Endrin'Kako suggested that a man and woman's blood must be the same (*tsy maitsy mitovy ñe ra*); but Endrin'Lavavolo countered with an example of a couple known to have different blood groups and yet to have children. Perhaps blood groups do not have to be the same if the man has "strength" (*heriny*), added Endrin'Lavavolo, something that applies to both the man himself and his semen. A weak man is unlikely to have children, and the point was illustrated by mentioning the case of a childless habitual drunk. Indeed drunkenness and impotence were sometimes (and often comically) equated, although too much sex is said to be debilitating also, the body and the semen becoming weak. Then again too little sex has the same effect, and hilarious conversations about men (usually adolescents) that moped about in a state of malaise would quickly find a reason in their assumed celibacy. Furthermore Endrin'Lavavolo pointed out that if the mother has sex with the father only once then the child is often weak and ill in its first months and years (implicitly suggesting that semen from repeated coitus can give the child strength), and she cited the example of a sister's daughter who had left the village to live "in the bush" soon after conception and not "lain" with men again. The child was sickly and weak until three years old. But Endrin'Kako added that in some cases, after a woman has become pregnant and then sleeps with a different man, the foetus may "leave" (*miala*) or "go out" (*mivoaka*); isn't this because the first man and the second were "not the same" (*tsy mitovy*) she wondered aloud.[3]

Throughout this conversation, and others, it seemed that for every nascent theory a countering example could always be found. What came through however was an idiom of similarity and complementarity, that pregnancy and childbirth would only be possible for the same reasons that made a good marriage possible. Indeed, the birth and growth of a child (or better still children) is seen very much as completing part of the early stages of marriage, and a marriage that survives there being no children is very rare indeed.

Aban'Maso and his wife were ideal in every way, they worked well together, they liked one another, their granary was always full (an oft cited image of the ideal marriage) and they cared for one another. But relatives of Aban'Maso were particularly keen that he should remarry for despite their having got on so well for several years he and his wife had no children. Finally Aban'Maso and his wife separated and divorced, and both married again. Aban'Maso finally had four sons; and his former wife had two daughters.

The story was told me as Endrin'Lavavolo and her sister speculated on what conception and gestation involved. A man, such as Aban'Maso and his wife, may be married for years and not have children. Then they divorce, marry again, and each have children with their new spouse. Only when they had found someone the "same" as themselves could they have children, and only then would their marriage likely survive. That they married again and had children only went to show that they were "not the same".

Whilst successful childbirth is a reason for celebration, as though not to tempt fate very little is said about the state of a woman's pregnancy, and even when it becomes visible and she is "heavy" (*mavesatra*) it is not something openly discussed. As one finds elsewhere in Madagascar, the child *in utero* is thought to be susceptible to a variety of environmental influences, and midway through her pregnancy a woman begins to follow a regime of dietary taboos, although a number of others based on ideas of contagion were practised in the past (see Deschamps 1936:134). She abstains from "cold" foods such as pineapples, and foods that are thought to clog in the womb and block up the child's orifices, such as ripe bananas, honey, jackfruit and avocado. Groundnuts (*voanzo*) too are avoided, being thought of as stillborn (*latsaka an-tany*, lit. "dropped on the earth") of the plant on which they grow.

The day of birth arrives, and if by the will of any then by that of God, Zañahary. Nowadays for those on the lower Manambondro river childbirth takes place in the hospital in Manambondro village at which a doctor and midwife are on hand, and mishaps are likely to be of less consequence there than anywhere else. In the past (and in some of the more isolated villages "in the countryside") a local midwife (*renin-daza*, lit. "mother of the child") helped and aided the birth. Whilst there are no more of these in the Manambondro area, many women have however experienced several births and appear to be quite competent midwives themselves. The same cannot be said of men, and they are strictly excluded from the event.

A child's father will only know the outcome of the birth when he returns from the fields or when someone comes to tell how things have gone. By then the placenta will have arrived, and all immediate dangers will be past. Said to be the "elder sibling" (*zoky*) of the child, the placenta (*razana*, also meaning "ancestor") is taken for burial in the grounds of the father's house-group. Wrapped in scraps of cloth that have been used during the birth, the placenta is buried in a hole a foot or so deep, immediately to the north of the *trañondonaky* ("headman's house"), a stone (*vato razana*, "placenta-ancestor stone") placed over it once the hole has been refilled. No words accompany the interment, no libations either. Words are kept for the happiness of a new birth, and the drinks that accompany the announcing of the child's name if one has been decided on.

Childbirth however is a dangerous event, and deaths of children and/or mothers are too common for women to face it without some trepidation.

Iketa's delivery was very difficult, the child dying because the umbilical cord got caught round its neck. Unlike her sisters and father's sisters who had had many daughters, the child was a boy, and sadness was expressed over the loss of a child who was said to have been "strong", this evident in the brief but futile fight it put up before dying. Several relatives gathered at Iketa's husband's house-group as the body of the child arrived for burial, and after recounting the circumstances of the birth a hole was dug in the place of the *vato razana* and the small cloth-enveloped body placed within it, laid out with its head to the east and its feet to the west. After the burial was completed the hole was refilled and covered with a stone, and people soon went back to their houses and tasks. For the mother and father it was a loss to be faced stoically. But that was the way of things, and "thanks to God" she was still living.

Although a cause of sadness, the death of a child is much less a loss than that of its mother, and the sorrow expressed for a child that dies in the perinatal period is short-lived, as such children are not yet considered to be fully human (see below).

Fortunately more children survive than not, and after a couple of days they go home with their mother. Post partum resting (*manapata*; fr. *fata*, "hearth") for many is still carried out in the traditional manner, the mother and child remaining close to the hearth and heavily swaddled in blankets. Mats are pinned to the inside of the wall around their bed, and the mother of a newborn must wash in hot water. Still abstaining from "cold" foods, her diet comprises early on of soft and watery rice and other "hot" foods. In her screened corner the mother and the newborn child (*zazamena*, lit. "red child") are kept warm because both are thought to be vulnerable to the cold which can enter them and cause illness. For a month the child remains mainly in the house, only emerging with its head fully covered and wrapped in blankets, carried on its mother's back. After the first month has passed both mother and child begin to move about more freely, the child's head now being exposed when it leaves the house for the first time. Mothers commonly apply a variety of pastes around the child's forelock, to quicken the hardening of the fontanelle (*hevo*), so as to ensure, one woman told me, that the child's *fañahy* (see below) did not leave them. By then the child will have begun to respond to things heard and seen, first signs of becoming a "living person".

Fañahy, work and nurture

A stillborn child, or one which dies shortly after birth, is buried not as "living people" (*olombelona*) are, in a tomb after the performance of mortuary rites, but rather is accorded similar status to its "elder sibling" placenta-ancestor and buried with very little ceremony. That such children are however somehow more like persons than the placentae alongside which they are placed may be gauged from the fact that the positioning of the body in the

hole dug for it reproduces that of the corpses of "living people" in tombs, and that they are usually buried to the east of placentae, the superior direction and the one associated with the ancestors. Those who die around the time of birth and up to a few weeks thereafter are known as those who "do not fill a month/fill months" (*tsy feno volana*), sometimes also referred to as *biby* ("animal"), a term also used for corpses of "living people". Yet in the very fact that they are not buried in the tomb but under the *vato razana* alongside the placentae reveals that those "who do not fill months" are in fact not full persons, but merely beings born of humans. They lack a *fañahy*, the basic concept of what makes persons "living people".[4]

Babies only gradually begin to take on the persona of "living people", the first signs of doing so are when they begin to react to things they "see" and "hear" (*mahita, mahare*), such as the cooing of their mothers, abilities which are said to emerge after a month or so. They also begin to cry in a way that suggests that there is something they want, and smile when something pleases them. In this they are beginning to exhibit aspects of their *fañahy*, and, as one woman suggested, it was to ensure that this did not escape the child that the quickening of the child's fontanelle is encouraged through the application of medicines.

The term *fañahy* is somewhat complex and difficult to translate, having a whole host of meanings and nuances.[5] In some respects the *fañahy* is a person's "soul" or "spirit", and like that of Christian teaching it survives death, although not in the same manner. In addition, besides being unique to "living people", it is also unique to each individual person, and given Abinal and Malzac's (1987:143) etymon of the pronoun *ahy* ("me"), the term has the extra sense of "self" and even "personality". Furthermore, as Temanambondro understand it, the *fañahy* is implicit in people's "will" and "desire" (*sitrapo*), which when acted upon make clear their intentionality. As "spirit" and "self" *fañahy* individuates, and the concept represents to some extent what we might call the "moral self".

Of those I talked with, Endrin'Lavavolo offered a cogent commentary on those aspects of *fañahy* that I had heard mentioned in various contexts in people's discussions of the practice of others.

I asked Endrin'Lavavolo if you could see someone's *fañahy*. "You don't know their *fañahy* but you see what they do every day - if their heart is clear, [if] their mind is clear. [You] see a clear mind with good people, calm people - [you] receive explanations from them [or] a recounting [of something that happened]. And [you] see [a clear mind] too in the way people do things."[6]

A little later I asked whether people said there were differences between the *fañahy* of men and women. "Each person has a different *fañahy*. The respect and honour given men is greater [lit. above]. But the mind - some men think that women's minds aren't clear, but some are the same [as men's minds]. Women spoke at political meetings before but the men didn't like it. They don't know how to speak' they

said. Finally women didn't go to political meetings any more - they couldn't be bothered."[7]

Having more than once heard people talk about the work of others in terms of their *fañahy* I asked her to clarify what people meant. A person's work can be a sign (*famatarana*) of their *fañahy*, and work and *fañahy* often go along together (*miarakaraka*) She illustrated her point by comparing the work of two men I knew well. "If the work is very clean and well finished, if a person works hard, then often they have a good *fañahy*" (*laha madio tsara ñe asany de vita tsara, laha miasa mafy, de matetika tsara ñe fañahy*) she concluded.

There is therefore much more to the concept than dictionary definitions suggest, and Endrin'Lavavolo's comments highlight how people make discriminations in what others do in terms of their *fañahy*. Here then is the basis of an aesthetics of Temanambondro personhood, for there is a high value placed on those with a "good" *fañahy*, who work hard, and who "nurture" and "care for" people. The concept is also important in Temanambondro concepts of psychology, which are often used to distinguish the "minds" of men from those of women.

Although everyone may have a different *fañahy*, people distinguish between broad categories of "good" (*tsara*) and "bad" (*ratsy*) *fañahy*. A person with a *ratsy fañahy* is someone likely to be "mean spirited" or "stingy" (*masihy*), "quick tempered" and "fierce" (*masiaka*), as well as "cunning" or "sly" (*fetsy*). Such people are often presumed to lie and/or steal, and not surprisingly the ultimate *ratsy fañahy* is the sorcerer (*pamosavy*), a stealer of life (cf. Deschamps 1935). Their alter are those said to have a *tsara fañahy*. Kindness and generosity are such a person's hallmarks, both of spirit and in material terms, and unlike *ratsy fañahy* who "like themselves" (*tia teña*), those of *tsara fañahy* "like others" (*tia nama*, lit. "like friends"). They typically work hard and carefully, and their work exhibits the effort put into it, whereas that of a *ratsy fañahy* is typically slapdash and finished poorly. The concept of *fañahy* is also central to Temanambondro notions of moral sociality, and someone of a *tsara fañahy* is likely a person who "cares for" or "nurtures" (*miteza*), a term applied not only to the bringing up of children nor restricted to women.

To some extent many Temanambondro hold an idea that life in the past was easier, rice harvests were more plentiful, and people got along with one another more. This difference between past and present is often linked to changes in the *fañahy* of people, and illustrated through reference to work (*asa*, here explicitly farming, *fambole*, lit. "planting"). In the past everyone grew *vary hosy*, the rice variety considered the "rice of the ancestors" (*varindrazana*). The work was hard and required the use of many cattle to trample the rice fields and cooperation between households. Now *vary hosy* is hardly grown by anyone, replaced by another variety, and cattle herds have dwindled mainly due to the very high price increases of the last 25 years. But it is also pointed out that in the past people of one house-group herded their cattle together and worked together more,

each household helping out with the work of the others. Now this only rarely occurs, and there is a tendency toward household atomism within house-groups, except for their cooperation in ritual. When I talked to Endrin'Kako's mother about this time past she said that "the people before had a different *fañahy*" (*hafa ñe fañahy ñ'olombe taloha*), they "liked others" and did not merely look after themselves all the time. People were more "free" (*malalaka*) with their help and possessions, and although "relatives" (*havana*) should "look after" (*mikarakara*) each other, people now are "selfish" (*tia teña*) and only look after themselves. Sometimes this selfishness is displayed by a household which keeps to itself more than it should, sometimes the "liking" for oneself means a lack of cooperation between spouses.

Those often said to "only like themselves" were *pesera* (fr. *pêcheur*), young men who fished lobster for selling on to traders from Vangaindrano and Fort Dauphin. By local standards they could earn a phenomenally large amount of money in a very short space of time, but as it was pointed out to me more than once, they "do not know how to use a spade" (*tsy mahay fangady*). Derided for not being farmers (cf. Deschamps 1936:37), they also exemplified people's low opinion of them in wastefully and selfishly consuming the money they made, rather than distributing some among their family and using it sensibly. A typical *pesera* would fish for a few days, get drunk every pay day, spend their money on alcohol, women, imported clothes, and shoes in which they at best appeared uncomfortable. Keeping everything to themselves, they exhibited their *ratsy fañahy*, showing that they only "liked themselves" and "did not know how to care for [others]" (*tsy mahay miteza*).

Whilst people's comments on *pesera* emphasize the way in which a person's *fañahy* is evident in their consumption, the *fañahy* of others is remarked on in terms of their work. Among the pastoralist Karembola, Middleton suggests that the size of a cattle herd is a sign of their *asy*, a *mana*-like "efficacy" (1988:84; cf. Huntington 1988:105). The idea is similar to Temanambondro ideas about seeing people's work as a "sign" of their *fañahy*, a more prosaic way of viewing the tangible signs of others' hidden qualities. For Temanambondro a "good" *fañahy* is visible in a person's ability to "look after", "care for", "nurture" and "rear", all part of the semantic range of the verb *miteza*. In making things "grow" and "increase" (*mitombo*) one needs to *miteza*, whether what one is nurturing is people, plants, or livestock. Those who rear cattle and chickens (*miteza aomby, miteza akoho*) aim to make their herds and flocks increase. When growing rice one must "nurture water" (*miteza rano*), and the most difficult rice of all to grow is that which needs the most nurturing, *vary hosy*, "rice of the ancestors". But the most valued nurture is that which relates to people, whether "caring for" them through feeding them the product of one's work, or simply helping them out in times of hardship. For those who bring up children nurture is a long term commitment, and there is the hope that in old age those one has nurtured will nurture one in return; but one can also nurture relatives and

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friends in the short term through occasional gifts and loans or taking them in to one's house if they cannot support themselves. Although people usually "bring up" and "nurture" their own children, Temanambondro frequently foster the children of close relatives, another sense of the verb *miteza*, and something practised by those who have children of their own as well as those who are childless.

To adopt Guyer's (1993) term, the fulfilment of self-realization among the Temanambondro is thought of in terms of whether or not people "know how to nurture" (*mahay miteza*). Those who do know how to are valued by others, and their "good" *fañahy* the subject of praise. Their ability to nurture plants and livestock may be found in their work, in a full granary or their cattle, signs of their productive ability, but if they keep these to themselves, fail to look after their children, whether their own or fostered, fail to care for relatives with needs, or fail to fulfil their obligation to present cattle for slaughter when a ceremony requires them to do so, then despite their ability to nurture crops and animals they fail to be recognized as those who "nurture people" (*miteza olo*), and are castigated for being "stingy" and "mean". Their nurturing abilities are misplaced, and they are of a "bad" *fañahy*. The fulfilment of self-realization then comes through in people's generative capacity to make things increase, grow and become more (*mitombo*), an ability to "nurture" that is the best evidence people have of a person's "good" *fañahy*.

Besides being central to ideas about work and nurture, *fañahy* is of fundamental importance in Temanambondro folk psychology. Being able to *miteza* is not thought of as a gendered ability, and both men and women may be referred to as "people who know how to nurture". Thus their self-realization is not limited by their gender. Yet other valued aspects of persons, their ability to speak with a "clear mind", tend to be thought of in gendered terms, and to some extent the self-realization of women is limited. As Endrin'Lavavolo put it "The respect and honour given men is greater", something evident in the memorials made for them in mortuary ceremonies (see P. Thomas n.d.) and in Temanambondro notions of "thinking" and "speaking".

Gender, body, and mind

Despite a general tendency to ignore gender in anthropological discussions of the person (see Howell and Melhuus 1993:46-9), recent work in Madagascar has tended to combine the two issues in analysis. That said however, there is a certain lack of agreement about the significance of gender in Malagasy concepts of the person. Huntington (1988) for example posits the entirety of his analysis of Bara personhood and social organization on gender, which he views as ultimately reducible to Bara ideas about procreation (1988:23). Others however point to the varying significance of gender. Astuti for example suggests

that "gender *is* and *is not* an attribute of Vezo persons" (1993:288), whilst Bloch (1987) highlights contradictory representations of gender among the Merina, and has later remarked with reference to the Zafimaniry, that "Gender is not ... the prime identity that it may be in some cultures" (1992:136).[8] However, the change in the degree of significance of gender through the life course that Bloch (1992:136) notes is perhaps a distinctive feature of the Zafimaniry not shared by all peoples of Madagascar, including the Temanambondro.

Temanambondro representations of gender might best be described as ambiguous rather than contradictory, something illustrated by ideas associated with houses and domestic space where images of the unity of spouses as "paired" exist alongside a hierarchical model of gender that posits men "above" and women "below" (see Chapter 6; P. Thomas 1995). This ambiguity can also be seen in statements about birth. To those stupid enough to ask it is made very clear that it is women and not men who actually give birth. Yet birth is also linguistically non-gendered, for both men and women "bear children" (cf. Feeley-Harnik 1991b:67). The ambiguity here centres on the fact that people phrase both statements - that it is women and not men who give birth, and both men and women bear children - with the same verb, *miteraka*.

But as it will become clear, there is a developed set of ideas and images that highlight the extent to which gender *is* a difference that makes a difference (Yanagisako and Collier 1987:41) among the Temanambondro. This is especially clear in the genderedness of relatedness (see Chapters 6), but is also evident in the use of idioms of "strength" and "weakness" applied to such things as "bodies" and "minds".

Virtually the first statement given to those enquiring about the outcome of a birth informs them whether the mother has "got a girl" or "got a boy" (*mahazo apela, mahazo lelahy*), and although the gender of a nursing child is of little consequence, it is not long before children take on gendered practices in play. Whilst girls and boys spend a great deal of time playing together, young girls sometimes separate off to go about their "play cooking" (*sakandrokandro*), whilst boys as young as three will play at herding cattle, using mud models or a chick tied helplessly to the end of a piece of string, encouraging both in their sluggish movement with the cry "*Ha! Tsyyyy*", the same as that used by older brothers and fathers. And although all children tend to sit in the western half of the house with their mother, girls and boys sit differently, with the former often being told to "sit properly!" (*mifitaha tsara!*), kneeling down so as not to expose their genitals from below their often thread bare dresses. Clothed differently from about 4 years of age, even earlier still boys and girls are differentiated in differences of hair style (cf. Deschamps 1936:58, 136).

In later years girls start to look after younger siblings from age 7 or 8, carrying them on their backs as their mothers do, something they play act with pieces of cloth or manioc at an earlier age. Meanwhile boys begin to gather kindling and herd less

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predictable cattle with their brothers at around the same age. Thus by the time they are 10 both girls and boys are already performing tasks associated with their gender. As adolescence is reached girls are already adepts at the various parts of rice farming that are performed by women; whilst boys, still known as "big sucklers" (*beminono*) until into their late teens, begin to learn those parts of the agricultural round seen as "man's work" (*asa ñe lehlahy*) when they establish their own plots of rice with parental help in their mid-teens. By the time they marry both men and women have for a long time experienced the genderedness of everyday life, in the use of domestic space, in bodily habitus, and in work. Nor are they naive about the genderedness of sexuality as they start out as potential parents themselves. The marriage relationship itself maintains strong gender distinctions, and the importance of gender remains in old age too, with elder men and women respectively addressed with the honorifics Rangahy and Rañavavy.

Gender is thus a significant category for persons throughout their life and in their daily experience. The extent to which this is so is emphasised by the fact that gender is a difference that makes a difference even before and after life. Some house-groups in Manambondro village bury the placentae of girls and boys separately, as well as those children who "do not fill months"; reproducing the spatial configuration of men and women in houses, the placentae of boys are buried to the east and those of girls to the west. For those buried in the tomb gender also separates, for men and women are spatially segregated in burial, although in a manner different to those who never became "living people".

Yet despite all this, interest in the gendered body is comparatively slight. There are no elaborate forms of body symbolism, nor taboos that highlight differences in gendered bodies. Tattooing was once practised but this was performed on both men and women (cf. Decary 1961); nowadays however body adornment is confined to jewelry and hair style, the latter being much more elaborate in the past for men than is presently the case. Along with burial, the greatest ritual attention paid to the gendered body is circumcision, performed on boys anywhere between a few months and their mid-teens, depending on the resources of those who hold the ceremony. Although there is no clear idea that circumcision is seen as somehow completing the male person, it is notable that the prepuce of boys who die uncircumcised must be removed before they can be buried, a common practice throughout the southeast (see Deschamps 1936:102; Deschamps and Vianès 1959:52; Chandon-Moet 1972:110; cf. Beaujard 1983b:468). No explicit reasoning is given for the ceremony as a whole either, although it is said to make a boy "strong", a trait of maleness, and circumcision songs compare the "cut" (*tapaka*) boys to a bull. This association of maleness with "strength" is a central image of gender which is often applied to the body. It is also particularly relevant regarding the division of labour, and can be seen in concepts of folk psychology.

In seeking to clarify ideas about conception and the ways in which parents and

their children were related it became clear how aspects of the body metaphorically represented more widely applied images of gender. Women, it is said, are like flesh (*nofitra*); they are "soft" (*malemy*). Men on the other hand are like bones (*taolana*), especially the backbone (*taolandamosy*), the strongest bone of all; they are "strong" (*matanzaka*). Thus I was once told that fathers "make [their children] strong" (*mampatanzaka*) and give them "strength" (*heriny*); whilst mothers give them "thought" (*hevitra*), "small talk" (*resaka madiniky*), and "nurture their *fañahy*" (*miteza ñe fañahiny*). At first these ideas might appear to be a theory of substantial relatedness akin to that reported by other ethnographers, such that flesh comes from the mother and bones from the father (Baré 1977:96; Huntington 1988:23-8). However it is quite clear that for Temanambondro such statements are, as Endrin'Lavavolo pointed out, "only a way of speaking" (*fomba fiteny avao*). That is to say that the gendering of flesh and bone is figurative rather than substantial, metaphoric rather than metonymic, and is part of a wider set of images and ideas which frequently associate the strong and durable with maleness; and the soft, intangible, and ephemeral with femaleness.

These and other associated images of gender are played out in a variety of contexts, including work. Men perform work which typically requires "strength", such as trampling rice fields, clearing swiddens, house building, and hunting feral pigs. But because women are "soft" they do other work, lacking the "strength" for it, and the "desire" (*sitrapo*). Yet in reality the division of labour by gender is not strict and there are several types of work performed by both when need arises, although it is more usual for women to perform "men's work" than vice versa (see Chapter 6).

Whilst "strength" is found in the bodies of persons and needed for the work they do, it is also seen the "minds" they think with. Whilst *fañahy* is evinced in work, consumption, and nurturing, it is also made clear in a person's thoughts and words. Imagined as located within the body, the *fañahy* was said by some to "rest" (*mipetraka*) in the head. The extent to which it is associated with the individuated self is not only clear from the fact that, like "life" (*fieñana*) it departs the body after death, but also because during spirit possession (*tromba*) it is displaced by the spirit which is said to "rest on/in the head" (*mipetraka an-doha*). Although for some the location of *fañahy* is uncertain, it is clear that *fañahy* works in conjunction with "mind" (*saina*), most definitely located in the head and expiring on death, in the processes of "thinking" (*mihevitra*) and "reflecting" (*mieritreritra*), when,

Processes of "thought" and "reflection" involve the interaction of "mind" and *fañahy*, such that *fañahy* could be said to inflect the form of thought, or as Aban'Marozaza put it, it "commands" (*mandidy*) it. For one woman the process was viewed almost as a flow through the upper part of the body, involving *fañahy* and "mind", but also "heart" (*fo*), a process where "thinking" and "feeling" are not separated, although they may be spoken of differently. She explained how "thought" and "reflection" "made the heart

move" (*mampihetsiketsika fo*) for one feels things in one's "stomach" (*troky*) and "mouth of the heart" (vava fo, located at the base of the sternum), such feelings affecting the way one thinks. Both "thinking" and "reflecting" are referred to as "head work" (*asa loha*), as is "remembering" (*mahatsiaro*) which is "like reflecting, as if there were some sort of image stuck in the head" (*akao eritreritra, akao misy sarisary petaka an-doha*).

Whilst distinctions of *fañahy* are between "good" and "bad" and ungendered, it is commonly said that "minds", "thought" and "reflection" are to some extent different for men and women. Whilst "reflection" is a mulling over of things, thinking through possibilities, "thought" involves making "decisions" (*manapakevitra*, lit. "breaking thought"), and decision making within groups is typically the domain of men. A woman is quite commonly put down by men for "thinking like a woman" or having a "woman's mind". And "minds" and "thought", like a person's *fañahy*, are in evidence in what they do, most importantly in "speaking" (*miresaka*).

A "clear mind" (*mazava saina*) is evident in people's "speech" (*resaka*) and the ability to "explain" (*manazava*, lit. "to make clear"), something thought to increase with age and experience and best exhibited by men in political meetings (*kabaro*) that place an emphasis on clarity of "speech" and "explanation" (*fanazava*), and in the telling of "histories" (*tantara*). Those who "know how to speak" (*mahay miresaka*) and "know how to orate" (*mahay mikabaro*) are often highly respected for their verbal skills, and their use of proverbs (*ohabolana*) a source of enjoyment and appreciation. However there are those who, whilst able speakers, are not admired for what they aim at achieving with their speech. Thus "clear speaking" does not always signal a "good" *fañahy*, but may in fact imply just the opposite when found in those said to "know how to deceive" (*mahay politiky*); the use of the French is noteworthy in the context.

As the ability "to make clear" is one of the principle criteria by which truth tends to be judged, someone who cannot explain things clearly is unlikely to be able to force their view, a problem experienced by women to varying degrees. Generally excluded from making decisions which affect men, they defer to "men's minds" by staying away from political meetings. Even those women who are recognized as knowledgable and who can "make things clear" and "know how to speak" tend to be in compliance with this gender stereotype, waiting until the men have had their say before speaking. As a result women are rarely given formal occasions to voice their opinion nor their knowledge, and their political practice is best described as resistance. Perhaps not surprisingly a woman's ability and a man's inability "to make clear" are not seen to bring the gendered differentiation of minds into question, they are merely untypical exemplars of their gender. But such women are few in number, and many show no interest in the types of knowledge and speech forms that are socially valued and exemplify "clear minds". Their disinterest merely reconfirms the opinion of those who see "women's minds" as "soft" and lesser than those of men (cf. Keenan 1974:137-9).

Conclusion: aesthetics and personhood

During fieldwork I came to find that an enquiry into concepts of the person can easily lead one to ask very stupid questions: where do babies come from, who gives birth, what are the differences between men and women, what makes living people "living people". That I should travel as far as I did just to find out such things perhaps struck many as sublimely ironic. Surely I already knew.

Yet people's responses to such apparently inane questions tell us a great deal. Living people are "living people" because they "breathe" (*mieña*), "have offspring" (*mana taranaka*), "plant rice" (*mamboly vary*) and "respect themselves" (*mañaza teña*). These themes recur in people's estimation of the "good life", seen in a good house, a full granary, many cattle and many rice fields. It is best to die old with many offspring I was told, and to have many cattle given to one at one's commemoration. As work can be a sign of a person's *fañahy*, many cattle given at one's commemoration signal that one is "respected" and "honoured", and that one has "nurtured many" (*tineza maro*), one's own offspring and those of others. The disdain meted out on those who fish for lobster in part comes from their wasting the money they earn, failing to invest in those things valued by most: houses, land and cattle. These are what makes a person "renowned" (*malaza*), and the respect shown these and others can be seen in the "many cattle that pass by them" (*aomby maro momba anazy*) when they attain ancestorhood.

Thus the aesthetics of funerary monuments is at least as much to do with the life they commemorate as the formal properties of the objects themselves. Indeed Temanambondro aesthetics focuses less on objects than on domains of life that the Western notion of aesthetics overlooks, as I argued in the last chapter. For the Temanambondro I suggest there is an aesthetics of the person and an aesthetics of gender.

The close relationship between aesthetics and ethics noted long ago by Leach (1954a:36-8; 1954b:12) centres for the Temanambondro on personhood and the concept of *fañahy*. Fernandez's observation of the Fang, that "There is ... a pleasure in seeing quality in a person or manifesting it oneself" (1973:195), something emphasised in the context of what people do, is true of the Temanambondro also. A "good" *fañahy* is something valued, the source of praise and "respect", and something which people manifest in "nurture" and work. Thus if Yoruba appreciation of mothering (Thompson 1973:46) is at all like the Temanambondro appreciation of those who "nurture", then Thompson is wrong to assume it lacks aesthetic qualities, for in a "good" *fañahy* and the ability to nurture are to be found a quality and ability of inestimable value, celebrated by many but not achieved by all. Because work can be a "sign" of a person's *fañahy* it too possesses aesthetic qualities.[9] These issues will come up again in the context of marriage (see Chapter 6). Assessing the *fañahy* of a potential spouse is a significant part of planning marriage, and whilst there is no aesthetic of beauty which focuses on the prospective

spouse's body, there is an aesthetic that assesses a person's *fañahy*, how hard they work, and whether, God willing, if the couple manages to have children, they will be capable of "nurturing" them (cf. Feeley-Harnik 1991b:289-290).

The aesthetics of the person thus focus on what people do. But there is also an gendered aesthetic which focuses on what people are, an aesthetics of image and metaphor. Gendered images of "strength" and "durability" take several forms. We have seen that this gendered aesthetic forms part of Temanambondro ideas about the body and about people's "minds", about what happens to boys at circumcision, and what a man must possess in so that a woman may conceive. Later we will see how concepts of ancestry emphasize the father's "side" as the "strongest" of the "eight sides" through which people trace their ancestry affiliations. In addition we will see that in house-groups and memorial objects continuity and durability is imagined as male, whilst the flowing Manambondro river is said to be "female" and women lack the spatial continuity of men, dispersing in marriage.

As well as gendered images Temanambondro use a number of images of clarity which also possess aesthetic qualities, and throughout Madagascar "clarity" is sought in various guises. Among the Zafimaniry for example, Bloch (1995a) notes that "clarity" is a "central value", one which "is both aesthetically valued and associated with pleasant living conditions" (1995a:66). Although Zafimaniry concepts of clarity extend beyond the visual - to include speech and medicine - Bloch focuses his discussion on how they relate to people's perception of the montane region they inhabit, and where value is placed on the visible traces that people have managed to make on an uncaring landscape, through building houses and villages, megalithic monuments, and bunded rice fields. Among the Zafimaniry and others, including the Temanambondro, one of the two most valued zebu for sacrifice is the one possessing the body marking of *mazava loha* ("clear head"), a white stripe that runs down the middle of an otherwise black head, the marking of the animal which signalled to Andriamaroary that the river they had reached was where he and his followers should settle. Such markings are made on the bodies of people also, placed there by using white clay or chalk during rituals that aim to mark out people from others, making clear who they are. Although notions of clarity are rarely mentioned in accounts of such body marking (but see Bloch 1993b:129), perhaps the practice is related to a wider aesthetic of clarity as yet little understood.[10]

Temanambondro aesthetics of clarity focus on "minds" and "speech", both of which are seen to be gendered. Here it is the formal qualities of speaking, rather than what speech can bring about, that are assessed (cf. Fernandez 1973:207-9). The ability to "make clear" through "clear speech" is the basis of aesthetic criteria of coherence and intelligibility, and those Temanambondro (usually men) who are recognized as those who "know how to speak" and "know how to tell histories" (*mahay mitantara*) are roundly admired for their ability. The speaking abilities of women however are little valued, their

"minds" and "speech" devalued through the image of "softness".

Thus the "minds" and "speech" of women limit to some extent their self-realization, and the image of "softness" raises the issue of the political dimension of aesthetics. Applied to women's "minds" the image devalues what women have to say before they have said anything. Like the Marakwet aphorism "women are like children, they speak before they think", Temanambondro comments on "women's minds" and "thinking like a woman" are a type of statement "which tells us nothing but says everything" (H. Moore 1986:164-6). As women exhibit the quality of "softness" represented by things of everyday experience - flesh, mind and speech - they can only ever transcend their status by acting "like men" (*akao lelahy*). But as Temanambondro gender concepts make clear, throughout life, even before and after, gender is a difference that makes a difference, and whatever they do they are always "below" and men "above".

In areas other than speech and mind however, women's self-realization is not circumscribed to the same extent. In "nurturing" they are the equals of men, and they possess a *fañahy*, which like those of men may be "good" or "bad". Finally, they too can become ancestors, although in this final state of being they both retain their gender whilst sometimes exhibiting male-like qualities of durability and generational continuity.

Whilst gender is therefore an identity relevant throughout life, its relevance varies according to context, for as I hope I have made clear, personhood among the Temanambondro is processual. From the period when newborns are still like "animals", "living persons" emerge as those who possess a *fañahy* which is evident in what they do. Through work and "nurture", having children and caring for them, "living people" gain "respect" and "honour" whilst they themselves "grow bigger" (*mitombo*) in various ways. Finally they die, their "mind" expires along with their "breath", their *fañahy* wandering until the person achieves ancestorhood, and the "respect" and "honour" they have gained is evident in the "many cattle that pass by them". Personhood is therefore performative, for persons are known through what they do. But persons are also known through who they are related to, the "eight sides" of ancestry, something that can also be seen to have performative dimensions, and it is to the subject of ancestry that we now turn.

The "Roots" and "Sides" of Ancestry

The denial and desire of Kidisomitra

Having gathered in the piles of cut panicles, Kidisomitra and I spread them out over a large mat and began to beat them with sticks so as to lighten the load of harvested rice we would carry back to the village. Although in his early twenties Kidisomitra had recently finished building a house which I heard he was hoping to sell for one zebu. Sat just a few feet away preparing the midday meal, Endrin'Zanatelo poked fun at Kidisomitra by asking him who it was that he wanted to marry, implying that the zebu Kidisomitra was seeking was going to be used for the *fafy*, the final rite of marriage. "I don't want to get married", countered Kidisomitra, "I just want to raise cattle".

Whether or not this was the truth of the matter who could tell? But there was a rumour that Kidisomitra had been sleeping with a woman from his mother's brother's house-group and made her pregnant, something he vehemently denied. This was no joking matter, for if it were true than any zebu Kidisomitra might exchange for the house he had built would end up dead, killed as an atonement for having slept with a tabooed relative. As if it might defend him against the accusation, Kidisomitra argued that he didn't even like the girl in question, and added that he had designs on Pelamenty, although he only planned on seeing her as a lover (*sakeza*) rather than as a wife. "So you think she's different" Endrin'Zanatelo said scornfully, "don't you know she is still your relative?" Kidisomitra's desire seemed to incriminate him as someone who did not know who he was related to as much as the rumour he brushed aside as lies did. But even though Endrin'Zanatelo explained to him how both he and Pelamenty had "sides that entered into each other" at Amorondala, meaning that they were both related through the house-group located there, Kidisomitra would not agree. Denying that he had such a "side" he said that he "did not receive the history" (*tsy mahazo tantara*) of his relationship to Amorondala, and that Amorondala did not "call" him when they held a ritual.

Although "histories" usually take the form of words, the "history" to which Kidisomitra alluded is a common euphemism for the portion of meat given out to those who attend a sacrifice, an embodiment in exchange terms of the relationship between the house-group that hold the rite and those who "have sides that enter into" it. To be "called" to a ritual and receive the "history" performatively creates the relationship; but as Kidisomitra was not called and received no "history" he argued that he was not "related" to the woman of his amorous intentions through the house-group at Amorondala. If his

hopes were realized and the woman consented to his request then should any accusation of incest (*mila fady*) be made it was generally agreed that Kidisomitra had reasonable grounds for denying that he and the woman were "relatives" (*pihavana*).

The story of Kidisomitra and his desires illustrates some of the issues of the present chapter on the "roots" and "sides" of ancestry. Every person has "sides", relationships they trace through those that "bore them" or generated them (*niteraka anazy*), those that generated those that generated them and so forth. These "sides" stem from "roots", some traced to "mother's brothers", but one, said to be the "strongest", traced through the father. The latter is the "root" of Ancestry, a "kind" of people represented as sharing "one tomb", and each and every person belongs exclusively to one such "kind", the Ancestry of the father. However, through "sides" traced through women to "mother's brothers" the person is related to Ancestries and house-groups often other than their own, and to whom the person stands as *anakapela*, "children of women". Both these relationships, that of Ancestry and relatedness with "mother's brothers", are constituted performatively, one through the completion of marriage rites, the other through being continually constituted through practice. These facts form the basis of the argument that Temanambondro ancestry and aspects of personhood are performative, made and un-made through people's practice.

Performativity and Relatedness

Given the equivocal nature of people's ideas about conception it is perhaps not surprising to find that Temanambondro do not think about relatedness in terms of heritable substance, something emphasized by the fact that the association of women with flesh and men with bones is simply a "way of speaking". No amount of questioning on my part elicited anything like a concept of shared substance from those I talked with, although some noted that children sometimes "take after" (*mihaky*) one or other of their parents, referring sometimes to their appearance, sometimes to their *fañahy*. It would therefore be clearly wrong to think of Temanambondro notions of relatedness in terms of substantial relations, and the conceptualization of ancestry must therefore be approached from a different angle.[1]

If Temanambondro concepts and practice suggest anything they stress the contingency of relatedness, that relatedness is performative, and that relations are (re)constituted through past and present practice. Whilst the sense of "performative" adopted here is somewhat different to that of speech act theory it is used in a similar sense to that of Sahlins (1985:xi-xiii, 26-31) in his discussion of "performative structures".[2] Although a side-issue in his discussion of the relationship between anthropology and

history, Sahlins' discussion is an important one and particularly apposite, given that it comes out of an engagement with the problem of talking about social relations among Hawaiians, another people on the fringe of the Austronesian world. Noting that "customary kinds of acts can precipitate social forms as well as vice versa" (1985:xi), Sahlins suggests that performative structures are those which "continuously mak[e] relationships out of practice" (1985:28). Relatedness is thus processual rather then being ascriptive -or as Schneider (1984:72) puts it, about "doing" and not "being" - and is performative in that people performatively constitute their relatedness through the practice of social relations.

Similar arguments about the performative aspects of identity have been proposed by others working in Madagascar, such as in Michael Lambek's (1992) discussion of taboo, where he notes that a person's identity is performatively created through the act of continued observance of a taboo; and Rita Astuti's (1995b) insistence that Vezo identity is performatively constituted through acts of Vezo-ness. However, neither emphasize the extent to which ancestry (or "kinship" or "descent") is performative, which is my intention here. As Sahlins claims for the Hawaiians, so too for the Temanambondro: people continuously make relationships out of practice, rather than basing their practice on ascribed relatedness, and ancestry is therefore as much a performative concept as personhood and collective identity.

Whilst the performative aspect of Temanambondro ancestry is one aspect of their social practice, another is the categories through which it is conceptualized, and which frame the following discussion. Whilst I argue that ancestry is performative, it is constituted in a particular form and through a particular set of categories and images. More specifically the performativity of ancestry takes a highly spatial form, partly through acts of placing, whilst relatedness is conceptualized through a number of categories and idioms which are highly spatial in their imagery. Thus for Temanambondro social relations are also spatial relations.

The account of ancestry presented here therefore focuses on the ways in which relatedness is performatively constituted in practice, and on the categories, idioms, and images employed in the conceptualization of social relations. Thus the account given is an attempt to explain Temanambondro ancestry in terms of Temanambondro categories rather than being a gloss in the metalanguage of kinship theory. However, what follows is my interpretation of Temanambondro practice rather than indigenous sociological theory, for none as such exists and doubtless no one would have thought it worthwhile spending much time formulating one - there were many more important things to do. But it is a position reached from reflecting on Temanambondro categories and practices, and it is to these that we now turn.

Teña fototra: the "root" of Ancestry

Temanambondro concepts of ancestry are based on a gendered distinction between links traced through men and links traced through women. We need to understand how fathers become the "root" of their children before looking at how the "root" of paternal Ancestry is differentiated from the "sides" of ancestry that people trace through women that generated them.[3]

Temanambondro speak of the relationship between the person and their forebears in terms of "sides" (*ila*), and of these "sides" they single out one as the "strongest" (*teña mahery*), that traced back through the father, the father's father, the father's father's father and so forth.[4] The relationship with the father is spoken of in different ways. Using botanical images frequently found in other contexts, the father is referred to as the "big trunk" (*fotora be*) and the most important "root" (*teña fototra*) to which a person is related through their "sides",[5] and it is through the father that the person receives the singular identity of Ancestry (*karazana*), for "the Ancestry of one's father is one's own Ancestry" (*ñe karaza'ñe aba teña de ñe karaza teña*).

In sociological terms a *karazana* is a grouping known by a name - such as Ambanihampy, Mahanara, or Nahireza -comprising a set of people of one or more house-groups (*trañobe*) who "have one tomb" (*mana kibory raiky*). Each and every person belongs to one and only one Ancestry, just as each and every house-group forms part (or all) of one and only one Ancestry. As a whole those who belong to an Ancestry are buried in "one tomb", the basic image of the conceptualization of Ancestry (see Chapter 5). But although it derives from the root *razana*, meaning "ancestor", the term *karazana* itself is used to define "kinds" of things, such as collectivities of people, species of cultigens, trees, animals and so forth, and so merely points to an aspect of commonality among a group of people in contrast to another rather than implying "descent" from one or more ancestors (cf. Bloch 1971:42-3; Feeley-Harnik 1991b:23-6; Astuti 1995b). Thus people who are said to be *karaza raiky* ("one kind") may be of one named Ancestry and share "one tomb"; but the term is also employed to refer to the Temanambondro as a whole in contrast to a "different kind" (*karaza hafa*) of people such as the Tesaka, even though no idea exists of shared common "descent" among all Temanambondro.

A child is not "born" into an Ancestry however, in the sense that Ancestry derives from birth, but rather has the identity conferred on them by ritual means. As I pointed out in the previous chapter there is an ambiguity about the gendered nature of birth, such that whilst both men and women "bear children", only women are said to "give birth", both statements being made using the verb *miteraka*. On asking about how parents were related to their children, Aban'Betongatra pointed out to me in my naivety how "the mother carries [the child] for nine months then holds onto the house post [when she gives birth]; the father, he simply collects firewood" (*minde sivy vola de mitaña andry ambo ñe*

endriny; ñe abany mila fotsivavo avao). He then clarified the point with a proverb: *tsy miteraka ñe vaovitsy fa ñe fomba mampananaka an-Manambondro* ("the shin bone does not give birth for custom makes a man have children in Manambondro"). The shin bone he explained is the father, and it is "only custom that makes fathers fathers" (*ñe fomba avao maha-aba ñe abany*). The "custom" to which Aban'Betongatra referred is that of the *fafy*, the sacrifice of a zebu that marks the completion of marriage rites (see Chapter 6), and until this is done a man is not recognized as a child's father.

In conferring Ancestry on his children a father is said to "give [them] a name" (*manome anarana*), the name of Ancestry, and to gain "law" or "recognition" (*adidy*) in his relationship with his children. The usual means by which this is done is the performance of the *fafy* that completes marriage rites, such that all children born to a man after he has completed the *fafy* take on his Ancestry until such a time as he divorces. The *fafy* therefore performatively creates a man as a "recognized" father of his children, just as it performatively creates the Ancestry of the children born to him.

Other ways of establishing a father's "law" and "recognition" clarify another point of the proverb of the shin bone: that making fathers is about "custom" and not about procreation. A man may marry when a woman already has a child, and he can negotiate with his in-laws (*rafoza*) to have the child recognized as his own regardless of whether or not he is known to be "the father [who] bore [the child]" (*ñe aba niteraka anazy*). Indeed it is sometimes well known that he is not, but if the child is subsequently "recognized" as his own then the child takes on his Ancestry.

The extent to which Ancestry has little to do with procreation can also be seen in what is known as "buying [the] iron with the handle" (*mivango vy amin'ñe androñany*). Although such cases are now rare, in the past a man who had few or no children of his own would sometimes seek for a wife a woman who was already pregnant by another man. Before she gave birth to the child the man would complete the marriage rites, and so become "recognized" as the child's father. Having struggled to produce children, in "buying the iron" (i.e. the woman) "with the handle" (i.e. the unborn child) the man could be reasonably certain of having children who would "make his name live" (*mahavelo ñe anarany*).

Whilst the marriage rite can give a man "law" before the birth of children, it also extends that "law" over any children born to his wife after his death or while he and his wife are separated but not divorced. Although there is some ambiguity about this nowadays, in the past a man would be recognized as the father of any children born to his wife within a three year period of his death, or within the same period of having separated. A child born within the period is known as a *zanak'adidy* ("child [where there is] law"), because until a marriage is formally terminated "there is still law" (*mbola misy adidy*).

To impugn a person's claim to be of a particular Ancestry, such as suggesting that their father is not really their father, would be a terrible slight, and if the fines meted out to

those who make such claims are anything to go by, it is regarded by Temanambondro as one of the gravest offences of all.[6] As far as Temanambondro are concerned, being of an Ancestry means that a person has a father, and fathers are made through having "finished the custom" (cf. Middleton 1988:81). However, there are children who are said to "have no father" (*tsy mana aba*), born to unmarried women, and yet who have Ancestry. Such cases are of interest because it appears that the person takes the Ancestry of their mother. Yet it is my contention that Ancestry is constituted in terms of links through men. These two apparently contradictory points must therefore be reconciled.

There is little control of the sexuality of adolescents and it is not uncommon for a woman to bear one or more children outside (and sometimes before) marriage. Such children are known as *zanak'adrao*, "children of the *adrao*", born to men who pass by a woman's house at night but who are gone on the morning, just as the *adrao* (a nocturnal "wild cat") prowls at night but is never to be seen in the day. Although said to "have no father", *zanak'adrao* belong to the same house-group as their mother and take on the same Ancestry; no stigma attaches to them, and they are accorded the same rights as others.[7]

However, it is arguable that *zanak'adrao* receive their Ancestry not from their mother as such, but from their mother's father, something made clear in the way people speak of the child's relatedness. Firstly, a child who "has no father" invariably addresses their mother's father as "father" (*aba*), although they also refer to their mother as "mother" (*endry*) also (cf. Astuti 1993:282). Secondly, when a woman who "has no father" marries then those referred to as "on the side of the father" are people she is related to through her mother's father, whilst those on the "side of the mother" are her relatives through her mother's mother; not surprisingly therefore when a *zanak'adrao* speaks of their *endrilahy* ("mother's brother"), they are in fact referring to their mother's mother's brother.

Although these practices were never explained in the following manner, they can be interpreted in terms of the "law" and "recognition" already mentioned. With the completion of marriage rites a man "has law" (*manan'adidy*) over children subsequently born to his wife, and this "law" extends over his daughter's children too as long as she remains unmarried. A child born of an unmarried woman therefore remains within the "law" established by her father, which means that they take on the Ancestry of their mother's father, himself the "father" who confers Ancestry, the child's *teña fototra*. In this sense then Ancestry comes from the "father", and "fathers" create themselves as such by conferring Ancestry on their children. Just as men performatively constitute themselves as "fathers" by "giving the name" of Ancestry, so are Ancestries constituted through the performative actions of "fathers", the conferring of Ancestry on their "children". Thus Ancestry is about relatedness through "fathers", and from the perspective of Ancestry the relationship between a child and its mother is significant only in so far as it is a relationship between the child and the Ancestry of its mother's father (cf. Astuti 1995a:97-8, 172n.33).

Whilst men performatively constitute themselves as fathers in terms of Ancestry through "finishing custom", they also constitute themselves as fully moral persons by "nurturing" (miteza) their children. How people put the concepts mentioned above into practice can be seen in the following story about two sons who "had no father". The story clearly illustrates that "custom" needs finishing to make a man a father, whilst men should "nurture" their children in making themselves fathers.

As a zanak'adrao, Tanzaka belonged to his mother's father's house-group, but it was common knowledge who was "the father who bore him". In fact the man was widely known by the teknonym Aban'Tanzaka even though he had "not finished the custom" (tsy vita fomba) and failed to complete the marriage rites. Not long after Tanzaka was born, Aban'Tanzaka spent several years away from Manambondro with his father's brother, and did not help "bring up" Tanzaka (tsy niteza anazy). When Tanzaka was in his mid-twenties Aban'Tanzaka's own father "asked for" (mangataka) Tanzaka, offering to finish the rites that his own son had failed to finish and so make Aban'Tanzaka recognized as Tanzaka's father.[8] However, Tanzaka's mother's father declined "to give" (manome) Tanzaka, basing his refusal on the fact that he had only one daughter and no sons.

By this time Tanzaka and Soapela were "related as lovers" (misakeza) and had a daughter, but Tanzaka had no cattle with which to complete the marriage rites. Time went by and the couple subsequently had a son, and some speculated as to whether Tanzaka would ever "finish the custom". When Tanzaka's son was nearly two his house-group decided to hold a circumcision, the first for nearly ten years. Although Tanzaka wanted to have his son circumcised by his own house-group (as is the "custom"), he knew that because he had not finished the marriage rites it would be very difficult. Technically his son was of a different house-group and Ancestry, and so Tanzaka had no right to circumcise him. In most cases it would be impossible, but Tanzaka and Soapela had farmed together for quite some time (although they did not have a house together) and Tanzaka "cared for" (miteza) his children with Soapela. Soapela's own house-group regarded Tanzaka as being of "good" fañahy, working hard and "giving respect" (manome haza) to those of Soapela's house-group.

After completing all but the final marriage rite Tanzaka managed to negotiate with Soapela's house-group to let him circumcise his son on the agreement that within two months he would complete the final marriage rite. Shortly after the circumcision he received some zebu from his "mother's brother" (actual MMBS) and with one of these he completed the fafy, so "finishing the custom" and conferring on his son (and daughter) his own Ancestry.

The story is notable for several reasons. It shows that even when a man may be in a position to "finish the custom", the house-group of the child he seeks to be recognized as father of may refuse "to give", and there is nothing he can do about it. A common reason given for a refusal is that there are considered to be too few children for one to be given, but it is more often the case that a house-group will relinquish daughters rather than sons to those who seek to "finish the custom" after the child is born. And although people

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frequently cite practical reasons for this, such as it is good to have many men for the "hard" work they do, it is also the case that a daughter will likely marry outside the house-group, and, as Aban'Betongatra put it, a man with daughters and no sons will become "dead and done with in [his] house-group" (*maty tanteraka am-patrange*).

The story also reveals how flexible people can be. Although Tanzaka had "not finished the custom" he was allowed to circumcise his son as if he had, on condition that the final marriage rite would be finished very soon afterwards. Had it not then Tanzaka would likely have been fined a zebu by Soapela's house-group, the sacrifice of which would not have made him the father of his children but would have merely paid off the fine imposed. The flexibility was due to the fact that Tanzaka's position was seen as a difficult one, and most importantly he had no cattle to finish the marriage rite. But he "gave respect" to Soapela's house-group, attending rites there as if he really was a son-in-law (*vinanto*), and had contributed as a father should to the upbringing of his children. If he could not perform the rite to confer his own Ancestry on his children, then he at least did much that is expected of a father in terms of "nurturing" them.

Of some significance also is the fact that had Aban'Tanzaka been considered Tanzaka's real father then his long affair with Soapela would have been deemed incestuous as both Tanzaka and Soapela would have "had a side that entered into [each other]" (*manan'ila mampiditra*) for Soapela's FMF is Aban'Tanzaka's MMMF. Had Aban'Tanzaka "finished the custom" it would have made sexual relations between Tanzaka and Soapela incestuous until Tanzaka had at least completed the preliminary marriage rites. If relatedness were based on ideas of substance then Tanzaka would have inherited the substance of Aban'Tanzaka, and therefore have shared substance with and been related to Soapela. But as Aban'Tanzaka had "not finished the custom" Tanzaka and Soapela did not "have sides that enter into one another", and incest had not been committed.

Those who "have sides that enter into one another" are said to be of "one stomach", sharing relatedness through women rather than through the *teña fototra* of the father and Ancestry. To see a differently gendered aspect of relatedness, of relations traced through women rather than through men, we need to look at the "eight sides" of ancestry through which people trace their relatedness to Ancestries other than that of the father. But before doing so we turn now to look at another way in which Ancestry is performatively constituted, through the burying of the placenta and disposal of the umbilical cord, acts which emphasize the multiplicity of the person's "roots".

Placing persons and placing Ancestry

As we saw in the previous chapter, following the birth of a child the placenta is taken and buried next to the *trañondonaky* ("headman's house") of the father's house-group, a practice which can now be seen from a new perspective.[9] Although not considered a

person, the placenta that follows the child out of the womb after birth is related to the new born child in a significant way (cf. Carsten 1991:428). Said to be the child's "elder sibling" (*zoky*), the term for placenta (*raza*) also means "ancestor". On the significance of this people simply explained that an elder sibling should follow their junior along an unfamiliar path so as to protect them; similarly the placenta follows behind the child when it is born. But like actual living siblings the child and the placenta occupy the same house, the "child's house" (*trañondaza*) of the womb, until marriage for the former and birth for the latter. As we shall see in the next chapter, relatedness through houses is particularly significant, and siblings (as well as ancestors) are important in the imagining of relations between those of one house-group.

However what people do with the placenta is perhaps more significant than their ideas about what the placenta is, for the burial of the placenta is a performative act in the making of Ancestry. The burial of the placenta in the grounds of the house-group of their "father" is an act which establishes relations between the person and their actual siblings and ancestors in a highly spatial way, through an act of placing, the burying of the placenta beneath the *vato razana* ("placenta-ancestor stones") alongside those of all the others, living and dead, who are of the same house-group. Thus being of a house-group and Ancestry is spatially realized, whilst these acts of placing are part of performatively constituting a person's Ancestry.

Another act of placing around the time of birth, the disposal of the umbilical cord, performatively establishes both a person's Ancestry and their status as a Temanambondro person eligible for burial in the tomb. When only a few days old a child's hair and nails are cut for the first time and these are wrapped in a piece of cloth along with the umbilical cord (*foitra*), severed quite soon after birth. Shortly before dawn the wrapped bundle is taken to a place along the river known as the "place of the throwing away of the umbilical cord" (*fañariana tadim-poitra*), and weighted with a stone it is thrown out into the middle of the river after the following invocation:

[We] announce to you Ancestral Water. The throwing away of the umbilical cord of Iano. [Even if] gone north. Gone south. Gone west. [Even if s/he] becomes attached to the land there only you water of the Manambondro will s/he not forget.[10]

The extent to which people do not forget their Ancestral Water became clear to me when I talked to those who had gone north, west and south, those who for various reasons had migrated to other parts of the island. Whilst some referred to the "sweet water" where their umbilical cord had been thrown as the thing that "makes them Temanambondro" (*maha-Temanambondro anazy*), others told of how the river itself often figured in their dreams, something they associated with the "longing" (*manina*) they felt when away from their "ancestral land" (*tanindrazana*) and relatives.

This act of placing is an important part of defining both personhood and ancestry. Sometimes referred to as the "root of life" (*fototra fieñana*), the umbilical cord ends up placed in another "root", the Manambondro river from which the Temanambondro take their name. Thus the "root" of a person's life connects them to the "root" of their collective identity, the Ancestral Water of the river, and no matter where they are born, whether in their home village or elsewhere in Madagascar, the umbilical cord of each Temanambondro is returned for disposal at the "place of the throwing away", and those for whom the rite has not been performed are said to be debarred from entering the tomb. The disposal of the umbilical cord is thus a performative aspect of defining a person's identity, for it establishes them as Temanambondro by placing their "root of life" in the "root" of the river.[11]

However, whilst the disposal of the umbilical cord in the river is part of the constitution of personhood, the person's Ancestry is defined through whereabouts along the river the act is performed. Each Ancestry has its own "place of the throwing away", and so just as the burial of the placenta places the person in their house-group, the "throwing away" of the umbilical cord places the person in relation to their Ancestry. These acts constitute a form of relatedness between persons and places, and with other persons (including ancestors) associated with the same places, whether they be other Temanambondro or those of the same Ancestry. Thus social relations are also imagined as spatial relations, constituted through shared places.

These acts of placing can also be seen to have temporal dimensions which spatially juxtapose the beginning of life with its end. The burial of the placenta by the *trañondonaky* echoes the death of the person, for their corpse will be laid out in this house during their funeral. In a parallel fashion, the "place of the throwing away" is located alongside the "harbour place of the corpse" (*tsirañam-paty*), the place along the river where those of an Ancestry depart the village when they are taken for burial, the body removed from the *trañondonaky*, taken to the river's edge and placed in the canoe to be taken downriver for burial. The acts of placing that accompany the beginning of life thus spatially anticipate the rites that accompany its ending, burial and commemoration.

The placing of placenta and umbilical cord therefore are part of the process of performatively constituting personhood and Ancestry. All Temanambondro have their placenta disposed of in a particular way and in a particular place, their umbilical cord thrown in the river, their corpse buried in a tomb: it is part of what makes them Temanambondro persons. These acts also define the person as someone who has Ancestry, for being a person is to have Ancestry and to have "relatives" (*havana*). Yet a person's "relatives" are not just those with whom they share Ancestry, but also those to whom they are related through the "sides" of ancestry, links traced not only through "fathers" and the *teña fototra*, but also through "mothers" and "mother's brothers". It is to these relationships that we now turn, to look at the "sides" of ancestry and what renders

people *anakapela*, "children of women".

The "sides" of ancestry

Relatedness through the *teña fototra* of "fathers" and Ancestry is relatedness through only one of the "sides" (*ila*) of ancestry, albeit through the "side" said to be the "strongest". In fact Temanambondro speak of the person as having "eight sides" (*valo ila*) or "eight branches" (*valo sampana*), of which there are "four sides with the father, four sides with the mother" (*efatra ila teña amin'ñe aba teña, efatra ila teña amin'ñe endry teña*), each "side" being traceable to an actual person: on the "father's side" (*amin'ñe ilan'ñe abany*) the father, the father's mother, the father's father's mother, and the father's mother's mother; and on the "mother's side" the mother, the mother's mother, the mother's mother's mother, and the mother's father's mother. Formally speaking those through whom the "eight sides" are traced represent a three generation personal kindred, yet people do not talk about "sides" in terms of individual ancestors but rather in terms of their forebears' Ancestry and the place they "appeared from" (*miboaka*). Thus talk of "sides" is not talk of particular ancestors, but of the relationships traced through them.[12]

In speaking of their "sides" people say they "have a side" of a particular Ancestry; for example, someone may say they "have a Tsihitatraño side" (*manan'ila Tsihitatraño*) when one of their forebears is of the Tsihitatraño Ancestry. In fact people have more than "eight sides", effectively having as many as they can remember by tracing back relationships through those that generated them, those that generated those that generated them, and so forth. But such relationships are often forgotten, or at least only remembered or relevant when performatively constituted through practice. Similarly, knowing where one "has sides" is a type of knowledge that is unevenly distributed, and it is when asking people about the "sides" they "have" that one finds that "sides" are imagined spatially, and that knowledge of them derives from constituting them in practice.

Despite their importance as an aspect of a person's identity, particularly regarding incest and marriageability, not everyone knows their "eight sides", still fewer the names of the ancestors through whom the "sides" are traced. Genealogical knowledge is very unevenly distributed and one can find startling differences even within a group of siblings. To a great extent such knowledge is most extensive among elder men, principally because it is made explicit during activities at which they and not women participate, political meetings (*kabaro*) and "invocations of the ancestors" (velatry). However, such knowledge is not solely the preserve of men, and some women are highly knowledgable, although women's knowledge tends to be shallower in terms of generations.[13]

What is striking about this knowledge is that people know much more about *where*

they "have sides" (*manan'ila*) than *through whom* the "side" is traced, which is to say that knowledge is spatial rather than genealogical. For example, when asking two sisters who were of "one father, one mother" (*aba raiky, endry raiky*), about their "eight sides" it became clear that the eldest knew the names of all but one of the ancestors through which her "eight sides" were traced, while her younger sister struggled to remember names but knew the places where she "had sides". Although the former was an especially knowledgable woman as far as knowing what "made people related" (*mampihavana*), what was most striking was that her younger sister, who most typified people's knowledge of their "sides", worked out her "sides" by reciting not ancestor's names but place names, and thus by implication the house-group and named Ancestry associated with that place, saying that she must have "sides" at these places as they often "called" (*mitoka*) her to marriages and funerals there. Through repeated attendance at rites at such places, and attendance by people from these places at rites hosted by their own house-group, a person comes to know that they have a "side" at a place even if they do not know the name of their ancestor who "appeared" from there.[14]

Apart from being highly spatial in form, a person's knowledge of their "eight sides" is therefore gained from practice, involving attendance at rites at the house-groups where one has a "side". In talking of places where they "have sides" people use another spatial idiom, saying that they have a "side which enters into" (*ila mampiditra*) that place, an idiom used also to talk of two people who share a "side" such that they both have a "side" that enters into the same place. How specific people are about their "sides" depends a lot on where the place the "side enters into" is located. For example someone may say they have an Tesaka side or Masianaka side, merely alluding to "kind" of people, but also the place they live given that people know that to have an Tesaka or Masianaka "side" means to have a "side" that is a "long way away" (*lavitra*) rather than "close by" (*akaiky*). Closer to home someone from Manambondro may say they have a "side" at Befeno or Nosoa, merely naming the village where the "sides" is rather than specifying the name of the house-group or Ancestry. More precise still people within the village will say for example that they have a "side" at Ambalaharonga, referring by place name to a house-group of the Ambanihampy Ancestry.

Whilst the remembering and conceptualization of the "eight sides" of personal ancestry take spatial form, there is an important gender element also. Like the relation with the father, relationships through "sides" are talked of in terms of "roots" (*fototra*), although as we have seen the "root" of the father is singled out as the "strongest" of all those that a person is connected to through their "sides" or "branches". Because Ancestry is represented in male terms, a relationship through the *teña fototra* of the father, it should not be surprising to find that people speak of their "sides", a relationship between their own Ancestry and the Ancestry of a forebear, more often in terms of "mother's brothers" than "mother's", such that for example the "side" of the father's father's mother is referred

to as the "mother's brother of the grandfather" (*endrilahin'ñe ababe*) and the "side" of the mother's mother as the "mother's brother of the mother" (*endrilahin'ñe endry*). Thus whilst "sides" other than that of the *teña fototra* of Ancestry are relationships traced through women they are sometimes represented as relationships between men and Ancestries.

However, another idiom represents the relationship not in terms of the Ancestries of the forebears through whom a person traces their "sides", but rather in terms of their house-group, and here the relationship is gendered female and embodied in the "children of women" (*anakapela*), who owe "respect" (*haza*), as do all "children", to the "roots" from which they grow.

Anakapela: Children of Women

As well as emphasizing the unity of Ancestry through the image of "one tomb" (*mana kibory raiky*), Ancestries and the house-groups that compose them also talk of "one father" (*aba raiky*), the named ancestor said to have "founded" (*nañorina*) the Ancestry's tomb (see Chapter 5). But as do other Malagasy peoples, Temanambondro also stress the importance of siblingship, including the relationships between all those who can trace one of their "sides" to a sibling group. These people are referred to as "people of one stomach" (*olo troky raiky*), and Temanambondro emphasize the importance of relationships between people so related in various ways, such as the valued marriage practice of *fanambadiana mitroky*, "marriage between people of one stomach" (see Chapter 6). Indeed the emphasis placed on "descent" in the vast majority of analyses of "kinship" has meant that the importance and significance of siblingship in Madagascar has been all too frequently overlooked (cf. Feeley-Harnik 1991b:225-9).

Yet ethnographers working in different parts of the island have often noted the importance placed on differences between what they refer to as "descendants" of men and "descendants of women, people who are in fact categorized by terms which literally mean "children of men" and "children of women" (cf. e.g. Baré 1977:60; Hurvitz 1980:46-7; Beaujard 1983b:149), these "men" and "women" being related as siblings. There are some however who have dwelt on these categories, and in so doing have also noted their hierarchical implications. In her account of the various branches of Sakalava royalty, Gillian Feeley-Harnik (1991b:65-113) for example shows quite clearly that whilst the idiom of "children of men" and "children of women" distinguishes between children of brothers and sisters born of the same mother, it "also refer[s] to positions of superiority and inferiority persisting for generations" (1991:86). In the context of a quite different polity, Karen Middleton's (1988) discussion of *anak'ampela* ("children of women") too

highlights the hierarchical nature of the relationship, as well as the way in which it is represented in terms of gender. Underlying the idiom of *anak'ampela* is a notion of "femaleness", and whilst suggesting that *anak'ampela* is a "multivocal category", Middleton points out that "one of its meanings is that it combines 'femaleness' with that of inferior generation to express values of otherness and subordination" (1988:231).

To some extent the "inferior" or "subordinate" position of *anakapela* among the Temanambondro is less developed than among the Sakalava or Karembola, although hierarchy is certainly present in the relationship, as the term itself implies. Derived from *anaka* ("child") and *apela* ("woman"), the term points to the significance of gender and generation in the constitution of hierarchy. Those who are "children" to "fathers" and "mother's brother's" owe them "respect" (*haza, hasy*), and in being classified as of different generations their relationship is one more hierarchically marked than the relationship between "elder" (*zoky*) and "younger" (*zandry*) of the same generation. Clearer still are the implications of gender, where men are said to be "above" (*ambony*) and women "below" (*ambany*), a relationship embodied in practice through the use of domestic space (see P. Thomas 1995).

However, gender is not simply the representation of the relationship for gender is embodied in the relationship itself, and a person is rendered *anakapela* through the "sides" they trace through women. The category *anakapela* is perhaps best understood when explained in terms of the "eight sides". Apart from the "side" of the father and Ancestry, the remainder of a person's "eight sides" are traced through one or more women, and it is through these "sides" that the person is *anakapela*. But whereas "sides" are thought of in terms of Ancestry, being *anakapela* is thought of in terms of the house-group that a particular "side" is "caused to enter" (*mampiditra*); thus the person is *anakapela* not to an Ancestry but rather to a house-group into which they "have a side that enters" (*manan'ila mampiditra*). Similarly, the *anakapela* of a particular house-group are all those persons who have a "side" which "enters into" that house-group, or men who are married to women that have such "sides".

Although Ancestry is represented as a unity of "one kind" and "one tomb", relationships through the "sides" that render persons *anakapela* are individuating aspects of their identity that they share only with full siblings, those who are of "one father, one mother with themselves" (*aba raiky, endry raiky amin'azy*). Thus children of two brothers, whilst being of one Ancestry and one house-group will find that they are *anakapela* to the same house-groups on their father's "side", that is the house-groups of their father's mother, father's father's mother and so forth; whilst being *anakapela* to different house-groups through their respective mothers' "sides". The difference is an important one and stresses the point that relations through fathers "unite" people (*mampiray*, lit. "make one"), whilst relations through mothers (and thus women in general) "divide" (*mizara*) them and "make [them] scattered" (*mampirataka*), ideas that are

especially relevant in the conceptualization of marriage (see Chapter 6).

Besides being constituted in terms of relationships with house-groups, the relationship of *anakapela* is represented in terms of "mother's brother's" (*endrilahy*) on the one hand and "sister's children" (*zanak'anakavy*) and "sons-/daughters-in-law" (*vinanto*) on the other. Those to whom one is *anakapela* are talked of in a general sense as "mother's brothers", regardless of whether they are in fact the house-group of the actual mother's brother or that of the father's mother's brother, mother's mother's brother or whoever. The inverse situation similarly applies, and those who are *anakapela* to a house-group are regarded as "sister's sons" even if they are actual sister's son's sons, sister's daughter's sons and so forth. Finally, any man who marries assumes the position of *anakapela* vis-a-vis those house-groups to whom his wife stands as *anakapela*.

Using an image we have already seen, relationships with the house-groups of "mother's brothers" are referred to in terms of "roots" (*fototra*), as well as using images derived from the architecture of houses, the idiom of "support", and botanical images of growing plants.

Recognizing the coat of the man who was "headman" of her mother's mother's house-group, Endrin'Telovavy admonished the girl who had just thrown it on top of a pile of firewood where it would likely get dirty. "Look after it", she said, "that's the coat of the high-post of my mother's mother's brother" (*andry ambon'ñe endrilahin'ñe endriko*).

Although Endrin'Telovavy's metaphor appeared highly innovative (I never heard anyone else use it) it drew on other images of more widespread currency. The image of the "mother's mother's brother" (or more precisely the "headman" of Endrin'Telovavy's mother's mother's brother's house-group) as the tallest of all a house's posts (and the one supporting the ridge pole) was appropriate given that someone "above" should be given "respect", for they are one of a person's "roots". The image also fits with another that casts *anakapela* as "child posts" (*anak'andry*), the posts that are situated along the walls of the house, and placed between the corner posts (*andribe*, lit. "big posts") which represent the members of the house-group. As Aban'Marozaza put it "*anakapela* are like house posts, they give strength to the house" (*akao andry traño ñe anakapela, manome heriny anazy*). Indeed the "child posts" are included in the structure of the house to give it extra strength so as to stop it falling down in a strong wind or cyclone; so too the *anakapela*, called on to give the house-group "support" (*fahiny*) and present at rites, crises and work involving the house-group. Taken as a whole these images capture the complexity of the category of *anakapela* in the fabric of the house: the "high post" represents those to whom the person stands as *anakapela*, whilst the "child posts" represent those who stand as *anakapela* to that person's house-group.

Another image of "support" is to be found in the terms used to differentiate

anakapela, between those who are said to be "close" (*akaiky*) and those said to be "distant" (*lavitra*). The closeness of actual sister's sons is seen in the term *anakapela lahiny* ("*anakapela* members of the house-group"); being children of a woman of the house-group, actual sister's sons are seen as virtual "members of the house-group" (*lahiny*) of their mother as they are "still not too far away" (*mbola tsy lavitra*). Along with men married to women of the house-group (*vinanto*, lit. "sons-in-law"; but also including in this context "brothers-in-law), the *anakapela lahiny* are collectively known as "great" *anakapela* (*anakapela be*), or *anakapela tohan'akondro*. Like the "child posts" of a house to whom the *anakapela* are likened, the term *tohan'akondro* is too an image of "support", for the term literally means "forked stick" (*tohana*) which supports the cluster of fruit that hangs from a banana (*akondro*) tree. As well as images of "roots", "trunks" and "branches", Temanambondro frequently make associations between the growth and fruiting of plants and the proliferation of persons through their offspring (cf. Hurvitz 1980:271-7): the *anakapela tohan'akondro* support the house-group like a post supports a fruiting branch of bananas, the fruit itself being an image of people related through one "root" or "trunk". But the image of "roots" is also used to speak of the relationship of the *anakapela* to the house-group of the "mother's brother", such that *anakapela* and members of the house-group both share the same "root", a situation captured clearly in a proverb: *samby mana ñe lafiny am-pahiny*. Unfortunately everyday English is lacking here, but again through the image of bananas the proverb says "each has their stalk attached to the trunk". Thus whilst the *anakapela* be support the house-group like "child posts" support houses and the *tohan'akondro* supports a banana tree, they also have "roots" there themselves, albeit a different "root" to that of their own Ancestry.

Whilst *anakapela* be are said to be "close", more "distant" *anakapela* are known as *anakapela tsotry*, "easy, simple" *anakapela*. In fact *anakapela tsotry* may be very distant indeed, the "side" that "enters into" the house-group being traced through several generations. Although Temanambondro speak of the "eight sides" of ancestry, in fact people have more than this, and trace "sides" back as far as memory permits, and are thus *anakapela* to several house-groups, rather than simply to those which their "eight sides" are traced. That they are not *anakapela* to a considerable number of house-groups is mainly due to two factors.

Firstly, because of marriage practices. As people frequently marry into house-groups where they already have a "side that enters", one often finds that they and their children are *anakapela* to a house-group through more than one "side".

Whenever Ambalabory [a place-name synonymous with the house-group there] hold a meeting Aban'Tomañy is sure to be called, for he is *anakapela be* (see figure 4). His own mother comes from there, as did his father's mother, and he is said to have "sides" that "enter into" Ambalabory twice (*mampiditra indroa*). In addition, the "side" of his mother's mother "enters into" Tanambony [again a place-name

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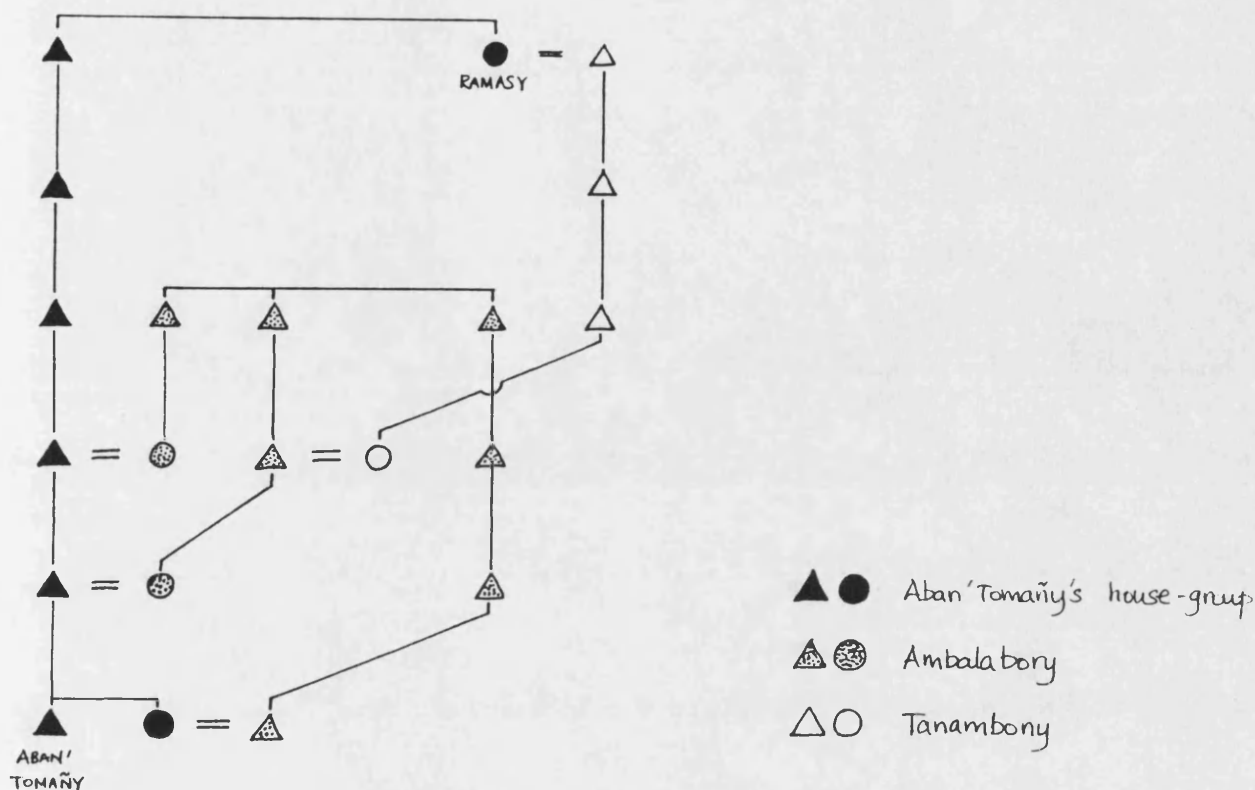
Figure 4: The case of Aban'Tomañy and the "sides" which "join together again and again"

synonymous with a house-group], whose founder married Ramasy, the sister of the founder of Aban'Tomañy's own house-group: thus Aban'Tomañy is *anakapela* to Tanambony through his mother's mother; whilst all the members of Tanambony are *anakapela* to Aban'Tomañy's house-group through their founder's marriage to Ramasy. Aban'Tomañy's father's marriage was therefore a "marriage between people of one stomach" (*fanambadiana mitroky*), for his wife and he had "sides that entered into one another", traceable back to the sibling set of Ramasy and her brother; Aban'Tomañy's father thus married a woman who was *anakapela* to his own house-group. Aban'Tomañy however had married differently, but his sister had "returned to her root" (*miverina am-pototra*) by marrying into the house-group of her mother, and "returning" to the "root" of her mother's brother. When I asked him about the complexity of the situation, both men and women marrying people of house-groups to whom they stood as *anakapela*, he said "it is good to join together again and again" (*tsara mitambatra mitambatra*).

Thus whilst people potentially have more than "eight sides", through the practice of "marrying close" (*manambady akaiky*), that is marrying someone the person is already related to, "sides" are made to "join together again and again", limiting the number of house-groups to which the person stands as *anakapela*.

A second reason why there are limits to the number of house-groups people are

related to as *anakapela* is that the relationship only endures as long as it is practised. The story of Kidisomitra at the beginning of the chapter illustrates the point well, and because he had not "had the history" he denied that he was related to the woman he desired. Over time relationships can be "forgotten" (*manadino*) and become "lost" (*very*).[15] A house-group may forget (or neglect) to "call" (*mitoka*) some of their *anakapela* to certain rites for whatever reason. And just as a house-group may forget, so too can *anakapela* fail to show up or fail to behave as *anakapela* should, giving "respect" to their "mother's brother" by merely supporting them when asked to do so, or failing to participate in the "work" asked of them. Thus relationships of *anakapela* only survive as long as practised, such that the *anakapela* remain "friends" (*nama*) with their "mother's brothers".

Although both men and women constitute a house-group's *anakapela*, in practice it is the men that a house-group "calls" when *anakapela* are summoned. The hierarchical implications of being *anakapela* can be seen in this "calling" such that *anakapela* present themselves to their "mother's brothers" and not the other way around, and like children they should give "respect" by following the demands of their "mother's brothers". But they may give "support" also, and the *anakapela be* are often involved in a house-group's political affairs. Outside this context *anakapela* are usually involved in the "work" (*asa*) of ritual, particularly marriages, circumcisions, and funerals. At such events the *anakapela* are given "work" by their "mother's brothers": they may be asked to join the team that buries a corpse, butcher slaughtered cattle, help cut trees in the forest or seek out suitable stones to be made into funerary memorials, contribute money to ritual expenses and rice to ritual meals, collect and chop firewood, contribute labour, wood and palm fronds for the building of a house-group's *trañondonaky*. However, in all the work they do they participate alongside members of the house-group itself rather than doing the work on their own. And although house-group members will often be "masters of the work" (topon'asa), whilst *anakapela* simply "help" (*mañampy*), beyond this there is little structured hierarchy, and Temanambondro would certainly find offensive the Karembola idea of associating *anakapela* with "slaves" (Middleton 1988:101-6).

People are rendered *anakapela* then through the "sides" that they trace to their various "mother's brothers", and the term itself highlights the hierarchical implications of their position vis-a-vis the "roots" from which they have grown. However, although Temanambondro do not constitute the relationship as particularly hierarchical in practice, they stress practice as an important part of the relationship. For being *anakapela* is a relationship people constitute performatively, through the "giving of respect" that is seen in responding to the "calling" issued by the house-group to whom they are *anakapela*, and through participation in the "work" that is to be done there.

Conclusion: performativity, place and ancestry

One of the foci of the last two chapters has been the issue of relational identity, how persons are constituted through their relationships with others. By looking at the concept of *fañahy* the analysis centred on individuating aspects of personhood, how the moral self of each person comes into being through their actions and others' evaluation of those actions. By talking about this process in terms of aesthetics my aim was to show how Temanambondro create themselves as valued persons.

But the person's relations with others comprises more than how they are constituted through what they do, think or say, for relational identity also concerns relatedness in terms of ancestry. To some extent relatedness de-individuates, creating persons as people of an Ancestry, "one kind". But through the "sides" traced through women ancestry individuates, for all persons of an Ancestry (except those of "one father, one mother") do not share the same relationships that make them *anakapela*. There are parallels here with ideas about *fañahy*: although there is broad categorization of "good" and "bad" *fañahy*, the *fañahy* of every person is seen to be different. So too with ancestry: the *teña fototra* of the "father" and Ancestry stresses unity and sameness, whilst being *anakapela* differentiates.

It would be a mistake however to think of either aspect of relational identity, the moral self or ancestry, as having primacy. Certainly the two are related, but they are two different perspectives on the person, their relative salience being contingent on context, rather than one being the prism through which the other is refracted.

These two perspectives can also be seen to be performatively constituted. A person's *fañahy* cannot be seen, but what people do is interpreted as a "sign" of their moral self, and thus person's are constituted in terms of their practice. In some respects the point is similar to that made by Michael Lambek (1992), although there are some significant differences in his conceptualization of personhood, and these are worth dwelling on. Whilst based on ethnography drawn from the Malagasy speakers of Mayotte, the analysis is clearly to be understood as having explanatory value for Madagascar as a whole (see 1992:247), and it is on this basis that my criticisms are made.

In arguing that personhood is constituted through taboo and the body, Lambek makes a comparison between Malagasy and Tallensi concepts of the person. Through focusing on taboo Lambek suggests that Malagasy persons are constituted "by means of the body" (1992:255) as taboos place restrictions on bodily practice, through prohibiting food stuffs, contact with certain things, and sex with certain relatives. This contrasts with the Tallensi case where, even though taboos are important, "they are less critical than the objectification of ancestral links in the spirit shrines" (1992:255). A distinction thus appears to be made between practice-based personhood in Madagascar, where society is constituted through bodily practice (1992:248), and Tallensi personhood which is

reducible to "kinship", "the objectification of ancestral links", which Lambek later implies is a system of "previously determined social positions" (1992:259).

Yet in focusing on how "taboo carves out a space for the self-construction of identity" such that persons are "more or less differentiated" (1992:260), Lambek ignores the importance of ancestry (or "kinship" or "descent") as another aspect of identity because he sees it as in some way determined or ascribed rather than grounded in practice. However, as I have suggested ancestry is as much a performative phenomena as the practice of taboo. Indeed the two come together in the case of proscribed sexual relations, for the practice of abstaining from sexual relations with a tabooed relative, or atoning for having slept with one, are similarly "objectifications of ancestral links". Conversely, denying that such ancestral links exist, as did Kidisomitra, means that no such taboo exists (cf. Huntington 1988:96-8).

Perhaps the problem lies in conceptualizing "kinship" in terms of "descent", and thinking of both in terms of structure. Yet Malagasy ethnography repeatedly throws up examples of the way in which "kinship" and "descent" are performatively constituted. The most obvious example is the repeated claim that burial defines group identity not birth, a clear case of performatively constituted affiliation (Bloch 1971:45; Gardenier 1976:86; Hurvitz 1980:37; Huntington 1988:35-6; Astuti 1995a:88-9). However, practices prior to burial are also significant ways of performatively constituting ancestry, whether in terms of named "kinds" (*karazana, raza*) or other relations, something that can be deduced for example from reading the various discussions of the building and maintenance of tombs (cf. e.g. Bloch 1971:111-124; Kottak 1980:178; Feeley-Harnik 1991b; Astuti 1995a:135-152) and residence (cf. e.g. Lavondès 1967:143-160; Kottak 1980:165-182; Huntington 1988:47-77). All these examples in fact clearly illustrate Sahlins' (1985) argument that people make relations out of practice, through building, living and burying together.

However, as the Temanambondro case clearly shows, different relations are performatively constituted by different means and to different degrees. As I have suggested, Temanambondro concepts of the person focus not only on how persons constitute themselves through their daily practice, but also on persons as those who have ancestry. But the Ancestry of the "father" and the "sides" of ancestry traced through women to "mother's brothers" are in certain respects constituted differently.

Whilst arguing that both the Ancestry of the "father" and the "sides" of ancestry traced through women are constituted performatively, it is the case that Ancestry does not require being continually constituted in the manner of "sides", for Ancestry endures through time from the point at which a "father" becomes able to confer Ancestry on his "children" by having completed the marriage rites. To some extent Ancestry is subsequently enacted or performed, as well as realized spatially as for example in the case of the disposal of the umbilical cord. But the performative dimension of Ancestry rests to a great extent on the marriage rite which performatively create men as "fathers" and those

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they have born as "children" of their Ancestry. Indeed to deny a person's Ancestry is to deny them the status of Temanambondro persons, for it would be to deny them burial in the tomb.

To appropriate Temanambondro metaphors for my own ends, it could be said that Ancestry has "strength" whilst the "sides" traced through women are "soft", an image in keeping with Temanambondro ideas about the genderedness of these qualities in terms of the gendered links Ancestry and "sides" are traced through. A person's Ancestry is "strong" in that it cannot be easily "forgotten" or "lost", as the story of Ravavy and her father illustrates.

Ravavy's decision to "follow her grandfather" (*miaraka amin'ñe ababe*) surprised some, but showed that as far as she was concerned she "did not agree" (*tsy mañeky*) with her father's decision. Her father had fallen out with his elder brother - there had been accusations of theft and sorcery -and decided to move to his mother's brothers's house-group which was of a different Ancestry. There he was given a place to build his house (*toko trano*) and cut off all formal ties with the house-group of his father. When he eventually died he "followed his mother" (*niaraka tamin'ñe endriny*), being buried in the tomb of his mother's brother.

However Ravavy continued to associate herself with her father's father's house-group, and although she lived in her father's old house she attended rites at her father's father's house-group as a "member of the house-group" (*lahiny*), and had made it known before she died that she wanted to "follow her grandfather" and "return to [her] root" (*miverina am-pototra*). When I asked why, EndrinTelovavy told me that it was because "that is her own kind" (*izany ñe karaza teña*).

Thus although Ravavy's father chose to "follow his mother" his burial did not change his Ancestry to that of his mother's brother, for Ancestry among the Temanambondro is defined not by burial but by the rite of marriage that makes a man a "father". For Ravavy's father to change his Ancestry would have meant performing the rite of "cutting the root" (*fira fototra*) to set himself up as a new house-group of the same Ancestry as his mother's brother. But he did not, and his daughter Ravavy did not "forget" her "own kind", and so was not "lost" to them.[16]

It is therefore only a change in who has "law" that can change a person's Ancestry. The "sides" of ancestry traced through women however could be said to be "soft" because they only endure as long as performatively constituted through practice, through "giving respect" and being "called" by those to whom the person is *anakapela*. In this sense then both Ancestry and "sides" traced through women are performative, but the degree of performativity varies.

As well as arguing that ancestry is performative, I have also tried to highlight the extent to which personhood and ancestry are constituted in terms of place. Place embodies relations between people (cf. Myers 1986:92), and relatedness is constituted through places, such as house-groups, tombs and the Manambondro river. Social relations are also

imagined as spatial relations, through such images as "sides that enter into one another", and the "roots" associated with places from which people grow.

In fact place, person, and ancestry are mutually constitutive. Persons are defined in terms of places such as the river where their umbilical cord is thrown, and Ancestries are similarly defined through house-groups and tombs. Yet river, house-group and tomb are only significant in so far as they are associated with concepts of personhood and ancestry, and thus just as places take on their identity through the persons and Ancestries associated with them, so do persons and Ancestries have their identity defined through those places. The "roots and "sides" of ancestry therefore are performatively constituted through places, and so too are Temanambondro persons. And it is this fact that leads me to suggest that Temanambondro possess a spatial aesthetic, a concern not simply with "the manner in which values ... are formally arranged in space" (Fernandez 1966:53), but also with the idea that persons are inextricable from the places they inhabit.

The elaboration of this spatial aesthetic is one of the threads running through the remaining chapters, whilst another is the way in which relationships are represented in images. Place and space is obviously one way in which relationships are represented, but there are others which we have seen in this and the preceding chapter, and which we will see again. One is gender, and in the following two chapters we will see how ideas about maleness extend beyond the "strength" of bones and the *teña fototra* to a view of Ancestry as constituted through men who achieve temporal continuity through being fixed in places; whilst women, "soft" and flesh-like, "divide" and "separate". Another is the image of "roots", "trunks" and "branches", and ideas about the relationship between the growth of people and plants. Finally there are houses, buildings that are good to think and good to live in, an elemental image of the Temanambondro sociological imagination, and one of the subjects of the next chapter.

<div align="right">

House, Tomb and River:

The Architectonics of Ancestry

</div>

Women don't know how to do houses

After we had finished re-thatching the roof of Endrin'Lavavolo's granary I asked her why it was that only men did the work of "roofing the house" (*manafo traño*), whilst to women was allotted the task of cooking the standard fare offered up on such occasions, a midday meal of rice and groundnuts: "*Tsy mahay traño ñe apela*", she replied, "women don't know how to do houses". Yet once built women are the ones who "look after the house" (*mikarakara traño*); they are the ones who cook in it, keep it clean, and weave the mats that cover its floor, and in the past its walls.

Discussing the houses built by those in the Analalava region of northwest Madagascar, Gillian Feeley-Harnik comments that "In the Sakalava view, men provide the form, women the content" (1980:579), something that could be read into Temanambondro ideas about houses also, although no one expressed the idea explicitly. But houses are not just built by men and looked after by women, houses are good to think also. In fact the house is a complex image of fundamental significance in the Temanambondro sociological imagination. House-posts may be "mother's brothers" or "children of women", as we have seen; but they may also be "paired" as "spouses", or have one end that is "elder sibling" to its "junior" other. Houses are also an idiom for the expression of moral sociality, ideas about what it means to live as "one house"; an idea which by metaphoric extension applies to house-groups of which all houses form a part.

The house then provides form, a tangible image of relationships that are themselves lived within and between houses. But it is perhaps not surprising that "women don't know how to do houses", for as well as being a tangible image of social relations, houses are part of the material presence of Ancestries, collectivities of persons whose generational continuity is imagined in male terms. In being built by men houses thus embody ideas about the maleness of the groups of which they form a part.

In working through the significance of the Temanambondro house I myself have been following a debate within our own sociological imagination, that concerning house-based societies. Before beginning an analysis of the Temanambondro house it is therefore necessary to approach the subject from the starting point of my own thinking, a debate

which arguably contains within it a way of rethinking the anthropological study of "kinship" from the perspective of indigenous categories, idioms and images.

Perspectives on the house

As an item of material culture, as an object replete in symbolic meanings, or as the locus of the domestic domain and systems of household production, the house has long figured in ethnographic accounts. Various studies have revealed ways in which aspects of houses are used to symbolize social relations and categories (e.g. Cunningham 1964; Tambiah 1969), whilst others have shown how gender representations involve the house through the division of domestic space and the role of women in the domestic economy (Bourdieu 1979; H. Moore 1986), itself frequently modelled on the house (Gudeman and Rivera 1990). Recently however there has emerged a more "holistic anthropology of the house" (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:4) which aims at uniting the architectural and symbolic significance of houses with their place in systems of economic and social organization.

Much of this work takes as its starting point the writings of Lévi-Strauss (1982:163-187; 1987) on "house-based societies". Lévi-Strauss's model was developed as an attempt to explain social organization in a number of markedly different societies where "political and economic interests" had begun to "invad[e] the social field" (1982:186), producing hybrid systems that classical kinship theory could only treat as aberrant. But there is an ambiguity in Lévi-Strauss's work about the nature of the house in house-based societies. In his earlier writings for example, Levi-Strauss talks of the house as a moral person "which perpetuates itself ... down a real or imaginary line" (1982:174); later however the emphasis changes, and the house is talked of as the "objectification of a relation: the unstable relation of alliance" (1987:155, emphasis removed). If the nature of the house as an "institution" (1987:155) remains unclear, the underlying premiss of Lévi-Strauss's theory however does not, for instead of seeing in the house the basis of a radical critique of the theory of "kinship" that it fails to be classified by, Lévi-Strauss instead creates a model of an institution which, whilst transcending previous categories of "kinship" analysis, remains premised upon them (cf. McKinnon 1991:30). Ultimately the problem with Lévi-Strauss's model of house-based societies is that whereas he claims that it is house-based societies that employ the "language of kinship" to talk about political and economic interests (1982:187; 1987:152), it is in fact Lévi-Strauss himself who employs the "language of kinship" to talk about relations which a variety of societies phrase in the language of the house.

But despite the many problems Lévi-Strauss's writings contain, they have provided for some a departure point from which to move outside "the strait-jacket of

descent categories" (Waterson 1990:166), and for others a "remind[er] ... of a sound anthropological principle: the priority of native categories" (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995:20).[1] It is these two aspects of writing on the house that I have tried to develop in the analysis that follows, although the house is not the only native category I have chosen to focus on. However, the end point of the analysis is not another attempt to reformulate the model of house-based societies. In fact I would not label the Temanambondro a house-based society in Lévi-Strauss's sense of the term, for as I have suggested they do not employ the "language of kinship" to talk about political and economic interests, but rather employ the language of the house to talk about social relations. Nor is the Temanambondro house merely "the objectification of a relation" (Lévi-Strauss 1987:155, emphasis removed), for as we will see houses are implicated in several relations, not just that of alliance or the conjugal relation of marriage (cf. Bloch 1995b:79). Within the house domestic space speaks of gender, whilst the architecture of the house is used to represent relations between spouses, siblings, "mother's brothers" and "children of women". The placing of houses within the house-group also speaks of siblingship and relations between generations. As a result houses, the spaces within and outside them, and the plots on which they are built are part of the ways Temanambondro imagine relations between men and women, parents and children, living people and ancestors. Thus it is not that the Temanambondro are "house based" as opposed to some other essentialized principle (cf. Bloch 1993b:131), but rather that the house is a key image that needs to be analysed in an attempt to understand how Temanambondro imagine their forms of relatedness.

In trying to capture the significance of the house to Temanambondro I have tried to emphasize throughout three concerns: sociality, spatiality and materiality, for the house is a place where the everyday and intimate is lived, a space dwelled in and a structure dwelled upon. The house is a structure extensively dwelled upon in that it is an object through whose fabric social, spatial and temporal relations are imagined, and despite the simplicity of its form and the absence of beautification, the house possesses aesthetic qualities in as much as it is "good to think" (cf. Tambiah 1969; Pak 1986). But as a space dwelled in the house is part of a more encompassing architectonic, and in the following I have tried to situate the house within significant spaces and places outside it, of house-group, village, bush and river. For although the house is of great significance, it is but one among other spatial images of relatedness, all equally important for the ways in which people constitute their sense of place.

Although startlingly unimpressive to the eye, the Temanambondro house is no less complex an artefact of the imagination than the more famous items of vernacular architecture which appeal to our own aesthetic of beauty and complexity of structure (cf. e.g. Feldman 1979; Blier 1987; Kis-Jovak et al. 1988; Waterson 1990; Prussin 1995). But the house cannot be reduced to its architecture, for it is important to contextualize it in relation to other items of built form and the space it occupies within wider built spaces.

Similarly simplicity of structure should not obscure the fact that the Temanambondro house is a complex image of relatedness, and the principal spatial locus of sociality.

As the focal point of domestic life, the house is a central image of marriage (see Chapter 6), but it is also situated within the house-group, a group said to be "one house", and a space imagined in terms of relationships with ancestors and siblings. And although a building of the "village" (*tana*) and the cleared space of settlement (*toko traño*, "house plot"), houses are constructed of materials from the "bush" (*añ-ahitra*), more particularly the "forest" (*ala*), two spaces opposed in Temanambondro spatial classification. In approaching the Temanambondro house we need therefore to keep in mind its location within spaces beyond it, of house-group, village, and bush, as well as remembering that whilst the house is a "combination of sociality and physicality" (Ellen 1986:28), for the Temanambondro it is also significant in terms of its spatiality, uniting spouses in marriage, ancestors and their living "children", as well as house-groups and their *anakapela*. In addition, in its construction and the use of its internal space the house is situated within and situates those inside it in terms of Temanambondro concepts associated with cardinal space. The space of houses then partakes of other spaces, and exists within an encompassing architectonic, the spaces people create both physically and mentally from the world they inhabit, and out of which emerge the images that are elemental to their sense of place (cf. Fernandez 1977a, 1982).

Beginning with the separation of the village from the surrounding bush, the analysis of architectonics moves on to look at the house as a complex image of relatedness, and house sites as one of the ways Temanambondro remember relationships of nurture. From here the analysis expands outward from the house to look at the relationships that constitute house-groups and Ancestries, imagined in terms of houses and tombs, and the ways in which Ancestries with different "origin-roots" have become Temanambondro through the placing of their tombs at the mouth of the Manambondro river. In looking at the relationships within and between house-groups and Ancestries we also see how images of unity contain within them the potential to be images of division, something vividly captured in the idea that "roots" always have many "branches".

Bush and village

In an analysis of the house among the Bemihisatra Sakalava of the northwest coast, Gillian Feeley-Harnik writes that "The whole community stands for ... [ancestral and spatial] order in opposition to the surrounding bush (*atiala*, 'in the forest'), which is the source and repository of all that is dirty and out of place" (1980:575). Whilst the point is a familiar one about contrasts between spatial categories, Temanambondro separation of "village" from "bush" is not as simple as this, nor does it coincide with the frequently

reported contrast between the domestic/cultural space of human settlement and the wild/natural space of bush or forest (cf. e.g. Ben-Amos 1976; Tambiah 1969). In fact, although they employ categories that imply a marked dichotomy, certain aspects of each space reveal there to be continuities between them.

Asking someone in the morning what they plan to do that day usually involves hearing them say that they either intend to stay "in the village" (an-tana) or leave for the "bush" (añ-ahitra, "in the bush"), a basic distinction of Temanambondro spatial classification, and one heard employed daily in referring to people's movement to and from their farming plots. The "village" is prototypically the space of dwelling and ritual, whilst the "bush" is that of the work of "planting" (fambole) the crops which are the staple of Temanambondro subsistence (see Chapter 1). Thus people contrast attending marriages, mortuary rites and so forth "in the village" with the work they do "in the bush". However, the differences between these spaces is relative rather than absolute, for the practices and beings associated with one frequently spill over into the other.

To some extent one can see the "bush" as containing the potentially harmful and that which is outside society, such as malevolent "spirits" (tsiñy) sometimes associated with the sites of old tombs (kibory tota), and in the past it was common for people eating "in the bush" whilst working there to throw a little food for whatever "spirits" (tsiñy, angatra) were lurking nearby so that those eating would not be disturbed. But at the same time people also left a little cooked food for certain types of "spirits" at the back of the house's hearth, or a little unhusked rice in the granary (varin'angatra, "spirit's rice"), two places that are as potent an image of the domestic community and away from the "bush" as one could hope to find. Furthermore, very little of the landscape of the "bush" has not had the mark of the work of "living people" left on it, socialized by those who plant it or cleared it in the past.

The activities of people in each space too may cross the boundary. Frequently people set up house on their concession, establishing themselves as "home in the bush" (mody añ-ahitra), spending most of their time there, returning to the "village" to attend to the affairs of their house-group, such as a marriage or funeral, or simply to visit. In fact even though ritual is prototypically a practice associated with the "village", more particularly the space of house-groups, often the rite for the atonement of incest (sombilin'akoho) is performed "in the bush". Finally, even agricultural work is carried out "in the village", on small plots known as zoloky, planted with such things as coffee and bananas and frequently used for sewing the nursery of vary hosy prior to its transplanting.

Situated on the outskirts of "villages" and often between house-groups, zoloky may sometimes be planted with various trees, such as breadfruit, mango and eucalyptus, which are often visible from quite a distance, so making obvious the location of a village before its houses come into view, the tall trees marking it off from the surrounding landscape. But even though most Temanambondro villages are located close to a river - the

Manambondro, Isandra and Iavibola, or one of their tributaries - villages reveal a great deal of variation in terms of their appearance, their size, and their sociological make up.

On the lower Manambondro, villages are mostly nucleated, their names often referring to physical features - Mahabo, "up high"; Ambato, "at the place of the rocks" - or size -Fenoambany, "full at the bottom"; Befeno, "large and full". But their appearance can be quite variable. Located at the confluence of two tributaries of the Manambondro, Lavay perches on a sharply rising spur, its several house-groups strung out along the ridge, a village whose entry paths become dangerously slippy in the rain. Although not yet overcrowded, the best places for building houses have been taken, and were it not for the fact that many live "home in the bush" there would be a serious shortage of space. A little closer to the estuary on a small knoll situated at a crook along the south bank of the Manambondro sits Nosoa, where a teeming multitude of houses and granaries are crammed together, sometimes with barely enough space to walk between them, and no discernable order as to how the village is laid out is at first apparent. These two villages contrast sharply with Befeno, spread out on level ground and its house-groups clearly discernable, each separated from the those around it by patches of grass or well trodden paths. Unlike Lavay and Nosoa, most of the population permanently reside in the village, something immediately apparent as few of the houses look in need of serious repairs.

Although each of these villages is peopled by more than one Ancestry, they are considerably smaller than the village of Manambondro, home to eleven Ancestries and the largest village by quite some margin on the lower Manambondro, Isandra and Iavibola rivers. To some extent Manambondro village is a mixture of the cramped extremes of Lavay and Nosoa, and the spaciousness of Befeno, with most of the population living near the RN12 and along the path that leads to both the Lutheran and Catholic churches. But away from these axes there are various other smaller groupings of houses, often a house-group on its own. The village itself comprises of several locales, their names often derived as with village names from the topography - Ambatovanda, "place of the grey stones"; Iabokininy, "place of the tall eucalyptus". Sometimes a place name may designate the place occupied by a single house-group, sometimes the place is occupied by several. In some cases the place name is that of the Ancestry living there, such as Mahanara or Vohindava, but as in the case of Ambanihampy the place may be occupied by some house-groups who are not of the eponymous Ancestry.

Besides being divided by named localities, as with any other village Manambondro is structured by its division into house-groups. Where the spatial limits of a house-group are not clearly marked by a path, an area of grass, or *zoloky*, the limits are nevertheless known to many, and disputes about building beyond that limit are not uncommon. But where there is no discernible boundary, the clearest indicator of a separate house-group is the open space of the central plaza around which people build their houses, dwellings whose simplicity of form belies the complexity of the ideas associated with them.

The house: images of relatedness and memory

Unimpressive to the eye and simple in structure, Temanambondro houses (*traño*) are of a type common to the east coast of Madagascar, a single room dwelling built of a wooden frame and raised on piles.[2] Despite the introduction of new joinery techniques and materials such as cement and zinc roof-panelling, most Temanambondro houses are still built to a traditional design. Made entirely of vegetal materials and without nails, the traditional house has a free-standing floor enclosed by a rectilinear frame to which roof and wall panels are attached, the ridge pole and longest sides aligned along a north/south axis (see figure 5). The frame comprises four corner posts (*andribe*) which support four horizontal beams into which are keyed the remaining house posts (*anak'andry*), except, that is, for the ridge posts (*andry ambo*) which are free-standing, and traditionally located inside the frame. The ridge posts support the ridge pole (*ambony mandry*), and it is against this and the long-beams that the rafters (*raraka*) lie, tied in place during roofing. Whilst house posts and beams may be cut from various species of wood, the roof thatch, walls and floor boards all come from the traveller's palm (*fontsy*), with the fronds used for thatch, and the stems of the leaves for the walls. The floor comprises boards of the debarked outer part of the palm's trunk laid on a lattice of poles, the whole resting on beams raised some half a metre or so from the ground and supported by stones or short posts. The two doors are traditionally free moving wall panels, located in the centre of the longer east and west walls of the house, although many people now prefer to have doors which can be secured with some form of lock.

In contrast to some Malagasy peoples, Temanambondro attach virtually no ritual importance to the building of the house or its first occupation (cf. Vernier 1955; Hurvitz 1980:195n; Kus and Raharijaona 1990:29; Bloch 1995b:75-6). Because land is "sacred" (*masy*) I was told that a house site should be sprinkled with a little alcohol before the work of raising a house (*mananga traño*) commences, but this was hardly practised with solemnity nor great respect, and if it was practised at all it usually signalled the desire of the men performing the work to finish of the remainder of the bottle after the blessing had been done. Sometimes a little alcohol was sprinkled where a corner post would be raised, sometimes in the middle of the house site, but no prescription exists as to how a blessing should be done. Nor are the house posts erected in a particular order. In fact, apart from the division of labour - it is only men who build houses - the only notably ritualized act in house building involves the sprinkling of a little alcohol on the joints of the ridge post and ridge pole, into which are then inserted leafy branches (*ravi'kazo*). No exegesis of the practice was forthcoming, nor was it done on all the houses I saw being built.

The lack of ritual involved in the building of houses highlights an important facet of Temanambondro dwellings: that their significance is sociological and not cosmological. The house, the form of its construction and its internal spaces, is not thought of as a

ambony mandry
(ridge pole)

raraka
(rafters)

andribe
(corner post)

an-davana ambony

varanga
(doorway)

an-davana ambany

andry (or anat'andry)
(post, child post)

tafo
(roof)

tapenaka
(gable-end thatch)

an-sakana ambony

andry ambo
(ridge post)

an-sakana ambany

rindrina
(wall)

Figure 5: The house

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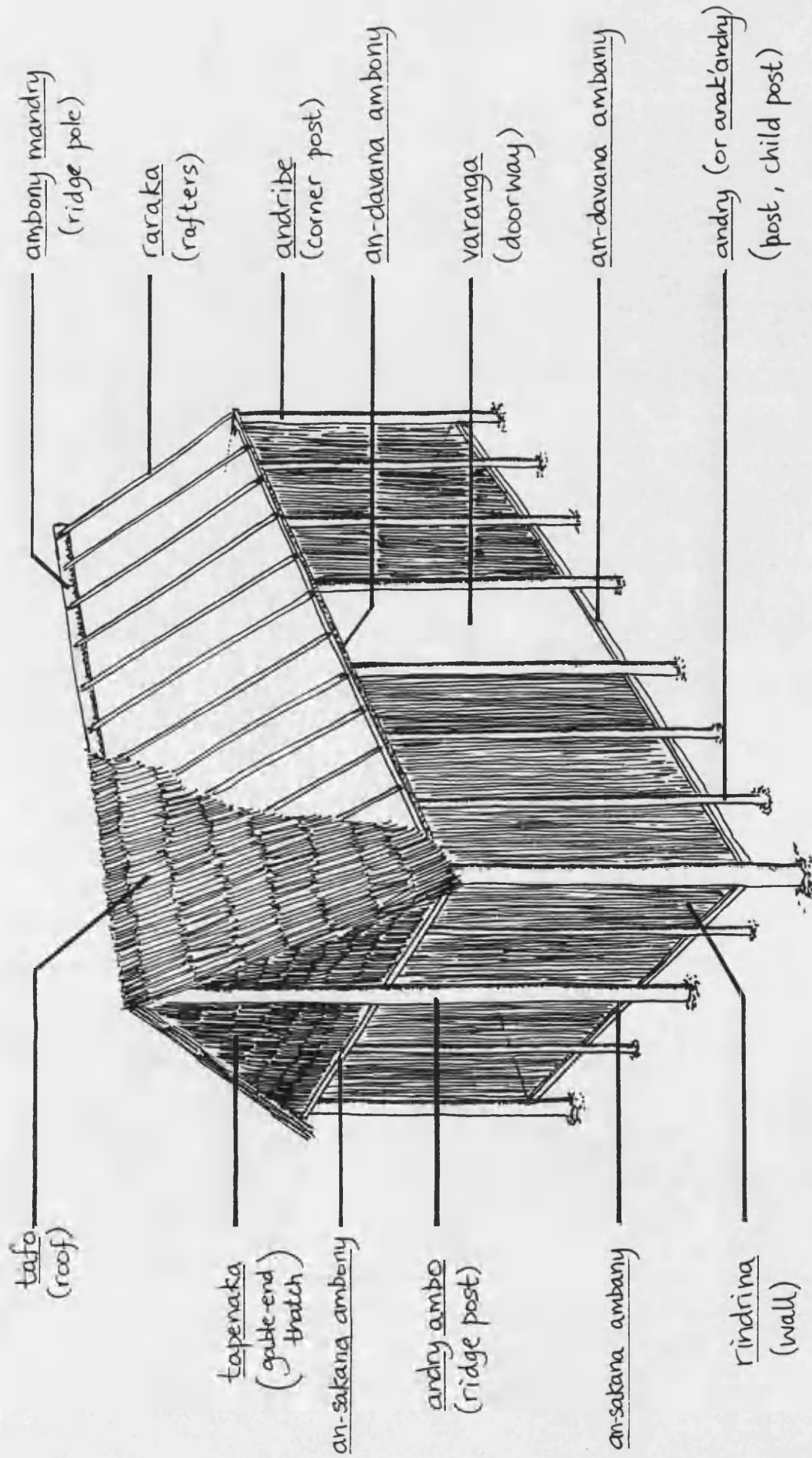
microcosm of ritual or mythical themes (cf. Ellen 1986; Fox 1993b; Keane 1995); rather the significance of the house to Temanambondro, what makes it good to think, lies in how it is variously used as an image of social relations (cf. Tambiah 1969; Pak 1986). In the previous chapter I suggested that Endrin'Telovavy's reference to the "headman" of her mother's mother's brother as a ridge-post, whilst quite an innovative image, drew on a common practice of imaging and imagining social relations through the house, such as the likening of the house's corner posts to members of the house-group, and the "child posts" to the *anakapela*. But the house is also used to represent relations between siblings and between spouses.

The everyday and intimate knowledge people have of the various qualities and properties of trees and plants - from planting and harvesting cultigens, as well as from using wood to build and cook with - is a rich source of imagery, and can be seen in the frequent reference to images of "roots", "trunks" and "branches", as well as in the way that properties of trees take on metaphoric associations. In line with the widespread importance of spatial orientation and the placing of persons and things, a piece of wood is viewed from the perspective of how it stood as a living tree, and those who regularly use wood are acutely aware of which is the "head" of a piece of wood or tree (*lohakazo*) and which is its "stump" end (*vodikazo*). This knowledge is vital when raising a house as the "stump" end of a house post must be placed in the ground, because, as Aban'Betongatra suggested, "if the wood is turned upside down then perhaps the life [of those living in the house] will be turned upside down" (*laha mihongana hazo de angamba mihongana ñe fieñana*).

Although the practice may at first appear identical to symbolic elements of house construction in Southeast Asia, the resemblance is only a passing one, and one worth commenting on. Roxana Waterson (1990:124) has noted that throughout Southeast Asia there is a widespread practice of placing house posts root/base/stump end down, and posts are frequently said to be "planted", something associated with the idea of the house as a "living" entity, imbued with a "vital force" (Waterson 1990:115-137) or "cosmic energy" (Errington 1989). Temanambondro reasoning as to why house posts must be placed "stump" end down however draw on different images, and despite the frequent use of botanical images they do not talk of "planting" house posts, nor think of the house itself as "living". Although the leafy branches placed in the joints of ridge-pole and ridge-post could perhaps be interpreted in terms of ideas about "planting" houses, such that by contagion the "living" property of the leafy branch is transferred to the newly built house, Temanambondro make no such connection. Nor in fact does their talk about houses suggest that one can be made.

Rather than being "planted" (*mamboly*) and "growing" as plants do (*mitsiry*), houses are "founded" (*mañorina*), both in the sense of "having foundations" and "being established". In fact if the use of the leafy branch suggests ideas of contagion, then the

desire is not for the transference of properties to the house but to those occupying it. The leafy branch should come from a fruit tree, and Temanambondro frequently make analogies between plants that proliferate through having many "offspring" (*isiny, voany*; both used specifically for plants), and people who proliferate through having "children" (*anaka*); indeed in some contexts the term *anaka* is used to refer to the "offspring" of both people and plants. If the leafy branch is to be understood as signifying anything, then it should perhaps be seen as referring to the desired fertility of the house's occupiers, prototypically a married couple. In addition, as it is the married couple who could be said to make a house "living", a house can therefore only be said to be "living" in terms of the ongoing relationship within it. One of the focuses of this relationship is the hearth, itself associated with fertility through marriage rites and childbirth (see Chapter 6), and Temanambondro explicitly remark on the fact that a house without a hearth is not a productive house by referring to it as a "young bachelor's house" (*traño gao*). A house then is not "planted", although it "grows" in the sense of proliferating (*mitombo*) through the fertility of the couple within it; and a house is only "living" in the sense that it is animated by the relationship of marriage that it houses.

Rather than suggesting ideas of "planting", the placing of house posts "stump" end down is explained in terms of the relationship between siblings, and the "stump" end of a piece of wood is referred to as the "elder sibling" (*zoky*), the "head" as the "younger sibling" (*zandry*). The practice of placing the "elder sibling" in the ground would appear at first an inversion of the usual principle of according higher symbolic value to things "above" (*ambony*) in comparison to things "below" (*ambany*), such that the *lohakazo*, being the "head", should be "elder sibling" to the "stump". But in fact what takes precedence here is not the relative position in space, but rather relative "strength": the "stump" is the "stronger" of the two ends of a piece of wood, for it often contains a higher proportion of hardwood (*teza*) than does the "head" of the same piece, and so it is older. The "elder sibling" then is placed in the ground, supporting the house and giving it "strength", just as an elder sibling should do for their juniors.

These ideas take a different form on the horizontal plane however, for the "head" of the house's long-beams are accorded higher symbolic value, and the "head" is placed at the end of the house where the hearth is located, the hearth itself being associated with the continuity of the house-group (see below). However the axis overlaid with most symbolic value within the house is that of east/west, one overlaid with gender and the relations between spouses. The east of the house is focused on the east door (*lohabe*, "great head"), and it is in this half of the house that men sit, whilst women and small children sit on the west, "at the place of the door" (am-baranga). But in addition to spouses being joined through the internal space of the house, the idiom of "spouses" as "pairs" (*vady*) is carried over into the building of the house in the notion that the houses's posts and rafters must have "spouses" or be "paired" (*tsy maitsy misy vady*, "there must be a spouse/pair"), such

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that each house post is "paired" with another on the opposite side of the house, just as each rafter must be joined with its "spouse" where it terminates at the ridge pole.

It is clear, then, that many aspects of the physical fabric of the house are used to speak of social relations between persons. However, to speak of the house merely in terms of the images of relatedness that derive from its materiality and spatiality would be to overlook how the house is central to sociality, and how it figures as a highly evocative way of remembering "nurture" (*miteza*). To live in one house is to share all aspects of life: it is to live and sleep together (parents and children alike), to work together, to cook and eat together from the same hearth, and as one proverb puts it, to be buried together. Hardly surprising then that houses partake of the way in which Temanambondro make memories tangible through their association with objects and places (cf. R. Rosaldo 1980; Basso 1984, 1988; Küchler 1987, 1993; Hoskins 1993:118-141).

To talk of memory among Temanambondro is to talk of such things as trees and rocks, places and stories, but the idea of memory to a great extent homogenizes a disparate set of practices. Memories of events are tied to places as we have seen (Chapter 1), whilst the placing of the person through their umbilical cord is accompanied by the instruction to "not forget" the Ancestral Water of the Manambondro river (Chapter 4). In addition funerals involve acts of commemorating the dead in the production of memorial objects (see P. Thomas n.d.). But much of people's talk of "remembering" (*mahatsiaro*) and their recollection of the past involves far more mundane things than "historical" events and rituals of birth and death.

Many Temanambondro I came to know as friends placed great value on objects that they associated with events and people from the past. Whether the soot besmeared horn of a zebu sacrificed at a man's son's circumcision, a sewing machine that had travelled the length of Madagascar so that it could be passed on to a brother's daughter before the woman who owned it died, or a friend's dead father's broken bush knife that sat rusting in a corner - people were always keen to tell me about people I had never met by pointing out to me objects that they could associate them with. These items of personal inheritance seemed to be important as objects that linked people to others now absent, and sometimes dead. The practice was extended to inherited land also, and as well as being told myself where someone's father had built his cattle pen or where their mother had regularly planted sweet-potato, I heard others establishing relationships between people on the basis that they had adjacent rice fields, the implication being that to have such fields meant that they must have "sides that entered into one another" (*manan'ila mampiditra*).

Some of the most emotionally laden memories of people centre on pieces of land that their parents and grandparents farmed, or on the site a house in which they lived when "home in the bush".

Stopping by at the shop Endrin'Maditra ran with her husband in Vangaindrano, we got to talking about the place where I had recently been helping a friend prepare their rice field for transplanting. I said that I had seen her mother working nearby there a few days before, harvesting sweet potato. "We planted groundnuts there before", she said, "me and my grandmother", and for a moment the conversation stalled. Finally Endrin'Maditra looked up. "É, Philippe", she sighed, "I remember my grandmother when we talk of land" (*de mahatsiaro ñe endribeko laha miresaka tany tsika*), and smiling to herself she went on to other things.

Perhaps to some the story appears incredibly banal, but it is one example of the way people would speak with great fondness about where they had worked with their parents and grandparents, and the traces that were left there of that time. After a while I began to realize that the cultivated landscape was alive with people's memories, grounded in such innocent looking things as a rock that had served as a step into a house that was long gone but in which the person who pointed it out to me had spent much of their time as a child, or the breadfruit tree that now stood over fifty feet tall and had been planted by their grandfather.

The sites and frames of old houses, rocks that served as steps, fruit trees and sweet-potato plots - such were the places and things through which people remembered the "nurture" they received from their parents and grandparents. The emotional attachment to such places is strong, and the very mundaneness of them should not lead us to overlook their significance. That houses and farming plots should figure greatly in people's memories should not be surprising, for these are the places prototypically associated with giving and receiving "nurture", the value of which I have already highlighted (Chapter 3). And if "nurture" can be said to be part of the aesthetics of personhood, then trees, rocks and house plots can be said to partake of a spatial aesthetic -better still an aesthetics of place - one that finds value in places and the things found there which make memorable relations which are ultimately ephemeral.

The Temanambondro house then is important in terms of its materiality, spatiality and sociality, and whilst a complex image of relatedness, it is also a focal point for the practice of relatedness and "nurture". But it is not only the individual house which is important, but also the house-group of which it is a part. Whilst memories associated with individual houses are personal memories born of experience, people remember relationships stretching back several generations in terms of the house-groups into which they "have sides that enter", and it is now time to look at these groups, as well as their relationship to Ancestry, and so situate the architectonics of the house within its environing spaces.

One root, many branches: images of unity and division

For several months Endrin'Matory and Taboara, her brother's daughter, lived in adjacent houses, and using the hearths of both they cooked together, consumed together and to a great extent worked together, referring to the set up as "just one house" (*traño raiky avao*). When Endrin'Matory's daughter and Taboara's son got to fighting over who had most relish on their rice, Endrin'Matory rounded on them: "where's the people of one house if their food is not one" (*aza olo traño raiky laha tsy raiky avao ñe haniny*).

The place of marriage, of cooking, and eating together, of having children and "nurturing" them, the image of "one house" is perhaps the most potent image of moral sociality Temanambondro possess. But as well as being an image of living together, "one house" is also an image of dying together: *Pihavana - velo miharo traño, maty miharo kibory* ("Relatives: living they share a house, dead they are mixed in a tomb"). The image of those in life being together in death is captured in another proverb, a more poetic image but one which captures the same sentiment: *Tatamo amin-poñy: velo mifampialotra, maty mifampilaoka* ("The lily and the small fish: living one shadows the other, dead they make relish together"). Referred to as "companions" or "friends" (*nama*), *foñy* (a small minnow-like fish) are found swimming in the shadow of the *tatamo* (a water lily), and using a basket-net the two are scooped up and cooked together and served as a relish with rice. As the lily and the fish live in symbiosis, so too do the living who share "one house". And like the lily and fish in the cooking pot, the dead are mixed in their tomb. The proverbs then present an image of those of "one house" together in life and in death.

Yet as images of house parts discussed above might suggest, houses can also be used to speak of division and difference, such as the difference between "mother's brothers" and "children of women" and the separation of men and women in two halves of the "one house" of marriage. Political oratory (*kabaro*) not surprisingly makes much of images that play on the potential for division and difference in what is "one", and a powerful rhetorical image is that of "we all have one trunk, but each has their branch" (*fototra raiky itsika, fa samby mana ñe sokazany*), a similar image to that of the bananas which "each have their stalk attached to the branch" (*samby mana ñe lafiny am-pahiny*).

The idiom of "one house" is also used to refer to house-groups, just as the idiom of "one tomb" refers to an Ancestry, "one kind". But along with the proverbs mentioned, these images elide the fact that both house-groups and Ancestries have "branches" (*sokazana*), reckoned in terms of "siblings" (*pianakavy, pianadahy*) and "grandfathers" (*raibe*), and that Ancestries are often composed of more than one house-group.[3] As Aban'Tsotry said, explaining why it was that he had decided to "found" (*mañorina*) a new house-group, "One house, one tomb. That's how it should be. But people do things differently" (*Traño raiky, kibory raiky. Izany ñe tokony ho izy. Nefa samby hafa ñe fomba'ñ'olo*). The point was repeated by others: "the people who bury in one tomb should

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be of one house-group. But [people] often don't get along together" (*tokony ho trañobe raiky ñe olo alevina an-kibory raiky. Kanefa matetika tsy mifañaraka*), and as usual a proverb can be found to echo the sentiment: "stubbornness does not give birth to a zebu with beautiful markings" (*mekany tsy miteraka aomby soa volo*).

As we saw earlier there is a wide spread tendency to see in the "ways of people of the past" (*fomba'ñ'olo taloha*) the way things should be done (Chapter 3). But the tendency toward "liking oneself" (*tia teña*) has meant that the "one house" of the house-group rarely acts as such, and the "one house" which acts as such tends to be the "separate houses" (*toka traño*) established by couples at marriage. Economic co-operation within house-groups has declined, and although there is some inter-household co-operation, this follows a pattern of reciprocal exchange rather than pooling. In addition, where once there was everyday commensality within house-groups, now the practice only continues during circumcision and funerary rites.

The work of trying to create unity within house-groups falls to the *lonaky* ("headman"), usually the eldest man of the senior generation (*rain'olo*, lit. "father people"). His work (for *lonaky* are virtually always men) concerns matters pertinent to the house-group as a whole, and only rarely does he intercede in the affairs of a "separate house".[4] He represents the house-group at political meetings, and is the one who calls the house-group's ancestors during invocations (*velatry*). But to be effective he must be benign and of "good" *fañahy*, and a *lonaky* who does not run things by consensus will only create discord. Always a fine one with words, Aban'Marozaza explained his own practice as *lonaky* as "joinery but not slapping" (*mandrafitra fa tsy mikapoka*), and in so doing he contrasted the practice of crafting consensus by carefully joining parts together, with simple coercion, something which he emphasized as the practice of the French colonial administration. But sometimes differences become irreconcilable, and a few weeks later Aban'Marozaza lamented, in the context of a short-lived dispute which he saw as beginning to get out of hand, "I want it to turn out like stone, but it is turning out like sand" (*tiako mizary vato fa mizary fasika*).

When things do "turn out like sand" then a house-group may divide, and a new one is "founded" by the performance of the rite of *fira fototra*, "cutting the root". Reasons as to why this occurs are numerous - accusations of sorcery or theft, disputes over land, or the timing of a circumcision or commemoration - but they are all described as *ady*, "disagreements" or "fighting". But one could say that the division that occurs when the "root" is "cut" already exists as a fracture within house-groups and Ancestries, for both are made up of "branches" that stem from ancestors. Although a house-group is a spatially distinct grouping, it is divided into "branches" that stem from "elder" and "younger" siblings and which are differently located within the space of the house-group. Similarly, Ancestries are spatially united in "one tomb" but divided in terms of "branches" that stem from *raibe* ("grandfathers"), a division which is the basis for the alignment of "memorials"

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(*fahatsiarovana*) at the Ancestry's tomb.

To "found" a new house-group or a new line of "memorials" requires the performance of the *fira fototra*, "cutting the root" of the house-group or "grandfather". The creation of a new house-group is the most common form of "cutting the root", and whilst a "branch" of one house-group may choose to separate and "found" another, they remain people who bury in the same tomb as the house-group from who they have separated, part of the "one kind" and *teña fototra* of Ancestry, and such is the case when a new line of "memorials" is "established" (*mañorina*). A more extreme case is "cutting the root" of Ancestry, or alternatively when a house-group decides to graft itself onto another Ancestry. Then the *teña fototra* is severed, and either a new "kind" is "established" through the "founding" of a new tomb, or it joins another "kind" to which it as a whole stands as *anakapela*.[5]

To a great extent then images of unity - "one house", "one tomb" - play down the fact that "one root" can have many "branches". But of course it is all a question of emphasis. Each house-group is composed of "separate houses", and people's "liking for themselves" means that house-group unity is mainly only achieved architecturally and during rituals. But although people live in more than one house, they are of "one house", their house-group; and whilst an Ancestry may comprise more than one house-group, in the end those of one Ancestry end up in one house, the "house of the ancestors" (*trañondrazana*), the tomb that lies at the mouth of the Manambondro river, the "great trunk" (*fotora be*) that unites all Temanambondro Ancestries.

These images form the background to the remainder of the chapter which attempts to paint a more comprehensive picture of the architectonics and sociology of Temanambondro house-groups and Ancestries. But whilst various categories of person are found throughout the analysis - elder and younger siblings, fathers and grandfathers - one thing appears elemental to the conceptualization of the generational continuity of house-groups and Ancestries, and that is male gender. Temanambondro notions of relatedness frequently play on gender, and in the previous chapter we saw how the *teña fototra* of Ancestry was traced through "fathers", whilst the "sides" of ancestry that rendered people *anakapela* were traced through women. Whilst the remainder of this chapter focuses on aspects of the maleness of Ancestry, the female gendered relations traced through women are one of the subjects of the next.

Trañobe and fatrange: house-groups

When I posed the question "what makes people of one house-group related" (*ino mampihavana olo trañobe raiky*) I got two sorts of answer. In one the performative aspect

was emphasized, such that people of one house-group were said to be related because they performed (*manao*, lit. "to do") marriages, circumcisions and funerals together, and because they all got a share of the division of meat from sacrificed animals (*mirasa*). In fact such rituals involve not only those of a house-group but also the *anakapela* and various "mother's brothers" too, although those of a house-group receive bigger portions of meat than do others. In Chapter 4 I emphasized the extent to which Ancestry and "sides" were performative, and the idea comes through again here in this explanation of what makes people of one house-group related. In fact only as long as those of a house-group cooperate in ritual as "one house" (*traño raiky*) will the house-group remain together. Should cooperation cease then the house-group will likely divide, one part of it "cutting the root" (*fira fototra*) and "founding" (*mañorina*) a new house-group. To this extent people of a house-groups are performatively related, in that they remain "one house" only so long as they act as people of "one house" should.

But another answer, and the one which forms the basis of the following discussion, was that those of one house-group "have one father" (*mana aba raiky*) who is the *teña fototra* of the house-group, and the person said to have "founded" (*nañorina*) it. In fact it is quite often the case that the "one father" was not the one who "founded" the house-group by performing the *fira fototra* ("cutting the root"), this having been subsequently done by one of his "children" (*taranaka*), either in the next or some subsequent generation.[6] However, regardless of who actually performed the rite the "one father" is referred to as having "founded" the house-group, and he is the ancestor to whom all those of a house-group stand as both "children" and *lahiny*, and to whom those of other house-groups are not so related. As well as sharing "one father", the term *lahiny* too points to the way in which the generational continuity of house-group and Ancestry is thought of in male terms, for it derives from the root *lahy*, meaning "male", and the root of "man", *lelahy*.[7] Despite its gendered origin however, the term *lahiny* refers to all those of one house-group whether men or women, and the category includes *zanak'adrao*, those said to "have no father" (*tsy mana aba*).

As we will see presently a house-group's "one father" is often the sibling of another house-group's "one father", and may also be one of the "grandfathers" that define an Ancestry's "branches". But for now we will concentrate not on images of division but on images of unity, the "one house" of the house-group that has "one father". As we have seen those of a house-group are said to have co-operated with one another much more in the past, in farming, herding cattle, and consumption. To a great extent this co-operation now only occurs during ritual, and although unity is constituted spatially in the architectonics of the house-group, this too contains within it the basis of division by "branches".

As throughout the rest of southeast Madagascar, Temanambondro employ a pair of terms, *trañobe* and *fatrange*, which refer to a building and physical space, as well as to the

social group associated with these, and it is this group that I have been calling house-groups.[8] Although the semantic field of the terms overlaps to some extent, the differences between them reveal interesting ideas about the way in which relatedness among those of one house-group is conceptualized as a spatiotemporal process.

Literally meaning "big" or "great house", *trañobe* refers to the most important house of the house-group, as well as the house-group as a collectivity of persons. In the second sense a house-group is known by the name of its *lonaky* ("headman"), such as *trañobe Fotsivolo*, where Fotsivolo is the name of the *lonaky*. The term *fatrange* on the other hand refers to the physical space of a house-group, the land it occupies, as well as referring to the open space of the plaza (*elañela*) that is spatially and temporally central to the house-group. As well as being referred to by the name of its *lonaky*, as in *trañobe Fotsivolo*, the house-group is also known by the name of its "one father", the name being appended to the term *fatrange*; for example *fatrange'i Ramasindahy*, where Ramasindahy is the "one father". Thus the term *trañobe* is associated with the living *lonaky*, whilst the term *fatrange* is associated with an ancestor, a difference that can be further explored by looking at house-group architectonics.

A house-group is built around an open space of bare earth which is the ritual and often physical centre of the house-group. Sometimes referred to as the *fatrange*, this space is also known as the *elañela*, a term which means "in between" with reference to both spatial and temporal intervals. The plaza is literally "in between" spatially, surrounded on all four sides by buildings, with a row of granaries flanking its eastern edge and houses around the other three sides. The temporal "in between-ness" of the plaza comes from its association with the house-group's ancestors, a relationship which is multiply constituted. Although there are now few remaining, in the past there stood in the centre of the plaza a wooden stake (*fañary*) which served as a "sign" of a house-group's ritual independence (*famatara misy lonaky*, "sign that there is a *lonaky*"); some two metres or so in height, the *fañary* was surrounded at the base by a few small stones, and here offerings of such things as river water or honey were placed for the ancestors of the house-group.[9] Whilst being the most obvious link between the living and the ancestors, the *fañary* is however not the only aspect of the plaza associated with the house-group's ancestral past. To the east of the plaza, the direction associated with ancestors, is found a row of granaries, structures which in several respects resemble tombs, the "houses of the ancestors" (*trañondrazana*) which themselves lie to the east of the village. In addition, the hearths of the house-group are oriented around the plaza, and their association with ancestral spirits, marriage and childbirth reveals them to be related to ideas about the temporal continuity of the house-group (see below). Finally, the plaza is the place for ritual invocations and sacrifices, during which the house-group's ancestors are "called" (*tokavana*), entreated to confer blessing on the living, and told to "eat well" (*homana soa, homana tsara*) of animals slaughtered there. During these invocations the temporal relationship takes a spatial form,

with the *lonaky* sat to the west of the plaza next to the *trañondonaky* ("headman's house") and addressing the ancestors to the east, beyond the granaries at the tombs located near the mouth of the Manambondro river.

The houses of a house-group are sited on house plots (*toko traño*) surrounding the plaza to the north, west, and south (and in a few cases to the east, beyond the granaries). Of these the most important are two houses located alongside the plaza, usually to its north and south, the *trañondonaky* ("headman's house") and *trañondahy* ("men's house"). Talked of as "spouses" or "paired" (*vady*), these two houses are the most important from the perspective of ritual. Not a "men's house" in the usual anthropological sense of the term, the *trañondahy* takes its name from the fact that it is here that men gather during funerals, and apart from this context the house is of little ritual importance. The same cannot however be said for the *trañondonaky*.

Sometimes, although by no means always the largest house in the house-group, the *trañondonaky* is central to various ritual performances. For invocations of the ancestors during such rites as marriage, circumcision, and "cutting the root", the *lonaky* "calls" the ancestors sat "at the great head" of the *trañondonaky*, that is on the ground immediately outside the east door of the house, and it is here that cattle are sacrificed during such rites. In the case of funerals the house is where women congregate and where the corpse lies until it is taken for burial, hence an alternative term for the house, *trañombavy* ("women's house"); it is at this time that the dead person comes to lie alongside their "elder sibling" and "ancestor", the placenta which was buried to the north of the *trañondonaky* shortly after their birth.

It is during such events that the "one house" of the house-group comes together as such, and one can also see in the *trañondonaky* the "one house" that metonymically represents the house-group as a whole. The term *trañondonaky* literally means "headman's house", although *trañondonaky* are often uninhabited as many *lonaky* prefer to remain residing in their own house.[10] But the building may also be known simply as the *trañobe*, the same term used to apply to the house-group as a collectivity, and in this sense the *trañobe*-building represents the *trañobe*-group. In fact the *trañondonaky/trañobe* is the only house for which the house-group takes collective responsibility, and it is for the work of building and roofing the house that the house-group calls on its *anakapela* ("children of women").

In fact this metonymic representation takes two forms. Firstly, the *trañobe*-building which stands for the *trañobe*-group; and secondly, the term *fatrange*, which refers to both the group and its central plaza. Temanambondro possess a proverb, variants of which are reported for other Malagasy peoples, which (crudely translated) proposes that "ancestral land is eternal but people are not" (*ñe tanindrazana tsy mba lany fa ñe olona mihatiky*), and it is from the perspective of this that we can see something of the spatiotemporal conceptualization of house-groups. The term *trañobe* stresses the temporal

flux of things: it refers to a group of people which is constantly changing due to births and deaths; it refers to a house that is in constant need of repair, its fabric deteriorating with the passage of time; and it is appended with the name of the *lonaky*, the "headman" who represents the house-group when calling the ancestors and at political meetings, but who as a living person is only mortal. But whilst the term *trañobe* is appended with the name of a living person, that of the *lonaky*, the term *fatrange* is appended with the name of an ancestor, the "one father" who is said to have "founded" the house-group. Thus in referring to living people and houses, the term *trañobe* emphasizes those aspects of the house-group that are ultimately ephemeral; but a *fatrange* is a piece of land, which like its ancestors is eternal.

As well as pointing to the different ways in which house-groups are temporally conceptualized, the central plaza around which hearths are oriented highlights the spatial unity of house-groups. Indeed it is immediately adjacent to the plaza that the "paired" *trañombavy* and *trañondahy* are built, the houses that are central to the rituals carried out by a house-group and during which it most strongly manifests itself as "one house". Yet although "paired" as "spouses", these two houses are the spatial focus of the division of house-groups into "branches".

Although talked of as "one house", each house-group comprises one or more "branches" or "parts" (*sokazana*), another variation on the image of "roots", "trunks" and "branches" that we find for example in the "branches" (*sampana*) of a person's "eight sides" (*valo ila*).[11] Within house-groups "branches" are spatially located with reference to the *trañondonaky* and *trañondahy*, and here the importance is not of "one father" but of relationships between siblings who stand to one another as "elder" and "younger" (*zoky*, *zandry*), something that can be seen in the example of *trañobe Fotsivolo*.

The house-group is known as both *fatrange'i Ramasindahy*, after the "one father", and *trañobe Fotsivolo*, after the current *lonaky*, Ramasindahy's SSSS and the oldest surviving member of the senior generation (*rain'olo*). Nothing is remembered of Ramasindahy's wife, but his mother is recalled as having come from a Zafimananga village on the south bank of the Manambondro river, and *trañobe Fotsivolo* as a whole is still "called" to circumcisions, marriages and funerals by the house-group of Ramasindahy's mother.

Relations within the house-group and with its *anakapela* however are rarely spoken of in terms of "one father" but instead make reference to the six grandchildren of Ramasindahy (see figure 6) that make the house-group and its *anakapela* "six people" (*olo enina*). Of the six siblings the three sisters all married out of the house-group: Tsiteraka did not have children (*tsy niteraka*), whilst "children" (*taranaka*) of Rahendry and Tata count among the house-group's set of *anakapela*. Of the three brothers, Mananaomby only had a daughter, and she too married out of the house-group, her "children" too counting among the *anakapela*.

Only the first and last born of the six, Rasofy and Ivolo, continue to "prosper" (*tanteraka*) within the house-group, which is to say that they are the only ones to still have "children" there. However, the

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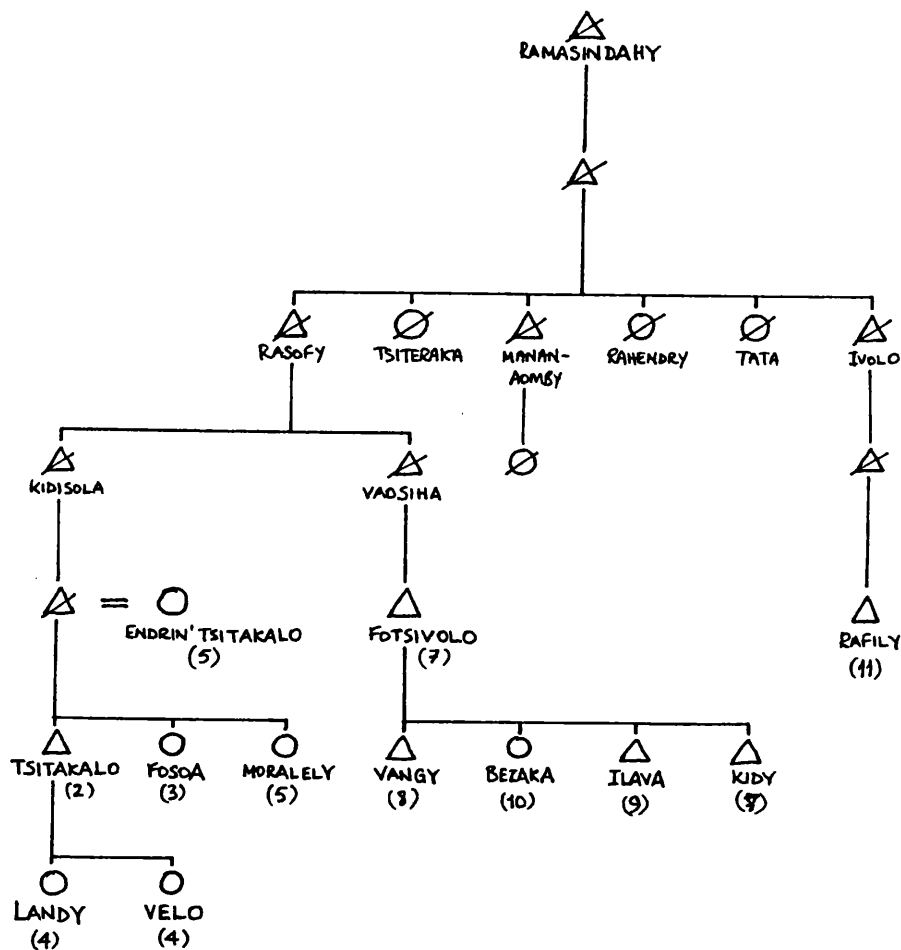
Figure 6: Genealogy of trañobe Fotsivolo

house-group is reckoned to have three "branches", not two: one stems from Rasofy's oldest son Kidisola, another from Rasofy's second son Vaosiha, and the third from Rasofy's younger sibling Ivolo. These are spatially distributed within the house-group as shown in figure 7. The "children" of Kidisola live in the north part of the house-group centred on the *trañondonaky*, and are reckoned to be the "eldest branch" (*zokin'olo*), being "children" of the eldest son of the eldest son. Meanwhile, the "branches" that stem from Vaosiha and Ivolo are "younger" (*zandrin'olo*).

The example of *trañobe Fotsivolo* highlights two important points about the conceptualization of house groups. Although people may speak of "one father", people do not conceptualize relatedness in terms of apical or common ancestors; rather they trace back "sides" to sibling sets, to a group of people described as *troky raiky* ("one stomach"). In fact Temanambondro conceptualization of what is usually termed "descent" focuses not on lineal links but rather on successive generations of siblings with only the identity of the first born (*vakirandro*, lit. "broken shinbone") and last born (*farandaza*, lit. "last child") clearly remembered.

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Figure 7: Map of trañobe Fotsivolo
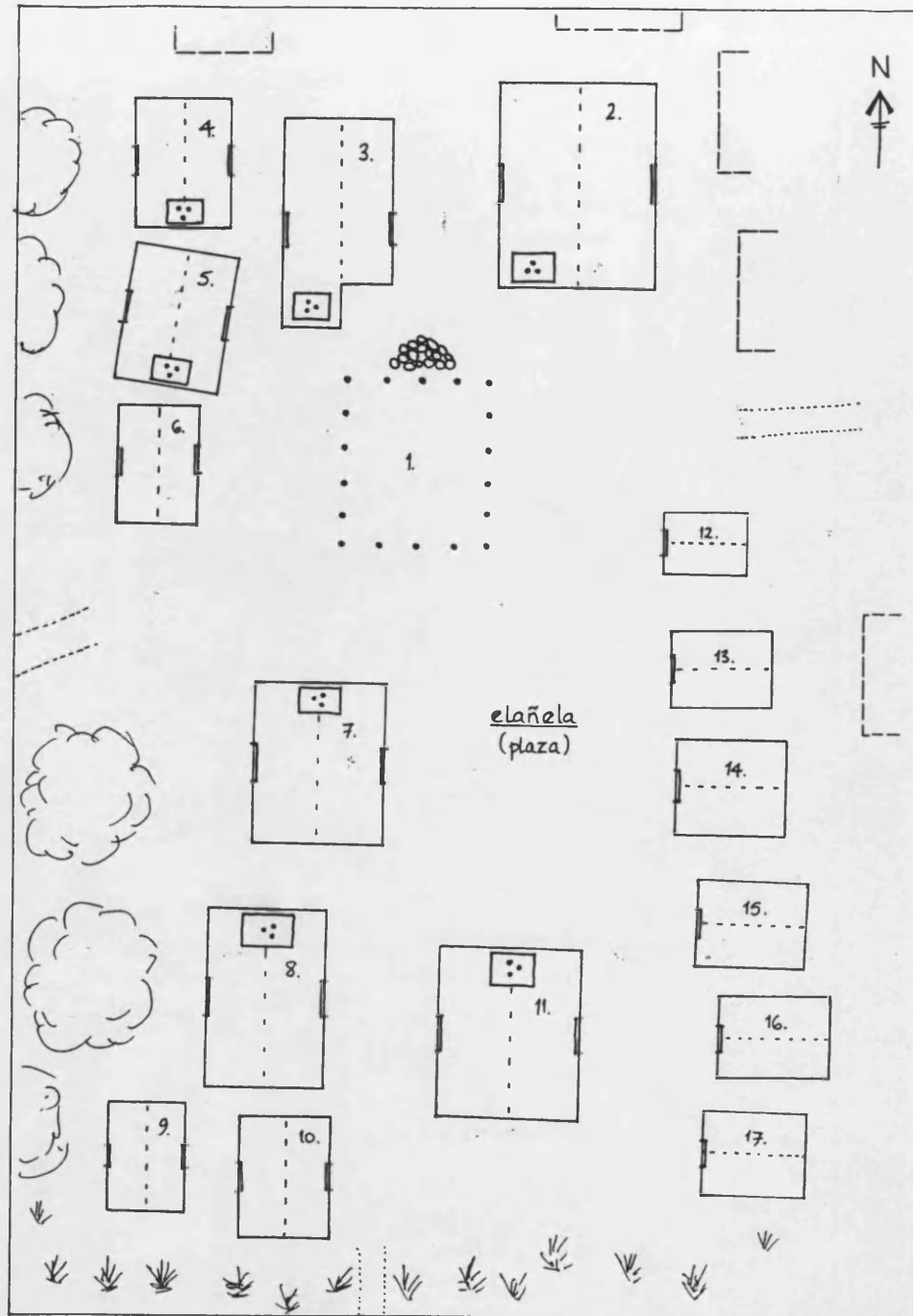
KEY TO HOUSES & THEIR OCCUPANTS

1. trañondonaky

2. Tsitakalo, plus second wife and 2 children

3. Fosoa, plus daughter

4. Landy, Velo, and Landy's son

5. Endrin'Tsitakalo, Moralely

6. currently unoccupied

7. trañondahy: Fotsivolo, his wife, and Kidy

8. Vangy, his wife, and three children

9. Lava (still eats with his father)

10. Bezaka (still eats with her father)

11. Rafily, his wife, and 2 children

12. Vangy's granary

13. Tsitakalo's granary

14. Fosoa's granary

15. Fotsivolo's granary ⎱ also used by
16. Fotsivolo's granary ⎰ Lava & Bezaka

17. Rafily's granary

KEY TO MAP SYMBOLS

house (traño)

house-frame (laha'traño)

granary (trañambo)

hearth (fata)

vatorazana

zoloky

path (lalana)

houses of neighbouring house-groups

elañela (plaza)

Another point illustrated by the example is the way in which "branches" are placed within house-groups. In keeping with the precedence one usually finds in Temanambondro spatial configurations, the *zokin'olo* ("elders", lit. "elder sibling people") of a house-group are associated with the *trañondonaky* and found in a group to the north of the plaza; whilst the *zandrin'olo* ("juniors") are found to their west and/or south, with one "branch" being associated with the *trañondahy*. Furthermore, as can be seen by comparing figures 6 and 7, within each "branch" one usually finds the eldest man occupying a position to the north and/or east of his juniors, who in turn build their houses to his south and/or west.

Currently nothing more than a tilting house frame (*laha'traño*), the *trañondonaky* of *trañobe* Fotsivolo has not stood as an occupied dwelling for some twenty years or so, but the "branch" stemming from Kidisola still build their houses around it. The eldest of Kidisola's "children", Tsitakalo, lives in a house that Kidisola himself built, whilst Tsitakalo's two unmarried sisters and two unmarried daughters live to his west. Since the death of Tsitakalo's father, Endrin Tsitakalo has stayed with her children rather than returning to her own house-group, and currently lives with Tsitakalo's youngest sister Moralely.

The branch stemming from Vaosiha builds to the south and west of the *trañondonaky*, with the *lonaky* Fotsivolo himself currently occupying the *trañondahy*. In fact as no *trañondonaky* is currently standing, the *trañondahy* usually functions as the *trañondonaky*, with political meetings conducted here, and invocations performed at its "great head". However, during funerals the house retains its role as *trañondahy* and Tsitakalo gives over his own house as *trañombavy*. Of Fotsivolo's four children, the eldest three live in houses to the south of Fotsivolo, whilst the youngest son, as is customary, remains with his father. Finally, Rafily occupies a house built to the south of the plaza, the place allotted to the "branch" that stems from Ivolo.

The example of *trañobe Fotsivolo* could be said to be a classic arrangement of the architectonic principles of Temanambondro house-groups, and by no means all house-groups exhibit such coherence. However, other examples which may appear to lack the same degree of adherence to these principles similarly use space as a way of differentiating "branches". For example, *trañobe Tsimitovy*, one of the largest house-groups in Manambondro village, comprises four "branches"; but whereas all "branches" of *trañobe Fotsivolo* continue to bury the placentae of their new born under the *vatorazana* to the north of the *trañondonaky*, each "branch" of *trañobe Tsimitovy* bury them in a different place, adjacent to the most northeasterly house occupied by the "branch".

Despite their differences, what these examples reveal is that Temanambondro house-groups concretely realize relations of relative age between "branches", and generation and relative age within "branches", in the architectonics of built form, such that these relations are materially embodied in the siting of houses in cardinal space. In this the architectonics of house-groups participates in the more widespread system of valences

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associated with the cardinal points, a fundamental aspect of Temanambondro spatial aesthetics. Both east and north are said to be respectively "above" (*ambony*) and have more "strength" (*heriny*) than their opposites, west and south. East is the "eldest" (*zokibe*), the direction of the "great head" (*lohabe*) and ancestors; by association it is the direction of the senior generation and elder siblings. Thus the architectonics of house-groups embody these distinctions: the "elder branch" is placed to the north, junior "branches" to its south and west, whilst within each "branch" the tendency is for elders to be north and east, juniors south and west.

On the one hand "paired" as "spouses" and on the other focal points of "elder sibling" and "younger sibling branches", *trañondonaky* and *trañondahy* are both images of house-group unity and house-group division. However, the most ambivalent of such images is not a house but that which a house contains, the hearth which forms the focus of all lived-in houses, a complex image of both unity and division which points to the tension that lies between the "one house" of "separate houses" occupied by married couples, and the "one house" of the house-group. But whereas people comment openly on the fact that *trañondonaky* and *trañondahy* are part of the division of house-groups into branches, nothing is explicitly said about the ways in which hearths both symbolize the separateness of houses as well as the place of the house in the temporal process of house-group reproduction. Yet these ideas appear to be implicit in a variety of practices which focus on the hearth.

A simple rectangular wooden frame enclosing compacted earth, the hearth (*fata*) is a focal point of domestic space and domestic life. Within the hearth the three hearth stones (*toko telo*) form an image of marriage as a relationship of complementarity and difference, the gender of husband and wife being marked through differential values (see Chapter 6). But besides symbolizing differences between husband and wife, the hearth also stands for the conjugal household, the "separate house" (*toka tr-año*) formed at marriage. Each of these households farms as a separate unit from other houses, stores its product separately, and consumes it separately, its rice, manioc and so forth cooked on the hearth that makes each house a living house rather than a "bachelor house" (*tr'año gao*). The division of the meat of sacrificed animals also follows the lines of "separate houses", with portions (*toko*) allotted to "each hearth" (*isam-pata*).

In work and consumption each house emphasizes its status as a "separate house" whose occupants should if possible try to "like others" (*tia nama*) rather than selfishly "liking themselves" (*tia teña*), and so deny that their house is part of the "one house" of the house-group. But as we have seen the "one house" of the house-group is divided, and not only by the "separate houses" formed at marriage, but also by "branches" of "elder" and "younger siblings". Here too the hearth is of significance. Hearths are situated at either the north or south end of each house according to which "branch" the house belongs to: as with the *trañondonaky*, hearths of the "elder sibling branch" are located to the south;

whilst those of junior "branches" are located to the north, following the positioning of the hearth in the *trañondahy*. In fact this point is the only one on which people elaborated: hearths "follow the branch" (*miaraka amin'ñe sokazany*), they are positioned in houses according to which "branch" of the house-group the house is a part of, the hearths of the "elder sibling branch" to the south, and those of the "junior sibling branches" to the north. As with the hearths of "separate houses", the hearth here again symbolizes aspects of house-group division.

Yet this spatial positioning appears to be an inversion of the principle that associates the "elder sibling branch" with the north, and the "juniors" with the south; each "branch's" hearths seem to be at the wrong end of the house. However, it is possible that the principle operating here is not one to do with cardinal points but the positioning of hearths around a central point, the plaza of the house-group, the central space of the *elañela* or *fatrange* that is a key image of house-group spatial and temporal unity and continuity. In fact the hearth is associated with aspects of house-group unity and continuity, as various practices attest.

During political meetings and rituals, the members of a house-group take up seating positions at the end of the house in which the hearth is located, and this means that when people meet in the *trañondonaky* the hosts take up the usually inferior position of south. However, they are also taking up the hearth-end of the house, and the one adjacent to the plaza. In fact certain practices would seem to imply that hearth-end of the house is "above" and therefore superior to the opposite end, regardless of their respective positioning in cardinal space. For example, the placing of the "head" of horizontal beams toward the hearth implies that the hearth-end is the most important, an idea that can also be seen in sleeping positions. Although people now sleep with their head to the east, in the past people slept with their head towards the hearth. As with the east, the head is "above", and the former practice of sleeping with the head towards the hearth suggests that the hearth-end is superior.

As to why this should be so the following tentative suggestions can be made. The hearth-end of the house is superior as it partakes of the temporal continuity associated with the central plaza. As I have suggested, the plaza is associated with the temporal continuity of the house-group, being the place within the house-group which most vividly realizes the connection between the living and their ancestors: through granaries which in many respects resemble tombs, through the offering post of the *fañary*, and through the performance of rituals that either call ancestors to request their blessing, or make ancestors of the dead. But the rituals performed also point to the future continuity of the house-group, for the requests for blessing will hopefully result in the proliferation of the house-group through the birth of "children".

Just as the plaza is associated with the temporal continuity of the house-group, so too are the hearths which are oriented around it. In the past offerings of food were placed

on the large flat stone (*fata tokobe*) that protected the ridge-post (*andry ambo*) from being burned by the flames of a cooking fire, and these were explicitly made to the "spirits" (*angatra*) of the house-group's dead who were said to be attracted to the hearth. But although the practice has largely died out, others highlight the place of the hearth within the imagining of the temporal continuity of house-groups. These practices focus on having children, for not only do women rest by the hearth after having given birth, but charcoal from the hearth is used in marriage rites to "take away the taboo" (*mangala fady*) that exists between the couple, something which is seen as a prerequisite to making the union fertile (see Chapter 6).

To a great extent I have gone beyond what anyone told me about the hearth, but it appears to me that hearths are associated with the temporal continuity of house-groups, through being a place visited by "spirits" of ancestors, and through being a place associated with marriage and childbirth. In effect they are part of the way in which the social reproduction of house-groups is imagined. Although a tentative interpretation, certain aspects of it appear to be in accordance with other ethnographic observations. For example, in his account of the Tesaka, Deschamps (1936:108) notes that a part of offerings made to ancestors was thrown in the hearth, a practice which implies that the hearth is a link with the ancestors and the past. As for images of fertility, fecundity and temporal continuity, Cotte (1947:185) notes that after marriage a Betsimisaraka woman is told by her father to make the hearth fecund with children; meanwhile both Feeley-Harnik (1980:578) and Middleton (1988:81-3) talk of the hearth and fire as symbols of the "descent" group.

Yet as we have seen hearths are also potential sources of division, part of the "separate houses" established at marriage which to some extent exist in a state of permanent tension with the "one house" of the house-group. This tension, talked of in terms of people who "like others" and those who "like themselves", is ever present and often a source of conflict. But handled skilfully it rarely results in a problem that is serious enough to lead to the establishing of a new house-group. A *lonaky* then must not only intercede between the living and the dead of his house-group, he must also try to achieve some sort of unity, making things "turn out like stone", and overcome the desires and appetites of those who would make things "turn out like sand".

To some extent the tensions that exist between the "separate houses" of married couples and the "one house" of the house-group are not reproduced between house-groups of the same Ancestry, something to which we now turn. But several aspects of the foregoing discussion are reproduced, particularly the way in which spatial images are used in the representation of unity and division within Ancestries, and how gender is basic to the representation of the generational continuity of these "kinds".

Karazana and kibory: Ancestries and tombs

The key image of Ancestry unity is that of "one tomb", the "house of the ancestors" (*trañondrazana*) located at the mouth of the Manambondro river.[12] And just as the "one father" is said to have "founded" (*nañorina*) the house-group, the tomb is said to have been "founded" by the "one grandfather", also referred to as the "master of the tomb" (*topon'kibory*). When invocations are made it is the "one grandfather" who is the first ancestor "called" after Zañahary (the "Creation Deity"), and it is to the "one grandfather" that the arrival of a person who has achieved ancestorhood is announced at the close of their commemorative funerary rites.

It is significant however that whereas the spatial unity of the house-group focuses on a place "in the village" (*an-tana*), the plaza that links the living to their ancestors, the spatial realization of Ancestry unity takes as its key image a building "in the bush" (*añ-ahitra*), more particularly "in the forest" (*añ-ala*), the tomb that links the living to their ancestors through the place of burial. For apart from the tomb, Ancestries that comprise more than one house-group are hardly ever to be found in one place, instead being spread out within a village and sometimes even found in several different villages. Thus Ancestries do not exist as spatially discrete entities in the manner of house-groups, and images of Ancestry unity focus not on the dwelling place of the living but rather on the abode of the dead.

Only in death then do those of "one kind", "one tomb" and "one grandfather" truly come together, for in life they are dispersed, both spatially and in practice. In fact usually the only time that an Ancestry works together is in the rebuilding and maintenance of its tombs. But this was not always so, and in the past (when Ancestries would have been demographically smaller) groups of "brothers" (*pirahalahy*) of one Ancestry cleared swiddens (*tavy*) together, and following a rule of first clearance they gained proprietorship of the land they cleared, which in turn they handed on to their "children" (*taranaka*). But with the drawing up of *concessions* by the French this land became "divided" (*zinara*), moving from being "trans-planted" (*voliavotry*) to "trunk planted" (*fotoboly*), from "mixed" or "joined land" (*tany haroana, tany kambana*) to land of a particular person (*tanin'i X*). Even so, and besides the fact that some land has left the Ancestry and gone to "sister's children" (*zanak'anakavy*), to a great extent members of one Ancestry still farm side by side on land that their ancestors first cleared. But with the end of large scale swiddening the "children" of "brothers" that once cleared large tracts of forest now concentrate their energies on their own rice fields and *concessions*, and rarely work together.

The pattern of fragmentation and division seen in work can also be seen in ritual. Marriages and circumcisions are performed by a house-group rather than an Ancestry, though there is a form of inter-house-group co-operation during funerals. Here house-

groups form together in a collectivity known as the *zanaray*, "children [of one] father". However, the name is somewhat misleading, as the basis of the *zanaray* is not necessarily relations of common Ancestry but rather relations between "friends" (nama) who may in fact be of different Ancestries. Thus one house-group may be *zanaray* with a house-group of a different Ancestry, whilst not being *zanaray* with other house-groups of the same Ancestry. Apart from the rebuilding of the tomb, the only rituals that necessarily involve an Ancestry as a whole are the "cutting of the root" (*fira fototra*), and the *vaky lela* ("breaking the tongue"), a rite at which a Temanambondro father has his child, born of a non-Temanambondro woman, recognized as of his Ancestry (see Chapter 6).

Yet to say as I have that Ancestries are united in death and the tomb is to prioritize the *teña fototra* of the "one grandfather" and something which overlooks the fact that tombs and burial are highly gendered, and that the "memorials" erected at the close of funerary rites are in fact divided by "branches". Although those of an Ancestry do collaborate in the rebuilding and maintenance of tombs, as with the building of houses this is "men's work" (*asa ñe lelahy*) and a task in which women have no part, from the collection and preparation of wood, vines and thatch, through taking down the old tomb and erecting the new, to the completion of the work when the ancestors are told to "enter" (*miditra*) their new house. This division of labour parallels the spatial division of burial, for men and women, although being of an Ancestry and "one tomb", are in fact buried either in two halves of the same tomb, or in different "houses of the ancestors", although in the latter case these are still talked of as "one tomb".[13]

Not only is the division of gender within an Ancestry marked out in burial, but so too are the separate "branches". Ancestries are divided into "branches" (*sokazana*) that stem from "grandfathers" (*raibe*). However, whilst "branches" of house-groups are spatially located through the positioning of their houses, the "branches" of Ancestry find their separate place in the lines of "memorials" (*fahatsiarovana*) that are situated to the east of tombs. By looking at the case of Amorondrano Ancestry we can see both concordance and difference in the division of an Ancestry by house-groups and "grandfathers", as well seeing that "grandfathers" are often siblings, and sometimes even women.

The Amorondrano Ancestry currently comprises seven house-groups and is divided between nine "grandfathers" (see figures 8 and 9); in addition, although spoken of as having "one tomb", women and men are buried in different tombs rather than in opposite halves of the same tomb, although both tombs are exclusive to the Ancestry.

The "one grandfather" and "master of the tomb" is Andrialahibe, and during invocations by Amorondrano house-groups Andrialahibe is the first to be "called" after Zañahary. In fact it can be seen that Andrialahibe and his siblings have the same father but different mothers (*miharo ray fa tsy miharo reny*, lit. "mix father but not mix mother"); but just as the name of Andrialahibe's father has been forgotten, so too has the Ancestry identity of Andrialahibe's father's wives. What is not forgotten however is that

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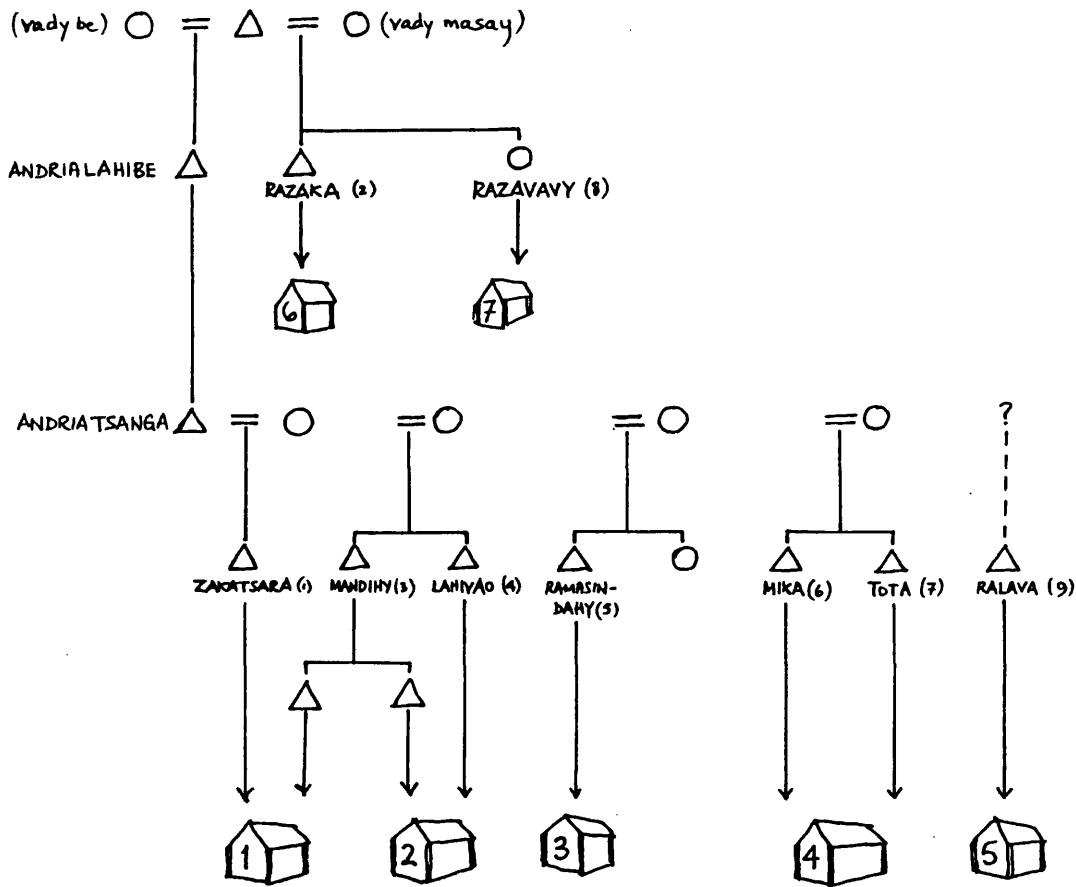
Fgure 8: Genealogical representation of the relationships between house-groups, Anorondrano Ancestry

Andrialahibe's father married polygynously (*mampirafy*), and that Andrialahibe is the child of the first wife (*vady be*, lit. "big wife"), whilst Razaka and Razavavy are children of the second (*vady masay*). It is for this reason that Andrialahibe is referred to as the "eldest" (*zokibe*), the "one grandfather" and the "master of the tomb" he "founded".

All seven Amorondrano *trañobe* stem from these three siblings, the majority being "children" (*taranaka*) of four wives of Andrialahibe's son, Andriatsanga. Until twenty years ago *trañobe* 1, 2 and 3 were still "one house"; however, dispute over the timing of a circumcision ceremony lead to *trañobe* 3 "cutting the root" and establishing itself as a separate house-group, something which *trañobe* 2 did a few years later. *Trañobe* 4 however has been a separate house-group for several years, as has *trañobe* 5 although it is no longer clear what the relationship between *trañobe* 5 and the others of the ancestry is. When asked however people said that Ralava is a "brother" of Andriatsanga's children. As for *trañobe* 6 and 7, they too were one house-group until recently.

Data on the history of the divisions between "grandfathers" could not be obtained, but it can be seen that although composed of seven *trañobe*, the Amorondrano have nine "grandfathers", and as figure 8 shows, it is not a simple case of one "grandfather" per *trañobe*, nor is it necessarily the case that the "children" of a "grandfather" will be found in only one *trañobe*. However the example does show some of

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                    (1)  Zakatsara

                    (2)  Razaka

                    (3)  Mandihy

  ┌─────────────┐   (4)  Lahivao
  │             │                                      N
  │    TOMB     │   (5)  Ramasindahy              ↑
  │             │                                      |
  └─────────────┘   (6)  Mika

                    (7)  Tota

                    (8)  Razavavy

                    (9)  Ralava
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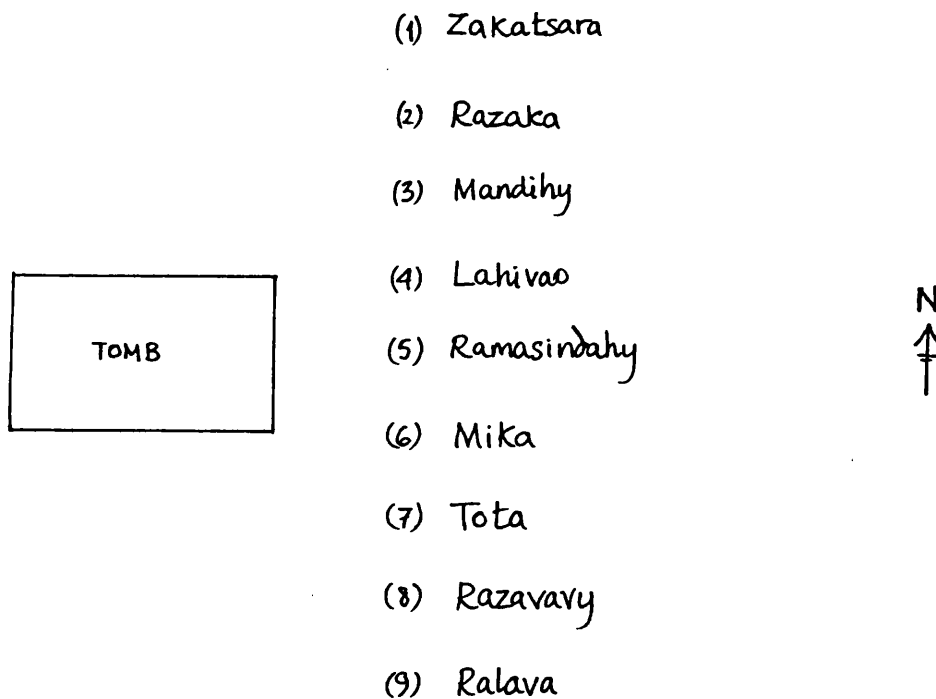
Figure 9: Alignment of "memorials" by "grandfathers", Amorondrano Ancestry

the relationships on which divisions between "branches" are based (several coincide with differences between "children" of wives of polygynous and/or serial marriages), and that several of the "grandfathers" are in fact (or at least said to be) siblings. Most important of all however is the case of Razavavy ("grandfather" 8), who turns out to have been a woman; as she did not marry, her children were *zanak'adrao*, children who "have no father" (*tsy mana aba*).

As figure 9 shows the division of "branches" between "grandfathers" is the basis for the alignment of "memorials" at the tomb. All the "children" of a "grandfather" have their "memorial" placed in the line of their "branch". For every person of the "branch" that dies and is commemorated, a new "memorial" is "founded", and so just as a "branch" grows in size through the proliferation of its living members, so too does it grow at the tomb with the erection of "memorials".

Although I have numbered the *trañobe* and "grandfathers", Temanambondro do not internally rank Ancestries, apart that is from the "branch" reckoned to be the "eldest" (*zokin'olo*), which in this case is that of Zakatsara ("grandfather" 1), who, like Andrialahibe, is the child of the first wife. As with the usual spatial ordering of this relation, the "memorials" of the "branch" of Zakatsara are situated the furthest north. The placing of the "memorials" of the remaining "branches" is said to correspond with the order in which they were "founded". This spatial ordering of "memorials" applies to the tombs of both women and men.

As with the "founding" of a new house-group, the "founding" of a new "grandfather" involves performing the rite of "cutting the root". But whereas a new house-group establishes itself by creating it own plaza around which it builds its own *trañondonaky* and *trañondahy*, a new "branch" stemming from a "grandfather" establishes itself by "founding" a new row of "memorials" at the tomb. However in each case by "cutting the root" all that is formed is a new "branch" which remains part of the "one kind" of Ancestry and committed to burying in "one tomb" in which all members of an Ancestry are buried when they are said to "follow their father" (*miaraka amin'ñe abany*). In some cases a "branch" may go so far as to build its own tomb, but so long as the "branch" remains part of the Ancestry, people still talk of the Ancestry as having "one tomb".

In the "one tomb" of Ancestry we therefore see the correlate of the "one house" of the house-group, an image of unity which highlights what makes Ancestries and house-groups "one" whilst playing down that they both have "branches". We see this again in images of what makes people Temanambondro, for here too people emphasize images of unity and makes people "one" (*miray*). Whilst Ancestries are made "one" in their tomb, these "houses of the ancestors" are located at the mouth of the Manambondro river, the "great trunk" from the Temanambondro as a "kind" of people take their name.

Ancestries of the "great trunk"

By pointing out that "people do things differently" (*samby hafa ñe fomba'ñ'olo*) Aban'Tsotry was emphasizing the fact that people who "did not get along together" (*tsy mifañaraka*) are likely to go separate ways, as he himself did when he decided to "found" a new house-group. The converse is also true however, at least to the extent that people who do things in the same way can be said to be "joined together" (*mitambatra*). The point was implicit in the remarks of those who stressed the performative aspect of being of "one house" (*trañ raiky*): what makes people of one house-group related is doing the things that people of one house-group should do. Just as some emphasized the performative dimension of being of "one house", so too did they allude to the performative aspect of being Temanambondro. But in doing so people stressed different things, "custom" or "ways of doing things" (*fomba*), and the place people lived.

As I suggested in Chapter 1, although not all Temanambondro Ancestries come from the same place, migration and settlement are facilitated by a relatively uniform social system based on house-groups and Ancestries, and a ritual system centring on rites of marriage and male circumcision, and funerals that involve burial and the subsequent transformation of the dead person into an ancestor. Yet whilst the social system varies little throughout the region, differences in the "ways of doing" marriages, circumcisions and

funerals are present, even if they can be said to be variations on a basic theme.

When asking about the ways in which immigrant Ancestries became Temanambondro people emphasized the importance of "taking" (*mangalaka*) and "copying" (*mangalatahaka*) certain "ways of doing things" or "customs" (*fomba*). In fact people are acutely aware of the multitude of different "ways of doing things", and frequently comment on them among themselves, as well as pointing them out to an enquiring anthropologist. The shape of the blade on a bush-knife or the way in which people plant manioc; whether a house is raised on piles or built on the ground; the way in which a woman wears a sarong or the design of a man's hat. These are all based on "ways of doing things", and they can even vary between villages. But the sense in which people talked of *fomba* in the context of what made people Temanambondro concerned much more than farming practice and dress sense, but instead emphasized "customs", forms of ritual practice. For Aban'Marozaza the situation faced by arrivals seeking to "stay" was simple: "each has their ancestors but if [they] stay [here] then [they] must take our customs, for our children are their spouses" (*samby manan-drazany kanefa laha mipetraka de tsy maitsy mangala fombanay, fa ñe zananay de ñe vadiny*). Although neither Aban'Marozaza nor anyone else listed a set of "customs" that must be followed, the most frequently mentioned were those involving marriage (*fanambadiana*), and hence the recognition of Ancestry, and funerary rites (*doby*). But implicit in Aban'Marozaza's remark is the fact that "ways of doing things" and "custom" are associated with places (cf. Astuti 1995a:61-5), a point which others made more explicitly.

Just as people are aware of the different "ways people do things", so too are they aware that the differences are associated with places: "people have different customs according to the place they live" (*samby hafa ñe fomba'ñ'olo arakaraka ñe faritra misy anazy*) said a friend after I commented on the small mounds in which people planted manioc and sweet-potato on the lower Isandra river, a practice different to that found on the Manambondro. But whilst different places might mean different "ways of doing things", people also emphasized from their own perspective how place brings people together, how people from different places and with different ancestors became one through the place they chose to stay in, a point made clear to me by Aban'Tiasotro of Befeno when he said "everyone comes from somewhere different but the place brought them together" (*samby mana ñe viany aby ñ'olo fa ñe faritra nampitambatra anazy*). But in speaking of the "place that brought people together" two things were repeatedly mentioned: tombs and the Manambondro river.

When the French forcibly moved the population of the island of Antokonosy onto the mainland they named the village where most people moved to Manambondro. But as Aban'Vangy made clear, "it is not the village which is Manambondro but the river" (*tsy ty tana ty ñe Manambondro fa ñe renirano*). The significance of the river in Temanambondro notions of the person has already been touched on, for it is into the river that the umbilical

cord (*foitra*) and "root of life" (*fototra ñe fieñana*) is thrown after birth, an act which is of crucial importance in rendering the person Temanambondro (see Chapter 4). In fact the river itself is a "root", as Aban'Marozaza explained when I asked why the Temanambondro were named after the river: "the river is the root and the basis of what makes Temanambondro the Temanambondro" (*ñe fototra iorenany maha-Temanambondro ñe Temanambondro ñe renirano*). A schoolteacher in Sandravinañy too used a botanical image when emphasizing why people on the lower Isandra were Temanambondro even though they lived in another river valley, for as he put it the Manambondro river is the "great trunk" (*fotora be*) by which all on the Isandra had "passed" (*nandalo*).

As the "place that brought people together" the river is the basis of Temanambondro collective identity. But that identity is also constituted through a particular stretch of the river, the embouchure through which people imagine themselves as a "kind" (*karazana*) of people. The river-mouth (*vinañy, vava rano*) "unites" (*miray*) people, for as Aban'Betongatra put it "there is a state of relatedness between people [who] have one river-mouth" (*misy fihavanana amin'ñ'olo mana vava rano raiky*). The river-mouth thus stands to the Temanambondro as a "kind" of people as the tomb stands to an Ancestry, for they are both images of unity; the "branches" of an Ancestry are united in its "one tomb", just as the "branches" of the Temanambondro are united through the river-mouth where they build their tombs. Hardly surprising then that I was once told of an Ancestry that was a late arrival in the region, "they have a tomb at the river-mouth, that's what makes them Temanambondro" (*misy kibory am-binañy, izany maha-Temanambondro anazy*).

In the Manambondro river and the placing of tombs we thus see images of what "unites" people, one of the things that makes them Temanambondro. But as we have seen images of unity often contain within them images of division: from every "root" there grows "branches". Whilst the Manambondro river is the "root" and "great trunk", "everyone comes from somewhere different" (*samby mana ñe viany*), and each Ancestry and "branch" has its own "origin-root" (*fototra*), their historical and geographical origins. Certainly the river "brought [people] together" (*nampitambatra anazy*), and the placing of tombs at the river-mouth made them Temanambondro. But not everyone arrived at the same time, and not everyone who came to settle on the Manambondro were of the same status. These differences are important, and are significantly realized through forms of ritual agency and the spatial organization of tombs.

The Temanambondro are said to be "children" (*taranaka*) of the Manambondro river, and it is for this reason that Andriamaroary brought with him water from the Manambondro river to the north. In bringing with him water of the river of which he himself was *taranaka*, Andriamaroary established himself and his followers as *taranaka* of the river into which the water was poured, and which he named Manambondro.[14] Yet it is the case that only a small number of Temanambondro Ancestries actually claim the

Manambondro to the north and the place of Vatomivarina as their "origin-root" (see Chapter 1). The point is an important one, for it is in distinguishing between "origin-roots" and the order in which people arrived and settled on the Manambondro that differences between "branches" of the Temanambondro are made.

In much of Madagascar indigenous populations or first settlers are often referred to as *tompon-tany*, "masters of the land" (cf. e.g. Bloch 1971:106; Kottak 1980:170; Hurvitz 1980:66-9; Beaujard 1983b:222; Lombard 1986; Feeley-Harnik 1991b:162-170). However the term has a different sense among the Temanambondro, and *topontany* refers to people who have knowledge about a place born of familiarity; one is *topontany* for example by knowing about the "ways of doing things" and "customs" people of a particular place have, or through being familiar with the local geography. In this context then "mastery" is about knowledge and not about control. Those people who elsewhere are referred to as *tompon-tany* are called by Temanambondro *zokitany*, "elders of the land", a status they usually (but not always, as we shall see) receive through being the first to arrive at and settle in a place, and which distinguishes them from "people who arrived afterwards" (*olo avy tafara*).

As I suggested in Chapter 1, throughout southeast Madagascar it is the case that recognition of ritual dependence amounts to political dependence, and before their demise and the imposition of colonial rule polities in the region were in the main structured around ideas of ritual agency. The importance of being *zokitany* often centred on the fact that being "elders of the land" entitled an Ancestry to perform two rites of purification that respectively re-established the "sacred efficacy" (*hasy*) of the land and river, the *sao-tany* and *sao-binañy*. Being the ones to perform these rites established an Ancestry as partial controllers of a power made immanent in the landscape.[15]

The power of "ruling" Ancestries however derived from a more fundamentally important ritual prerogative, the right to sacrifice cattle. Until the end of the nineteenth century Temanambondro "rulers" held the right to *sombily*, "cut the neck" of sacrificial cattle, and all other Ancestries were dependent on them and their representatives (*solo*, lit. "substitutes") when they wanted to perform a sacrifice, something necessary in virtually all Temanambondro rites of supplication. Why it was that "people who arrived afterwards" were made to "take" and "copy" the "customs" of those already residing in a place now becomes clearer: in doing so people agreed to recognize the ritual status of those they had chosen to live among, and thus made themselves their ritual and hence political dependents. A "ruler's" power extended only so far as the recognition by others of his ritual status; on the other hand "people who arrived afterwards" were only welcome to stay so long as they recognized a "ruler's" ritual status, something they did by adopting certain "customs". But as well as recognizing the ritual status of "ruling" Ancestries, the position of "people who arrived after" was reinforced spatially, through the placing of tombs at the mouth of the river.

Just how ritual agency and the placing of tombs worked out in practice can be seen by contrasting the polities at the mouth of Manambondro and Isandra rivers.

The division of the Temanambondro polity in three, each domain ruled by one of Andriamaroary's grandsons, lead to the "founding" of three "ruling" (*andriana*) Ancestries: the eldest grandson Ratsimaniry went on to settle at what is known as Sandravinañy, and established there the Ancestry of Andratsimaniry; the second eldest, Ratsiazomosary went upriver and settled at Vohimalaza, establishing the Andratsiazomosary Ancestry; and the youngest, Rafolo, remained at Antokonosy on the lower Manambondro, and from him stem two Ancestries, Andonakavaratra and Vohindava.

On first arriving at the river they named Manambondro, Andriamaroary and his followers had encountered the Ramañera, a people already living on the island of Antokonosy. However, rather than being accorded the status of "elders of the land" the Ramañera were vanquished and those left alive reduced to "waiters on the ruler" (*piambin-drondriana*), with the result Rafolo took the status of "elder of the land". But disagreement between two of Rafolo's sons lead to the "founding" of a new "ruling" (*andriana*) Ancestry, known as the Andonakavaratra, and it was from the newly formed Ancestry that all subsequent "rulers" (*rondriana*) came. Within the Ancestry it is the "eldest branch" that kept the status of "elders of the land" and even today performs the rite of *sao-tany* to "cleanse" (*madio*) the land. However, the rite which "cleanses" the river (*sao-binañy*) was given to two non-"ruling" Ancestries that arrived with Andriamaroary, one currently resident in Manambondro village, the other in Befeno. The right to make the first blow in sacrificing cattle however rested with the "ruler" (*rondriana*) and those he delegated to act as representatives in various villages.

Of those that arrived with Andriamaroary, those that were of *andriana* (Ancestry of "rulers") or *anakandriana* ("children" Ancestry of "rulers") status placed their tombs to the north of the embouchure of the Manambondro river, whilst subject peoples (now collectively known as Zafimananga) placed theirs to the south. Except for the Andonakavaratra Ancestry (who founded their tomb to the north of all others on the north side of the embouchure), the tombs of all later arrivals ("people who came afterwards") were placed to the south of the river-mouth. Some of these later arrivals were given *anakandriana* status, and their tombs are to the north and east of all other later arrivals on the south side of the embouchure; later arriving Zafimananga Ancestries have built their tombs to the south of the embouchure also, but further south still than those of the first arriving Zafimananga and later arriving *anakandriana*.

When the Andratsimaniry and their followers established themselves at the mouth of the Isandra, they too found others already there, an Ancestry known as the Zafitsiry. However, unlike the Ramañera the Zafitsiry were not vanquished, for there was said "to be a relationship" (*misy fihavanana*) between them and the Andratsimaniry; as a result the Zafitsiry retained the status of "elders of the land" and "masters of the river" (*topon'renirano*), and continue to perform the *sao-tany* and *sao-binañy*.[16] However, as "rulers" the Andratsimaniry retained the right to perform the *sombily*, a right they held throughout their domain.

Until quite recently the Andratsimaniry buried in the tomb of their Ancestry located to the north of the embouchure of the Manambondro river. Nowadays however they, and those Ancestries that "followed" them when they settled at Sandravinañy or "arrived afterwards", have relocated their tombs to

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the north side of the mouth of the Isandra river. But despite being *zokitany*, the Zafitsiry have their tomb on the south side of the river.

These two cases hopefully make clearer how ritual agency and the placing of the tombs functioned within the old polity. As we can see the "ruler" did not always perform the *sao-tany* and *sao-binañy*, and the two cases show how rights to perform these may be delegated. However, in both cases the "ruler" retained the right to perform the *sombily*. But because both *sao-tany* and *sao-binañy* involve the sacrifice of a zebu, "rulers" in the end control these rituals too, for they cannot be performed without the *sombily*. Thus whilst the status of *zokitany* is important, those who perform the *sombily* are in the end the ones who hold the highest ritual status, even above those who may be "elders of the land".

The cases also show how hierarchy is manifest in space and the placing of tombs. As we have seen in various situations, north is said to be "above" and therefore superior to south which is "below". This is immediately apparent in the placing of tombs among the first arrivals: on the Manambondro the "rulers" and "children of rulers" built their tombs to the north of the embouchure, whilst the subject Zafimananga Ancestries built theirs to the south. On the Isandra the situation is different, for here it is the Zafitsiry who, despite being "elders of the land" and continuing to perform rites of purification, have their tomb to the south, a spatial positioning which differentiates them from the Andratsimaniry and their followers. Yet despite these differences we can see that in both cases those who "rule" place their tombs to the north, and those who are subject to the south. Hence when the Ancestry of Andonakavaratra was "founded", it placed its tomb to the north of all others on the north side of the mouth of the Manambondro.

But differences between north and south are also perceived as temporal relations, with those to the north said to be people who arrived "before" (*taloha*), and those to the south "people who arrived afterwards" (*olo avy tafara*), and I have heard people speculate on the order of arrival of Ancestries by commenting on the position of a tomb relative to those adjacent to it. The basis of this perception is clear in the positioning of tombs at the Manambondro, where later arriving "children of rulers" built their tombs on the south bank of the Manambondro, and later arriving Zafimananga built theirs to the south of the Zafimananga who had arrived before them. Indeed even within a group of tombs it is sometimes the case that the northernmost is that of the Ancestry who first arrived, and such appears to be the case regarding the tombs of the "children of rulers" located on the south side of the Manambondro.

As we saw earlier, although spoken of as having "one tomb" each Ancestry separates the dead by gender, either through placing them in two halves of the same tomb, or in different tomb buildings, and it is time to look a little closer at this practice, for it too is perceived in terms of those who came "before" and those who came "afterwards". In

tombs located on the north side of the Manambondro men are buried to the north and women to the south, a practice which is universally reversed on the south side of the embouchure. The few who offered to explain the reason behind this difference suggested that "the people on the south [side of the river] arrived afterwards" (*ñe olo atsimo avy tafara*) and "still follow Tesaka custom" (*mbola miaraka amin'ñe fomba Tesaka*), something they do because that is were they have their "origin-roots" (*fototra*).

The explanation however is not wholly logical, even if some aspects of it are. It is certainly the case that Tesaka bury women to the north of men (see Toussaint 1912:378; Deschamps 1936:95); similarly many of the Ancestries who have tombs on the south side of the river do claim origins in the Tesaka region; finally several of the Ancestries who bury on the south side of the river are "people who came after". However, not all Ancestries who have tombs on the south side of the river are "people who came after", nor do they all claim Tesaka origins. For example, the Zafimananga Ancestries who accompanied Andriamaroary arrived "before" and do not have Tesaka origins; but like all other Ancestries with tombs on the south side of the river, they too bury their women to the north and men to the south.

An alternative explanation is that the practice follows the same principle by which hearths are arranged in house-groups, not primarily ordered by their position in cardinal space, but rather oriented to a central point, in this case the river. The practice of gendered burial therefore places women closer to the river than men, and by spatial contiguity the fertility of women is associated with the fertility of the Manambondro river, itself possessing "sacred efficacy", and as we will see in the next chapter said to be "female" (*vevavy*).

But whilst the placing of men and women in tombs is perhaps a practice oriented to a central point, the spatial relationship between tombs of different Ancestries follows the lines of the hierarchical ordering of the old polity. Relations between "rulers" (*andriana*), "children of rulers" (*anakandriana*) and the subject Ancestries of the Zafimananga were in part constituted spatially through the positioning of tombs, both in relation to each other and in relation to the mouth of the Manambondro river. With the demise of the old polity much of what constituted the hierarchy has gone; in particular "rulers" no longer hold the right to "cut the neck" of sacrificial cattle, and now each Ancestry performs the act themselves. But some aspects do remain. After the fighting that brought the old polity to an end, the former subject Ancestries united under the name Zafimananga, and the "rulers" and "children of rulers" united under the name Andrafolo. To this day when a corpse or funerary memorial is taken downriver to the tomb, only Andrafolo may pass to the east, to the "great head" (*an-dohabe*) of Antokonosy, the island where Andriamaroary and his followers settled on arriving from the north, whilst Zafimananga must pass "at the door" (am-baranga).

Here again we find an image of unity and division, for whilst all Ancestries have

the same set of funerary practices, and follow the same "customs", taking their dead for burial at the mouth of the "great trunk", they journey down that river on different sides of the island, and bury in tombs on different sides of the embouchure. In house-groups we saw how the central plaza (*elañela, fatrange*) and the *trañondonaky* and *trañondahy* are images of house-group unity - the *trañobe* as "one house" - whilst the houses themselves are focal points for the division of the house-group into "branches". Similarly with Ancestries, whilst united as "one tomb" and "one grandfather", women and men are buried separately either within the tomb or in different tombs, and "branches" stem from "grandfathers". So too for the Temanambondro as a people, whose "origin-root" is the Manambondro river, the "great trunk" from which they as a people take a name. But as with all "roots" and "trunks", each has its "branches", and within every image of unity there is the potential for division.

Conclusion: the genderedness of Ancestry

Both simple structure and complex image, the Temanambondro house is of great significance to the Temanambondro sociological imagination. But in analysing the house I have tried to illustrate how it cannot be reduced to one form of relationship, such as marriage; the Temanambondro house is implicated in a multiplicity of relationships, none of which can be seen as being logically prior to the others. In addition I have tried to relate sociality to spatiality and materiality, to combine sociological analysis with an analysis of Temanambondro architectonics, and in so doing draw out the ways in which Temanambondro imagine social relations as spatial relations. Here the aim has been to show how relatedness is represented and constituted through places, through house-sites and manioc plots, and through tombs and rivers.

The Temanambondro do not appear to be alone in imagining relationships in terms of places however. Of the Bemihisatra Sakalava, Gillian Feeley-Harnik for example writes that "people identified themselves and others through places, ultimately through the places where their ancestors were buried" (1991b:179). As we have seen Temanambondro identify themselves through burial places, although they also identify themselves through houses, house-groups, villages, fields and rivers. Feeley-Harnik's point is an important one though, for with a few exceptions (e.g. Hurvitz 1986; Bloch 1987:326; Wilson 1991:57), the place-ness of tombs and burial sites has been overlooked, and instead tombs have been principally viewed as artefactual extensions of "kinship". Having struggled to define social groups, Deschamps himself emphasized the importance of the group of people who bury in the same tomb, (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:15), something which he first formulated in his work on the Tesaka: the tomb, he said, is "The religious place

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par excellence, the rallying point of the clan, the visible symbol of its unity" (Deschamps 1936:94). The essence of the remark is something which can be heard as an echoed refrain through the next sixty years of Malagasy ethnography.

Almost without exception ethnographers refer to "kinship" as tomb-focused, and to the tomb as a symbol of "kinship" and/or "descent". In his work on Merina "kinship", Maurice Bloch for example comments with respect to Merina "demes" (*karazana*) that "while membership of these groups implies bilateral descent it is not in terms of genealogies that it is symbolized but in terms of tombs" (1971:45). Later he remarks that "The ideology of descent is centred on things - tombs and other ancestral property - and the link of individuals to these things is felt to be simply kinship which is defined in vague terms so as not to bring out the ambiguity of its nature" (1971:122-3). Not for the first time does Malagasy "kinship" turn out to be "vague" and "ambiguous".

But let us take a closer look at these statements which, although singled out, are merely exemplars of a widely held position.[17] Firstly, it appears that the tomb symbolizes a symbolic relationship, for "descent" is no less a symbolic mode of representing relatedness than is the tomb: thus the tomb symbolizes "descent" which is in turn a concept that symbolizes relationships between people. But do Merina tombs symbolize "descent"? If bilateral "descent" is symbolized in terms of tombs rather than genealogies, one can surely question whether the Merina actually have a concept of "descent", for surely if anything is implicit in the concept of "descent" it is genealogy (cf. Schneider 1984:67-74). It would appear however that Merina imagine relationships not in terms of "descent" (links to ancestors through forebears) but in terms of things (links to ancestors through tombs and ancestral property), and it is "the link of individuals to these things [which] is felt to be simply kinship". Thus if this link is "simply kinship" then it is not "descent", unless of course one conceptualizes "descent" as "simply kinship". In the end Bloch's account would seem to suggest that Merina represent relationships with those of their *karazana* not in terms of "descent" but in terms of the tomb, and that the tomb is used to represent relatedness with those who will be buried there as well as with the nameless ancestors who are already interred within it (cf. Bloch 1995b:71).

The situation is by no means unique, and the Merina are not alone in representing and constituting relatedness in terms of things. Writing of the Lio of Flores, eastern Indonesia, Signe Howell comments with reference to the significance of items of heirloom property that "It is not so much that they can be understood as representing the clan to itself as Durkheim suggested, but more that they relate people to each other" (1989:427). If one adopts this position as a way of viewing Merina tombs, it is arguable that these burial places are the images or models people use to conceptualize their relatedness, and that relatedness is both represented in terms of and constituted through such images; "they relate people to each other" rather than merely symbolizing their relatedness. Thus for Temanambondro, people constitute their relatedness in part through houses, just as house-

images are used to represent their relatedness.

From the perspective of Bloch's (1991, 1992) later criticisms of the anthropological conceptualization of culture, as well as Schneider's (1972, 1984) trenchant critique of kinship theory, it appears to me that the notion of "descent" is a misrepresentation of the concepts of the Merina and other peoples of Madagascar, just as it would be a misrepresentation of Temanambondro concepts to talk about *trañobe* and *karazana* as "lineages" and "clans", or of both as "descent" groups.[18] To talk of house-groups and Ancestry in terms of "descent" in fact tells us little of any import and "leaves all that is culturally significant unsaid" (Schneider 1984:78). Even though Temanambondro house-groups and Ancestries may be said to have "one father" and "one grandfather" this is not the only nor the dominant idiom or image, and if the notion of "one father" and "one grandfather" suggests anything it suggests that relatedness between people of the same house-group or Ancestry is thought of in male terms, as relatedness through "fathers", and house-groups and Ancestries might better be said to be "paternally ordered" rather than "patrilineal".

In suggesting as much my aim is not only to try and explain house-groups and Ancestries through using Temanambondro concepts, but also to show how, apart from being an aspect of personhood, gender is inherent in certain forms of relatedness (cf. Yanagisako and Collier 1987; Howell and Melhuus 1993). As various ethnographers have shown, gender is frequently used as a means of contrasting forms of relatedness, as well as the spatial and temporal values associated with those forms of relatedness (e.g. McKinnon 1991); the idea can be clearly seen in the category *anakapela* ("children of women"), a relationship conceptualized in terms of gender irrespective of the gender of the persons so related.

In Madagascar the gendering of relatedness frequently takes the form of emphasizing the differences between relationships traced through men and fathers, and those traced through women and mothers. Links through fathers and men are frequently referred to as "stronger", to be "hard" or more important (cf. e.g. Bloch 1971:116; Kottak 1980:184; Huntington 1988:63; Middleton 1988:81), and some have commented on how links with ancestors or ties to land are stronger when traced through men (Hurvitz 1980:47; Huntington 1988:33). Perhaps the best discussion of these ideas is to be found in Feeley-Harnik's (1991b) ethnography of the Bemihisatra Sakalava where she reports that "the preeminence of men ... in relations with the ancestors buried in the land they farmed, was ... [partly] based on assumptions about the greater rootedness of men in the land as compared to women" (1991b:179). This rootedness is clearly manifest in *togny*, "peaceful trees" through which men establish association with the ancestral "masters of the land" of a place (1991b:189, 221-2), and in the contrast drawn between sons who are said to "'stay on the piece of land [on which a house is built]'" (1991b:179, brackets in original), and daughters who move.

Refractions of these ideas are present among the Temanambondro also. Of the "sides" of a person's ancestry, that of the father is said to be the "strongest", and the father is referred to as the "great trunk" and the *teña fototra*, the most important "root". Similarly men have preeminence regarding ancestors. The *lonaky* of a house-group, who intercedes between the living and the ancestors, is typically a man; and it is men who make ancestors, through burying corpses and making their "memorials". Men are also the ones to leave longer lasting traces on the land, the ones who build the items of material culture that embody the generational continuity of house-groups and Ancestries: houses and granaries, tombs and "memorials". Indeed the most enduring of these "memorials" is itself male gendered, the *vato lahy*, "male stone".

Apart from these material embodiments, men also make Ancestry in so far as it is men who make themselves "fathers" and those who confer on their children Ancestry by completing the rites of marriage, a sacrifice performed by men at which women are virtually invisible. Following marriage the link between a child and its father is emphasized spatially: post-marital residence is virilocal, so children are born in the house of their father; it is in the father's *fatrange* that the placenta is buried; and it is at the father's Ancestry's "throwing away place" that the umbilical cord is cast into the Ancestral Water.

The emphasis on male gender can also be seen in the idioms and images used to speak of the generational continuity of Ancestries and house-groups. Said to be "one" in the male-built tomb, alongside which stand "memorials" of "male stones", Ancestry is represented in the "one grandfather" who founded the tomb, and in the several "grandfathers" (some of which may in fact be women) from which stem an Ancestry's "branches". Similarly house-groups are said to have "one father" and their members are known as *lahiny*, the term itself derived from the root *lahy*, "male".

All point to the male gendering of objects and of forms of relatedness in which the temporal continuity of generations within house-groups and Ancestries is imagined. But the objects and forms of relatedness are not just imagined temporally for they are also imagined spatially, and this too is gendered. For whilst men exhibit "strength" and male-like things have durability, men also have a constancy of place that women do not, for women are said to "divide" (*mizara*) and "scatter" (*miparataky*). Because "branches" in house-groups stem from siblings, it could be said that men create division as much as women. But "brothers" still "prosper" (*tanteraka*) in their house-group, for the children of a man who is a "father" are *lahiny* of the house-group. A "sister" on the other hand "drops" (*latsaka*) her children elsewhere, in the house-group of her husband, producing *anakapela* of the house-group of her father and brothers.

The metaphor of rootedness employed by Feeley-Harnik to talk of this constancy of place strikes me as most apposite, for it resonates with ideas about "roots", "trunks" and "branches" and the likening of the growth of persons and Ancestries to the growth of trees (cf. Feeley-Harnik 1991b:464-5; Bloch 1993a). Given the present context however,

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better still perhaps is the difference implied in the contrast Temanambondro make between "trunk planting" (*fotoboly*) and "trans-planting" (*voliavotry*), although this constancy of place was never explained to me in this way. Men as "fathers", the "root" (*teña fototra*) of children, stay in one place in so far as they do not move from one house-group to another at marriage; women on the other hand move to their husband's house. Thus whilst men stay in one place, and so are "trunk planted" like coffee or large fruit trees, women are "trans-planted", taken as cuttings and rooted elsewhere in the manner of the sweet-potato to which they are likened at various points during the ceremonies that accompany marriage, the subject of the next chapter.

From "Separate Houses" to "Sister" Rivers: The Spaces of Marriage

Cattle have no substitute

Not for the first time had Aban'Tomañy's wife left him and returned to her mother's house, but this time she had gone with virtually all the rice from the previous month's harvest. "This is not custom" a woman who lived nearby told me, and for many the act simply confirmed for them that Aban'Tomañy's wife had a "bad" *fañahy*.

A few days later I sat talking with Aban'Tomañy about the situation, and asked whether he would not like to marry someone else instead, but he said he could not as he no longer had any cattle to "finish the custom". Thinking it might prove an amusing diversion I told him of Nuer cucumbers; of course finding a cucumber in Manambondro would be even more difficult than obtaining a zebu, I thought, and the irony amused me. But Aban'Tomañy did not find much to laugh at, and he said that this was "not custom" and that cucumbers couldn't substitute (*solo*) for zebu when a man got married. About a fortnight later Aban'Tomañy's wife was back; the rice however did not come with her.

During my stay in Manambondro Aban'Tomañy and his wife managed to separate and get back together twice, as well as have a child, and although the frequency of their separations was unusual, they are indicative of the fact that Temanambondro marriage is relatively unstable. Divorce is frequent, and even though polygyny is now only rarely practised (it is "too expensive" some said, "the man must have lots of money") serial marriage is common, and virtually everyone marries two or three times and more, although not all marriages involve "finishing the custom" (*vita fomba*), something which requires the sacrifice of a zebu. Thus Aban'Tomañy's dilemma was not unique to him, and it was something he shared with other men at a time when cattle herds were dwindling in size, and the price of cattle was climbing. Temanambondro marriage is however notable for the absence of capital accumulation. The zebu which is needed to complete marriage is not transferred on the hoof so to speak, or "standing" (*mitsanga*) as Temanambondro say, but is instead sacrificed, and apart from this a man need only provide his spouse with a house to live in, something which need not involve any expense at all. Similarly, a woman's marriage trousseau of a few mats and bags is made from reeds harvested locally.[1]

The discussion of marriage presented here however does not focus on demography and economics, but rather on how marriage is conceptualized in terms of space, place, gender, and houses. The house provided by a man, and the mats which cover its interior are part of the conceptualization of marriage as a gendered relationship of complementarity and difference lived as a "separate house", and what this entails forms part of the discussion of the present chapter. In addition, living as a "separate house" is a relationship which ideally results in the birth of children, and it is partly to this end that the rites of marriage are aimed. The interpretation of these rites focuses on how they take away the taboos that exist between a couple, as well as involving substances which can be seen to be images of fecundity.

From the discussion of the house and marriage rites the chapter moves on to look at how marriage is imagined in terms of degrees of relatedness that distinguish between people who are "close" and people who are "distant". Ideas about closeness and distance are manifest in a variety of images used when talking about marriage, some of which emphasize how "distant" marriage involves a spatial process of "dividing" and "separating" which is associated with women, and implicitly contrasted with the constancy of place exhibited by men. On the other hand "close" marriages involve "joining together again and again", a containment of movement, and in the discussion of such marriages we will see why it is that cattle have no "substitute".

The chapter therefore unfolds through spatial contrasts, from the locatedness of marriage in a "separate house", to ideas about "distant" marriage taking place between people from rivers related as "sisters", marriages which are said to involve "going far and dividing". These spatial contrasts, as well as contrasts in place-ness, make much of gender, and the chapter concludes by extending the analysis of marriage to the genderedness of relatedness, a discussion which draws on the argument presented in the previous chapter as well as on comparative Malagasy ethnography.

A separate house: images of complementarity and difference

Despite the poetic appeal of the idea that life in Madagascar is a journey from (mother's) womb to (father's) tomb (Lambek n.d.; Huntington 1988:28-36), the Temanambondro conceptualization of birth, life and death rather emphasizes the process as one lived in "houses" (*traño*). From the "child's house" (*trañondaza*) of its mother's womb the new born infant emerges into the world to be "dropped" (*latsaka*, i.e. born) into the house of its father, the mother giving birth adjacent to the hearth that is the focal point for the imagining of the conjugal relationship from which children should come.[2] From then on the child "grows" (*mitombo*), "nurtured" (*miteza*) by its parents and other close relatives

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until it approaches the time of marriage. As an adolescent, young men start to live away from their parents in "bachelor houses" (*traño gao*), dwellings without hearths where they sleep with other friends; daughters however tend to remain living with their parents until they marry, although during this time parents do not exercise control over a young woman's sexuality. At marriage both man and woman move house - the man from the "bachelor house", the woman from that of her parents - and together they set up a "separate house" (*traño manokana*), both architecturally and economically. With death comes the final movement from one house to another, when the dead go to join others of their Ancestry in the tomb, the "house of the ancestors" (*trañondrazana*).

Of the life process as a whole however it is marriage that is most vividly imagined in terms of the house, something which appears to be common throughout Madagascar. Gillian Feeley-Harnik (1991b) for example comments on how marriage among the Bemihisatra Sakalava is a "housed union" between people who become "'one house' with a spouse", adding that "The closeness between spouses [is] articulated in their common dwelling ... and embodied in their creation of children in 'one bed' for which the 'one house' [is] a common circumlocution" (1991b:206). Similar ideas are reported by Maurice Bloch (1995b) for the Zafimaniry, where to ask someone if they are married is to ask "Have you obtained a house with a hearth?'" (1995b:72). In addition it is common to find that in this "housed union" a man's contribution is the house in which he and his wife live, whilst the woman contributes the items that will be contained within the house, such as cooking vessels and utensils, and household furnishings (e.g. Deschamps and Vianès 1959:80; Bloch 1971:180-1, 1995b:75; Chandon-Moet 1972:121-2; Feeley-Harnik 1980:573, 1991b:270-1; Middleton 1988:350).

Temanambondro marriage is also a "housed" relationship, and the idea that a house without a hearth is a house without a marriage is evident in the fact that a hearth-less house is called a "bachelor house" (*traño gao*).[3] Moreover, when someone's child is married people commonly remark "your child has obtained a house" (*nahazo traño ñe zananao*), and one proverb vividly captures what the relationship entails: *songin-dambo ñe fanambadiana*, "marriage is a feral pig's nest". Although something is lost in translation the image is clear enough, marriage is a place to live made by the couple who live there, and feral pigs (*lambo*) are said to pair off "like a married couple" (*akao izy mivady*). However it is not so easy to see in Temanambondro marriage an opposition of man to woman as container to contained (cf. Feeley-Harnik 1980:579), for marriage is to a great extent a complementary union *within* the house, although one marked by certain aspects of difference. Indeed both a man and woman bring to the house things that are contained by the house, and so are joint contributors to the domestic productivity of the union: a woman's marriage trousseau (*enta pihaom-bao*, "goods of the newly gathered") comprises things for the bed and various items of weaving, and a man often brings to his new house a large cooking pot. In fact a man will only build a house for him and his wife to live in if

none is available, and it is not uncommon to find that a newly married couple remain eating at the hearth of the man's father until they have a child of their own, only after which do they set themselves up as a "separate house".

The idea of the "separate house" is another example of the complex of images that Temanambondro make of the house. Indeed house images reveal the ways in which Temanambondro marriage is a relationship of complementarity premised on notions of difference, a relationship between "spouses" who are "paired", but "pairs" whose halves are not always "equal" or the "same" (*mitovy*).

When Temanambondro talk about being married they both stress marriage as something which one does, as well as talking about it as a state of being. When people are married they are said "to have a separate house" (*mitoka traño*, lit. "to-be-alone house"), something which emphasizes what the conjugal relationship involves. But the verb usually translated as "to be married" (*manambady*) emphasizes a state of being, meaning literally "to have a spouse". The term *vady* however has a greater semantic range than the English "spouse", for it can also refer to things which are "paired" or "one of a pair", and as we saw in the last chapter it can be applied to the *trañombavy* and *trañondahy*, or house parts such as rafters and house posts. In this sense *vady* refers to items which belong together, such as a jar and its lid to take another example, items which in some sense complete one another. This idea of completeness is also one of complementarity, and Temanambondro also talk of "spouses" as "friends" (*nama*), things which go well together without necessarily being "paired" (cf. Feeley-Harnik 1991b:200-210); again we saw this in the last chapter with the proverbial lily and fish (*tatamo amin-poñy*) which live together and are cooked and eaten together.

In fact Temanambondro emphasize the formal completeness of pairs, saying "there must be a spouse-pair" (*tsy maitsy misy vady*), in various contexts, such as during requests for blessing when two cups of alcohol are poured from two bottles, and at the first fruits ritual of *vary hosy* (deep-water rice) when two portions of rice are presented to the ancestors.[4] The idea is also true of people, they too "must have a spouse", and men and women could be said to be complete when they are "paired" in marriage. Yet although the term *vady* is itself ungendered - referring to both "wives" and "husbands" -Temanambondro marriage is also a relationship in which the difference that gender makes is significant. In fact in certain contexts marriage is clearly thought of as a relationship in which complementarity *and* difference are stressed.

House images again illustrate these ideas. The focal point of the "housed" marriage is the hearth, and as "masters of the house" (*topon-traño*) a married couple are associated with the end of the house in which their hearth is located. Yet hearths also contain a powerful image of difference within the conjugal relationship. Pans are placed in the hearth atop "the three stones that make the cooking cooked" (*ñe toko telo mahamasanahandro*), a small tripod formed from three rocks, and of these three stones

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two are said to be the man and the third the woman (cf. Middleton 1988:79). The differentiating of man and woman as two to one is an image also found in divorce settlements where it is customary (although not obligatory) for the contents of a couple's granary to be divided in three, two parts going to the man and one to the woman. Domestic space too emphasizes difference and inequality. Whilst husband and wife are associated with the house's hearth, the man sits to the east of the hearth, the woman to the west, an arrangement in accord with the common use of domestic space in which men sit to the east and "above" (*ambony*) women who sit to their west and "below" (*ambany*). This vertical distinction was also embodied in the design of plates (*atova*) that people used in the past, the "male plate" (*atovalahy*) from which men ate standing on "legs" (*tombony*) whilst that of women (*atovavavy*) sat flat on the floor.

Whilst finding in "spouses", "pairs" and "friends" ideas of ungendered sameness, in hearth stones, divorce settlements, domestic space and "male" and "female" plates we find on the other hand images that emphasize difference and associate the genders with different values. However it would be a mistake to see in images of difference the basis of gender opposition or antagonism, for they are rather a set of images that emphasize gender in marriage as a relationship of different things complementing and completing each other. In the division of domestic space for example, despite the association of men and women and wife and husband with different spatial values, the two categories are united *within* the house; so too are they united in the hearth, for on their own the two stones which represent the man cannot "make the cooking cooked", for it is the third stone associated with the woman on which a pan balances, and in practice it is the woman who daily cooks the household's meals. As Waterson suggests for Southeast Asia, so too for the Temanambondro, "The house is the site of fecundity as represented not simply by women but by the married couple" (1990:71), a fecundity which in the Temanambondro view is realized in two ways, in work and in children, but something achieved only through a successful union.

Ideas about what "makes a marriage good" (*mahatsara ñe fanambadiana*) stress the extent to which the relationship is a process of accommodation. A couple should "get along together" (*mifañaraka*, lit. "follow one another"), "help one another" (*mifañampy*), and "care for" or "nurture" (*miteza*) one another. Only after a time are a couple expected to "love" or "like one another" (*mifakatia*), something which must happen eventually or things will not work out. But all this requires some give and take, and a couple should "follow each other's changes" (*miara-mivadiky ñe tondra teña*, lit. "to follow the turns of carrying oneself"). Sometimes the woman however has problems not with her husband but with her in-laws (*rafoza*) with whom she is in daily contact due to virilocal post-marital residence. The fact that a couple need to "work together" (*mifañombo*) frequently extends to them helping with the work of the husband's parents, and the relationship a woman has with her in-laws can sometimes be a strain, especially, as is sometimes the case, when the

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couple share a granary with the husband's parents. But in spite of what she feels a woman must get along with her in-laws, and homilies to the effect that "one's *rafoza* are like Zañahary [God]" (*akao Zañahary ñe rafozany*; i.e. they are capricious but what can you do about it) simply emphasize the point that a marriage involves not just the "paired" spouses, but the husband's parents also.[5]

The ability to "care for" and "nurture" (*miteza*), not only of people - especially children - but also the crops on which the "separate house" depends for its livelihood, is something many people search for in a potential spouse when getting married. Temanambondro "work" (*asa*) is characterized by an extensive although not prescribed division of labour by gender, and "getting along together" involves work as much as it does personality. The domestic work of food preparation and cooking, washing clothes and other things associated with "looking after the house" (*mikarakara traño*) is almost wholly the lot of women, as is childcare, although women of different houses will often help each other out in some of these tasks. To men falls the responsibility of collecting and chopping firewood for cooking, as well as making necessary repairs to the house.

In "planting" (*fambole*) however is the most vivid image of how "spouses" should work together, although they often do not share the same task. In "rice work" (*asa vary*) for example men prepare the field by trampling it with cattle or reducing the earth to mud by chopping it with a bush-knife, as well as repairing and clearing the bunds. Women on the other hand specialize in transplanting, uprooting young shoots from the nursery and planting them in the prepared field, as well as later harvesting the crop with a finger-knife. However this schematic description should not obscure the fact that a husband will frequently help his wife on certain tasks, although there are some which men prefer over others. Men's work is said to require "strength" (*heriny*), but women's work is not thought to be any less tiring. Indeed for all their "strength" men do their best to avoid transplanting into a rice field, as more than one of them said, it "makes [one's] back ache" (*mamparary lamosy*), and nothing could be truer than that.

In "rice work" there is therefore a need for spouses to complement each other in different aspects of a single enterprise, something equally true of the work involved in planting manioc, sweet-potato and so forth. In fact the idea also sums up what it is to "have a separate house" (*mitoka traño*) and live as "one house" (*traño raiky*). In marriage a man and a woman could be said to fully realize their different potentials, each not fully realizable without the other, and a key image of what makes a good marriage, a full granary, represents what a man and woman can achieve in marriage but not on their own.

The image of the full granary however is only one aspect of the fecundity that people see as part of marriage, for another is the birth of children. In the marriage rites Zañahary and the ancestors are asked to ensure that the couple "will give birth to boys, give birth to girls" (*hitera-dahy, hitera-bavy*), and whilst those I asked said how a couple should "get along together" and "nurture" one another, they also pointed out that they

"should have children" (*tokony hana taranaka*). Himself married several times before having children, Aban'Marozafy reiterated the point: "its difficult if the couple don't bear children" (*sarotra laha tsy miteraka izy mivady*). As we saw in Chapter 3 Temanambondro thoughts on procreation stress the need for compatibility between man and woman; where no compatibility exists they are said to "not get along together" (*tsy mifañaraka*), tantamount to saying they will not stay married long, and marriages without children rarely survive.

With the birth of children the ability to "nurture" is extended to include offspring as well as spouses and crops. In this sense a fecund marriage is seen in a full house with many mouths to feed, and a full granary from which to feed them. Sadly it sometimes appeared to me that the former was more easily achieved than the latter, and women were not always overjoyed at being pregnant for the fifth, sixth or more time. But as they themselves pointed out they never knew how many of their children would die before them, and it was generally agreed that it was better to have too many than none at all. Fecundity however was desired, and it is towards achieving it that the rites of marriage are explicitly aimed.

From searching to blessing: the rites of marriage

Until a man has "found" or "seen" (*nahita*) the woman he wants to marry, he is said to be "still searching" (*mbola mitady*), a highly gendered affair, for it is men who "go here and there" (*mandehandeha*) "searching" for women, whether as spouses or lovers, whilst women should "stay put" (*mipetraka*), "sit" (*mifitaka*), and "wait" (*mandiñy*). The gendered agency of "searching" carries over into the marriage rituals too, for men make marriages in as far as they are the ones who bring them into being through the acts of sacrifice that make them possible. That is not to say that women are passive in the affair. Rather, this gendered agency is another aspect of the complementarity and difference highlighted above, and as we will see later, the idea that men make marriages through "searching" and completing the rituals is coupled with an image of women being the ones who "divide" (*mizara*) and "separate" (*miparataky*), moving from the house of their father to that of their husband.

Whilst "searching" emphasizes the role of the groom in choosing a "spouse", parents are crucial in actually arranging the marriage. In the past marriages were almost wholly arranged by the bride's and groom's parents, and although people now emphasize that it is the "children" (*zaza*) themselves who make marriages, there still remains the idea that the parents of the "children" bring the couple together. This was certainly Endrin'Lavavolo's opinion when she discussed the marriage of her brother's daughter

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with the groom's father, remarking that "it's not them [i.e. the couple] that marry each other but us [the parents] that tie them together" (*tsy izy mifanambady fa itsika mifamehy anazy*), and at marriage parents are said to "exchange a woman for a man" (*vavy mitakalo lahy*) and vice versa.[6] Although young adults, the prospective couple are still referred to as "children" as they are said to be unable to think "clearly" (*mazava*) about what they are doing as they are still "foolishly naive" (*sañañañaña*): "play-cooking burns down houses" (*sakandrokandro mahamay traño*) as one proverb observes on the consequences of leaving children to their own devices, whilst another comments that "children know how to whirl round and round in circles but the grown-ups just get dizzy" (*ñe zaza mañano saveringerim-bola fa ñe olombe ñe fany*). As we saw in Chapter 3, the ability to think "clearly" and make "decisions" (*manapa-kevitra*) is seen as the domain of older people and particularly men. Indeed throughout the process of completing the marriage rites both bride and groom are almost wholly silent and invisible, and when a young man chooses who it is he wants to marry, it is his parents and elders, both men and women, who arrange things for him and go about bringing the marriage into being.

In "searching" for a "spouse" a friend commented that it was "not the face [one] marries but the [person's] nature" (*tsy tarehy manambady fa ñe toetra*), a point which Temanambondro render in one of their numerous proverbs: "one doesn't marry someone for their looks but for their wise *fañahy*" (*tsy tarehy ñe hovadina fa fañahy feno fahendrena*). Again there is loss in translation, but the basic idea is that one chooses a "spouse" for qualities other than surface appearances, and this is as true for a man who is "searching" as it is for a woman when she considers the proposal of marriage when it is put to her. As far as parents are concerned they too think first of all about the *fañahy* of the person they are contemplating "exchanging" their child for, and to a great extent they assess the *fañahy* of their child's potential "spouse" by assuming it to be similar to that of the person's parents and siblings, as well as being manifest in how "diligent" (*mazoto*) a person is in their work.

Having announced to his parents who it is that he wants to marry, and providing that his choice is acceptable to them and other close relatives, then it is for women to begin a process that will eventually be completed by men. A close female relative of the groom, usually his mother, goes to "ask of the woman" (*manontany apela*), presenting herself to the bride's mother. They meet, and after exchanging greetings and news, the visitor explains that she is "looking for sweet-potato cuttings" (*mitady tahon-drondra*), and by slow degrees the two establish which "cutting" is being sought and for whom. Once this is done the visitor leaves, returning over the next few days two or three times more to hear the response from the bride's family. Things are still tentative and can easily go wrong, not least with the bride herself. Having been told who has "asked of" and "asked for" (*mangataka*) her, she is asked if she is "keen" (*mazoto*), and if she is not then things will go no further. Women are free to refuse offers of marriage, but if the bride concurs her

family agree "to give" (*manome*) the "child". The groom's mother's work finished, things are passed on to the groom's father who soon calls on the bride's family to "give a day" (*manome andro*) for the "appearance".

The day having possibly been chosen by consulting a diviner, the groom's party (the *pangataka*, "supplicants") arrive at the house-group of the bride to "appear before the in-laws" (*miboaka amin-drafoza*), an event also known simply as the "appearance" (*fiboahana*). Once married the groom should "give respect" to his in-laws (*rafoza*), and this respect is manifest in the "appearance", for the "supplicants" present themselves at the *trañondonaky* ("headman's house") of the bride's father, an act which establishes themselves in a position of relative inferiority, a status enhanced by the fact that within the *trañondonaky* they sit "below" (*ambany*) those of the house-group of the bride, by sitting at the end of the house away from the hearth.

Like the "supplicants", the party of the "masters of the spouse" (*topom-bady*) is made up entirely of men, members of the groom's and bride's house-group respectively, along with a few *anakapela* also. Among the supplicants sits the groom, although he remains silent throughout the proceedings, and shortly after arrival and the exchange of greetings and news, a "spokesman" (*soloteny*) for the "supplicants" addresses himself to the "masters of the spouse" and announces the reason for their visit.

Pangataka: We have cleared and burned a swidden (*tavy*) and it has burned well. We have come to you looking for sweet-potato cuttings (*tahon-drondra*), looking for seed rice (*doria*).

Topom-bady: You speak of seed rice, of sweet-potato cuttings. But there are many kinds of seed rice, many kinds of sweet-potato, There is "sweet-potato of the clouds", there is "slippery leaf". Tell me what sort you are looking for and I will tell you if I have it.

Pangataka: The cuttings I seek for the planting are Apela [the bride's name] for Lelahy [the groom's name].

Topom-bady: We hear you, you seek sweet-potato cuttings...

After these opening remarks another member of the party of the *topom-bady* takes the role of speaker, informing the *lonaky* ("headman") of the bride's house-group the purpose of the "supplicants'" visit. Finally, when the *topom-bady* are in agreement, the *lonaky* consents to the "supplicants'" request, and they in turn show their gratitude and respect by addressing the *lonaky* as "holy lord" (*masin-dRañandria*). In response to their "happiness" (*faliana*) the *pangataka* present a small gift of money known as the *tota hita* ("packet of firewood"), and the *mañi-boahazo* ("sweet smelling" *voahazo*, a tree) or *haravoana* ("satisfaction"), a half dozen or so bottles of local rum (*taoka, katratro*).[7]

The bottles are drunk by both parties, and the tension that one can sense as the "supplicants" make their request finally dissipates. The formalized talking that opens the

meeting now gives way to casual conversation on such things as the state of the rice crop and the week's gossip, and when all the bottles are drunk, a smaller number are presented as the final parting gift, the *fafa lamaka* ("sweeping the mat"). When all is concluded the *lonaky* tells the "supplicant" which is the house-group of the bride's mother, the place where they should present themselves next. The "appearance before the mother" (*miboaka amin'ñe endriny*) usually takes place either the same or the following day, and apart from a reduction in the quantity of money and rum given, this second "appearance" is formally identical to the first.

The two most striking aspects of the "appearance" are the silence of the groom, and the absence of the bride. Being a "child" the groom leaves the talking to others, all older than himself and possessing "clear speech" (*teny mazava*). The bride however remains in a different house, a non-participant in the "appearance" although she will have agreed to the informal request of marriage made earlier when the groom's mother "asked of the woman". The two will not meet until they perform together the rite that allows them to sleep with one another.

Once both "appearances" are completed the groom presents himself at his bride's father's house with a black hen with which to perform the *tandra ran-akoho* ("anointing with the blood of a chicken"). Taking the hen in hand the groom cuts its neck, ensuring a small amount of the blood falls onto a small flat stone, on which he then rubs an ember from the fire extinguished in water to produce a paste (known as *aringelo*). Sitting to the east of and "above" the bride, the groom takes a little of the paste on his finger and anoints his spouse on the forehead, an act accompanied by the phrase "starting from now you are no longer sister but spouse" (*manomboka amin'izao tsy anakavy sasy hanao fa vady*). After this the bride does the same, anointing and invoking, changing the gender of the referents accordingly. Now that the "taboo" (*fady*) between "brother" and "sister" has been removed they may sleep together, something they invariably do that night in a house provided by the bride's house-group; but before that the chicken is cooked and eaten by all those present in the bride's father's house.[8]

The period between "asking of the woman" to completing the *tandra ran-akoho* may be as little as ten days to a fortnight, and after this a couple usually set up house together. But in some cases the couple are said to be too "close" (*akaiky*), and their marriage cannot be consummated without the "intestines going up [and into the house]" (*olikena miakatra*), an image which refers to the division of the meat a woman receives from the zebu sacrificed at the closing marriage rite, the *fafy*. The period between the *tandra* and the *fafy* is in fact highly variable. In the case of *olikena miakatra* it is often only a few days; sometimes however the interim period can be several years. Most *fafy* occur before the birth of a child, and the rite itself is seen as creating fertility and ensuring an easy childbirth. But the importance of the rite also lies in the fact that only once it is completed does a man become recognized as the *teña fototra* and father of the children he

"bears" (*miteraka*), for as Aban'Betongatra put it, "only a zebu makes a father a father" (*ñe aomby avao maha-aba ñe aba*).

The term *fafy*, meaning "aspersion" or "sprinkling", is not applied solely to the context of marriage but is the general idiom and image of "blessing" (*fafy rano*), acts often accompanied by the sprinkling of water or the blood of a sacrificed zebu with the hand similar to the way in which rice is sown. In fact *fafy* is also the root of the verb *mamafy*, "to sow rice broadcast", and the central idea appears to be an act of "sprinkling" which produces increase: sown seed producing a harvest, water or blood producing "blessing". The idea is found also in the *fafy* that "finishes the custom" (*vita fomba*) of marriage, where the "aspersion" is of the blood of a slaughtered zebu, an act aimed at bringing about a fertile union in marriage: fertility in childbirth but also in other areas, such as health, wealth, crops and so forth. But as Temanambondro themselves emphasize, as well as a request for blessing and an act which "takes away the taboo" (*mangala fady*) between the couple, the *fafy* is principally about making men fathers.[9]

The day before the *fafy* is to take place someone from the bride's house-group goes to inform those who should attend about the "good news" of the next day's event. Those "called" (*mitoka*) fall into two groups: firstly the *fatrange*, those "on the father's side" (*amin'ñe ilan'ñe abany*), men of the bride's father's house-group and the house-group's *anakapela*; and secondly the *endry* ("mother"), those "on the mother's side", principal among them those of the house-group of the bride's mother's brother. Apart from these a representative of each house-group to which the bride traces her "eight sides" (*valo ila*) should also be "called", although this does not always happen. In addition to those "called", the other group present at the rite are the *panody fafy*, a group which accompanies the groom and those of his house-group, and who present the animal for sacrifice. (For convenience I shall henceforth refer in this section to the three groups respectively as the "father", "mother", and *panody*, a usage in keeping with Temanambondro idioms).

As with all "invocations", the *fafy* is performed before the sun reaches its zenith. When all is ready and those who need to be are present, the *panody* wrestle the zebu they have brought to the ground, and it is tied up and placed a little to the east of the "headman's house", "at the great head" (*an-dohabe*) of the *trañondonaky*. After this is done the elders file out and take their place along the east wall of the house, sitting as if in deference to those they are about to address, Zañahary and the ancestors.

The *velatry* ("invocation of the ancestors") is first performed by the "father", and then by the "mother", after which if the couple are "related" (*laha misy fihavanana*) or are "close" (*akaiky*) then the *lonaky* of house-groups where there are "sides which enter into one another" (*ila mampiditra*) should perform the *velatry* also.[10] The "invocation" of each speaker follows the same formula - first Zañahary is called, followed by the male ancestors and then the female ancestors of the tomb. Although the "invocation" is a speech

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addressed to Zañahary and the ancestors, it is not accompanied by any great reverence among those gathered, and amongst the chatter and braying it is often quite difficult to hear the words spoken:

Blessed earth blessed sky, made by you Zañahary. We call you first for you made both legs and arms. Here is the fattened bull with big horns. The marriage of Apela and Lelahy, take away the taboo. You said: you can marry together closely if you kill a zebu. Make it good, make it good this married couple. [They] will give birth to females. [They] will give birth to males. [What they] plant will produce a good crop. [What they] care for will become big. Become many. Increase the honour, have boys, have girls. That is what is asked from you Zañahary. Ended with you Zañahary.

    And come Andriavoalohany [the "master of the tomb"]. Make it good, make it good [so that] there is nothing to worry about. And come you grandfathers [named male ancestors of the tomb...] If there are some we do not know then we call you as well. Finished with you grandfathers.

    And come you mothers of the family there at the tomb. Come [named female ancestors...] Come those that I know. Come those that I do not.

    Eat well eat well all of you, gather yourselves together. Keep our bodies-and-souls well.[11]

Each in turn the remaining speakers call on their ancestors to bless the couple and take away any taboos. When all have finished it is left to the first to complete the proceedings:

Go home there all of you for we will eat what is ours. There by the sea you are welcome. If there is a poison-oracle of the spear or of the granary then the water of the Manambondro river is the cure.[12]

Finally the *lonaky* of the "father" calls for the animal to be killed. Young boys jostle with one another trying to catch in bowls the blood of the disgorged animal as it spurts from a neck wound started with a knife and finished with an axe. Only after the animal lies lifeless but twitching do the elders move to sit inside the *trañondonaky*, after which the butchering of the animal begins.

    Each house-group has its own "custom" for this, but it is usual for the *panody* to kill the animal and skin it, whilst the *fatrange* performs the butchering. Most of the meat remains with the *fatrange* to be divided among the *lahiny* of the bride's house-group and the many *anakapela* who attend marriages. In addition the intestines are divided between the bride, her mother, and the women who attend the *fafy*.[13]

    Throughout the *fafy* there is a notable absence of women. All those gathered for the *fafy*, sat in the *fatrange*, in the *trañondonaky*, under granaries, those who speak to Zañahary and the ancestors, and who kill, skin and butcher the sacrificed zebu: they are all men. Yet there are women present, albeit fewer in number and gathered in a house away from the central plaza. Only once do the women appear, during the butchering of the zebu when they come to take away the intestines for washing. When I asked, one woman remarked that she did not know why women attended the *fafy* as they never did anything, it was "without reason" (*tsisy dikany*). As for the bride herself, sat with the other women,

her absence from the centre of the event is notable too. Only after the division of the meat is complete and all the visitors have gone do bride and groom come together to perform the *tandra ra-kena* ("anointing with the blood of the meat"). Like the *tandra ran-akoho* this involves the making of a paste of *aringelo*, this time using blood from the heart of the sacrificed animal. Performed in the bride's father's house, the words of the *tandra* are the same.

What is perhaps most striking about the *fafy* is that it is not a widely visible pairing of the couple as is so often the case in marriage rites. Bride and groom only come together for the *tandra ra-kena*, and this is only seen by a small number of people. Instead the *fafy* is principally about making a man the recognized father and *teña fototra* of the children he "bears" (*miteraka*) such that he "has law" (*mana adidy*) over them. As a result they take his Ancestry, and when they die they are said to "follow their father" (*miaraka amin'ñe abany*) in being buried in his Ancestry's tomb.

But although the *fafy* is what "makes a father a father", it is also a request to "take away the taboo" and a request for blessing, for without these a man would have no children on which to confer his Ancestry. Certain images of fertility and fecundity have already cropped up in the foregoing account of the marriage rites - such as the likening of the bride to sweet-potato cuttings and seed rice, and in the *velatry* where Zañahary and the ancestors are entreated to ensure that the couple "will have girls, will have boys" - and it is to an analysis of these and other images of fecundity in marriage that we now turn.

Plants, black hens and hearths: images of fecundity

Whilst the peripheral presence of women at the performance of the *fafy* highlights the extent to which the rite is about making men into fathers, parts of the *velatry* spoken during the *fafy* point out that the rite is also concerned with fertility in a general sense, concerning crops, health, wealth, and the fecundity of persons. The issue of fecundity is also present in the complex of ideas and images surrounding the "separate house" (*traño manokana*) which emphasize how the conjugal relationship is a "pairing" of "spouses" (*vady*) in "one house" (*traño raiky*), a relationship of gendered difference in which the man and woman complement and complete each other and which is most fully realized in work and the birth of children. But whilst ideas about the fecundity of the "housed" relationship of marriage focus on the hearth, other images illustrate how fecundity itself is imagined, images which draw on ideas about the parallels between the growth of plants and "living people".

When the bride is taken from her father's house to that of the groom (*mañaka-bady*, "ascending of the spouse [into the house]"), she carries with her the trousseau of

items with which to furnish the "separate house" she will establish with the groom. But once there the first meal the newly-married couple eat together is taken in the house of the groom's father, and there are a number of "taboos" (*fady*) concerning what the meal can contain. Chicken should not be eaten, because they "wander about" (*mirerirery*), a quality not appreciated in a wife, although the bride may well think that the concern is misplaced as extra-marital affairs are far more common among men. Groundnuts (*voanzo*) too are not eaten, because when they fruit (*miteraka*, "give birth") the nuts "drop to the ground" (*latsaka an-tany*), something seen as analogous to the burial of a stillbirth (*latsaka*, "to drop" is also a euphemism for "to give birth").

Whilst several people were keen to explain why chicken and groundnuts were not eaten, many were unsure of why the foods that should be eaten were chosen: a meal of boiled manioc, usually followed by rice accompanied by sweet-potato leaves or beans. Each of these is recognized as a plant which reproduces from a single seed or cutting to "have many children" (*manan'anaka maro*), and the same idea would appear to lie behind the practice of speaking of the bride as "seed rice" and "sweet-potato cutting" during the "appearance". As my friend Fotsara told me, "when sweet-potato grow then they proliferate and there are many offspring, four or five. And when [people] marry then [they] must have children and so their number will grow, become many" (*ñe vorondra laha mitsiry de mifañakatra avy eo de marobe ñe isiny, misy efatra na dimy. De laha manambady de tsy maitsy hiteraka ka amin'io hitombo ñe isa, lasa maro izany*). The idea would therefore appear to be that the fecundity desired in marriage is analogous to the fertility of certain plants.[14]

The analogy is also extended to images of planting. Part of setting up a separate household (*tokatraño*) involves a newly-married couple establishing their own plots of rice, manioc and sweet-potato, but when people ask of the couple's whereabouts they are told "they are off planting bananas and taro" (*mamboly akondro sy tsonzo izy*). In fact they are likely doing no such thing, but the image focuses on two self-propagating plants which are known for their hardiness and plenitude in reproducing. In addition there is an interesting gender element also. Although rarely eaten, taro is frequently planted by women in house-group compounds as decoration, because it "makes the eyes happy [to look at it]" (*mahafaly maso*). Bananas on the other hand, at least until recently, were only planted by men, it being taboo for women to do so because shoots of the banana plant only fruit (*miteraka*, "give birth") once before they die, something which one hopes will not be the case with one's wife.

The relationship of marriage which "ties [the couple] together" (*mifamehy*) involves them living and working together, but without children the bond will likely break. In images of planting and crops that proliferate Temanambondro seem to liken the fertility of plants to the fecundity that is needed to ensure a marriage's survival. The couple which have many children are thus seen as analogous to plants which have many

"offspring". The idea can also be seen in the term *fafy*, a word which forms the root of the verb "to sow rice broadcast". But whilst the fertility of plants and the fecundity of people can be seen to be merely metaphorical, at certain junctures Temanambondro seem to posit a metonymic connection between the two also. Thus the fruiting of the groundnut is not just *like* a stillbirth, "dropping to" or "giving birth on the ground", for there appears to be an idea of contagion, the transference of properties from plant to person, such that eating groundnuts will *lead to* a stillbirth. Similarly the eating of manioc, beans and sweet-potato and the planting of bananas and taro will lead to having many children.

Not apt to reflect on their own symbolic practice, no one I talked with about these issues put it in such a way; they were content to say what one should do rather than why one does it is that way or what it means. But the idea that properties of things can be transferred by a process of contagion can be found in Temanambondro medicine, much of it herbal, but some of it appearing to be more symbolic than pharmacological. A paste of chalk or avocado for example is applied to a swelling produced by infection, the healing property of which is seen to lie in a process of "shrinking" (*mihenky*); as the paste dries out it shrinks and cracks, the idea being that this shrinkage will reduce the swelling. Certain taboos applied during pregnancy too work along the same lines (cf. Lambek 1992:264n.2; Bloch 1993b:125), and certain aspects of the *tandra* appear to rest on the same principles also, transferring the fertility inherent in the substances used to make the paste of *aringelo*. But the *tandra* is more complex than this alone, for it involves the removal of taboo as well as the transference of fertility.

The term *tandra* itself means "a mark on the skin", and as we saw involves marking the forehead of the "spouse" with a paste known as *aringelo*, made up from the blood of a black hen or zebu, and an ember extinguished in water. As for the name of the paste, *aringelo* derives from *helo*, "a bad possession spirit" (*tromba ratsy*), and like the more common type of spirit that possesses people (*tromba*), *helo* are thought of as exogenous agents that enter the body and "sit in/on the head" (*mipetraka an-doha*), and they are said to make people do "bad things" (*raha ratsy*). However *aringelo* does not usually contain any blood, being simply made from an ember extinguished in water, and it has uses outside the context of marriage rites.

Apart from the two food taboos (*fady*) that all Temanambondro hold in common (the meat of crocodiles and dogs) people have individual taboos that they adopt due to possession by *tromba*-spirits. Should a person eat a proscribed foodstuff however - such as pork or chicken - a paste of *aringelo* is made and applied to the roof of the mouth; were this not done then the person would become ill, vomiting up the food, as well as becoming possessed by the spirit who originally tabooed the foodstuff. Thus the *aringelo* nullifies the transgression of the taboo that has resulted in the person consuming a proscribed foodstuff, something which like *helo* has entered into their body. Although no one I asked seemed clear about a causal agent in such cases, to eat a proscribed foodstuff is certainly a

"bad thing", such as could be caused by a *helo*, and so too is having sexual relations with a "sibling", someone who like the foodstuff is taboo. One explanation that people gave of the *tandra* was that it "takes away taboo" (*mangala fady*), something which is a prerequisite for the fertile union between a couple who are referred to as "brother" and "sister". In fact without the performing of the *tandra* the potential fecundity of the union would be unrealizable, for to sleep with a "sibling" is to *mila fady*, "have sex with a tabooed relative", and the relationship would instead lead to the illness and even death of the woman.[15]

One important property of *aringelo* emphasized by some was that it "gets rid of *helo*" (*mahafaka helo*), expelling it from the body. In the contexts just mentioned the same principle applies, for the *aringelo* nullifies and expels the effects of transgressing culinary and sexual taboos, the effects of both being manifest in the body as illness.[16] But the *aringelo* used in the *tandra* is applied not to the roof of the mouth but to the forehead, the seat of "mind" (*saina*) and *fañahy* ("moral self"). In the case of spirit possession the spirit is said to "stay in the head", forcing a person's *fañahy* to "leave" (*miala*), thus producing a temporary loss of selfhood, and Endrin'Lavavolo explained that the *helo* was a "bad *fañahy* that disturbs people" (*fañahy ratsy mañosy olo*). By anointing the person on the forehead, the *aringelo* applied during the *tandra* is therefore put on the body in the place where *helo* are thought to reside, and as when any spirit leaves the person's body the "mind" is said to be left "clear" (*mazava*).

As I suggested in Chapter 3, Temanambondro notions of "clarity" are quite complex, and the present case is no exception. In addition to the *aringelo* making the "mind" clear, a black hen should be used because it too is "clear", the overall colour of the animal being the same, and the darkness of its feathers are such that one "cannot see the dirt" (*tsy mahita loto*). The act of the *tandra* could also be said to "make clear" in that it involves the recognition of relatedness between the couple, if only at the same time to nullify it by declaring that the person anointed is "no longer brother/sister but spouse". This recognition is in marked contrast to chickens and zebu which, as some pointed out, "don't know how to do taboo" (*tsy mahay fady*); in fact chickens and cattle have sex with "close family" (*fianakaviana akaiky*), and they copulate with each other regardless of whether being related as sibling, parent or child. Sociologically then, the *tandra* involves a recognition of relatedness between persons, and an anointing with the blood of animals who do not.

The *aringelo* therefore makes a "clear mind", using the blood of a "clear" animal, and could be said to "make clear" the relatedness between two people who, if they did not perform the rite, would be "having sex with a tabooed relative".[17] In addition to "making clear", the *tandra* "takes away the taboo" as we have seen. In fact the use of a black hen in this context is doubly appropriate as the animal is used to "take away taboos" in other contexts also.[18] However, when asked why a black hen must be used for the *tandra* the

reason most people gave pointed to the idea that in the *tandra ran-akoho* what was sought was a contagious transference of properties from the *aringelo* to the persons anointed.[19]

To understand this point we need to know more about people's ideas concerning black hens, the river, and the hearth. When asked why a black hen should be used for the *tandra* most pointed out that black hens "have many children" (*manan'anaka maro*), and as domestic livestock they are valued for the large number of eggs they produce relative to other hens. The water used to extinguish the ember from the hearth is also fertile, inasmuch as it should be drawn from the Manambondro river, itself possessing "sacred efficacy" (*hasy*), and it is for this reason that at the end of the *velatry* spoken during the *fafy* that it is said that if any "poison-oracle" (*tange*) is performed by one spouse on the other, then the water of the Manambondro can be used as the "cure" (*hetry*). Thus black hens and river-water possess fertility and efficacy.

The situation of the ember from the hearth is a little more complex however, and although ideas about the fertility associated with the hearth are not explicitly formulated, they appear to be implicit in certain ideas and practices. The ember (*baikafo*, lit. "hot thing of the fire") must be a "living" (*velona*) ember taken from the hearth, a focal image of the "housed" marriage, and the place of cooking, an activity itself likened to childbirth. A cooking fire in the hearth without a pan sat over it is referred to as a "male fire" (*afon-dahy*), because, as someone put it, "it doesn't give birth" (*tsy miteraka*); the inference here then is that a fire that has something cooking on it is female and gives birth. The association of the hearth and birth is explicit however regarding parturition. Although births now take place in the hospital, in the past women gave birth in the house sat adjacent to the hearth, sometimes holding onto the ridge-post located at the back of the hearth. Even with this change however women still rest post-partum by the hearth, a practice known as *manapata*, from the root *fata*, "hearth".

The *aringelo* used for the *tandra ran-akoho* then comprises blood of the fertile black hen, water from the river which possesses "sacred efficacy", and a "living" ember from a fire which can "give birth", the fire itself being located in a place where birth takes place. The blood, water and ember are therefore metonyms of the fertility and efficacy of the black hen, river and hearth. The *aringelo* is in effect a substance charged with the fertile power from which its elements are drawn, a power which is transferred by contagion to the persons who are anointed with it.

The utterance "starting from now you are no longer sister/brother but spouse" is a performative utterance, it brings into being a new state of relatedness. The elements of the *aringelo* are also used to transform a situation, for in the transference of properties by contagion they are thought to create fertility in the same way that the utterance creates the couple as "spouses". The elements of *aringelo* are in fact signs of the intentional outcome of the *tandra*, for whilst the *tandra* "takes away the taboo", the blood and charcoal could also be said to contain within them the power to bring about what the conjugal relationship

of marriage should result in, the birth of children by the hearth of the house.

As I myself have tried to make clear, such an interpretation rests on what I take to be implicit in people's practice. But in various contexts Temanambondro appear to liken the growth and multiplication of plants - through tendrils, shoots, leaves and fruit - to the process of the growth and proliferation of people through their children. In certain contexts this likening seems to be more metonymic than metaphoric, an analogy based on contiguity of substance rather than appearance, such as when people eat or abstain from eating certain foodstuffs, or when they use blood from a hen that "has many children" and an ember from a fire that can "give birth". But throughout the emphasis appears to be that the "separate house" created at marriage becomes a fecund house through a relationship based on complementarity and difference, and which is most fruitfully realized in the food it produces to sustain it, and in the children born of it, "dropped" alongside the hearth. It should therefore not be surprising that embers from the hearth are used in the *tandra*, for through its association with cooking and childbirth the hearth is the most potent image Temanambondro possess of the fecund house.

Spatial images of marriage and relatedness

When Aban'Tomañy explained that there was no "substitute" (*solo*) for a zebu he neglected to explain why, and at the time I did not think to ask. However the *velatry* spoken during the *fafy* points to the answer, for in speaking to Zañahary the performer of the "invocation" says "you said: you can marry together closely if you kill a zebu" (*hoy hanao: azonareo mifanambady akaiky laha vonoy aomby*). By way of explanation of this statement and why it is that a zebu is required for the *fafy* (*mahavy aomby*, lit. "what makes the zebu come") I was told the following story, of how it was that Raomby ("Mr. Zebu") came to end up with the "medicine" (*fanafody*) destined for Raolombelona ("Mr. Living Person").

When Zañahary distributed "medicines" to all the animals he had made and to "living people", Raolombelona was late. But Zañahary did not wait for Raolombelona, and his share was given to Raomby, and when Raolombelona finally arrived Raomby had drunk the "medicine" because he was thirsty. Finding Zañahary, Raolombelona said to him, "Raomby has drunk my share and there is no medicine left". And Zañahary replied, "Don't worry any longer. As Raomby has drunk the medicine you must kill an *aomby* [zebu] if you marry closely and the *aomby* will take away the taboo".[20]

Whilst the *tandra ran-akoho* could be said to play on ideas about the fecundity of black hens, the *tandra ra-kena* that follows the *fafy*, where the "spouses" anoint each other with blood from the heart of the sacrificed zebu, is explained in terms of that blood having the

"medicine" to "take away the taboo" that Living People should have been given, but which instead went to Zebu. Thus the explanation of why a zebu is required for the *fafy* is that the *tandra ra-kena* enables people to marry "close" and therefore remove the "taboo" (*fady*) between them because it contains "medicine".

In the past however it is said that whilst all marriages necessitated the *tandra ran-akoho*, not all were completed with a *fafy* involving the sacrifice of an *aomby* (*fafy mena*, "red *fafy*"). In fact only "close" marriages needed this, whilst "distant" marriages (*manambady lavitra*) were completed with a *fafy taoka*, a *fafy* involving local rum; with no "taboo" to be removed a zebu was not required, but like the *fafy mena*, the *fafy taoka* was a request for "blessing" and likewise established a man as the father of his "spouse's" children.[21]

Rather than trying to explain why the *fafy taoka* is no longer practised however, what I want to explore here are the ideas and images surrounding "close" and "distant" marriages. The terms themselves are another example of the way in which social relations are imagined as spatial relations, for "close" (*akaiky*) and "distant" (*lavitra*) are adjectives of both social and spatial proximity. Somewhere "distant" is *lavitra*, as is a "distant" relative, such as the *anakapela tsotry*; similarly a place which is "close" is *akaiky*, as are "close" relatives such as the *anakapela be* or *anakapela tohan'akondro*.[22] Of course the same expressions can be found in English, and we talk of "close family" and "distant cousins". But the English usage is far more metaphoric than the Temanambondro, a difference derived from the imagining of relatedness. Where English kinship is rooted in ideas about "blood", Temanambondro relatedness is multifaceted, stressing performative elements, as well as ideas about people stemming from "roots" (*fototra*). Temanambondro idioms of "close" and "distant" do not therefore imply that social relations are *like* spatial relations; rather the emphasis is on the idea that social relations *are* spatial relations.

The idea was illustrated in the previous chapter in the discussion of the architectonics of house-groups and tombs, where it was suggested that the arrangement of houses, "memorials", and tombs does not simply reflect the division of groups into "branches"; rather the architectonics of these items is one of the means in which "branches" are constituted. Relations between generations, between siblings, and between those who "came before" and those who "arrived afterwards" are thus constituted through relations of "above" and "below" and through the placing of houses, tombs and "memorials" relative to one another in cardinal space.

The significance of space in the Temanambondro sociological imagination can also be seen in the idioms and images surrounding marriage practices. Here "close" marriages are imagined in terms of corporeal images and idioms that emphasize the containment of movement, whilst "distant" marriages are imagined in terms of "dividing" and "going far", ideas which extend to a symbolic geography based on rivers related as "sisters".

As well as being part of people's sociological imagination, ideas about closeness

and distance are also part of people's experience. In Manambondro village the vast majority of marriages are made within the village, with most of the remainder being made within the river valley. One's village and surrounding lands, along with other nearby villages, are the social universe of everyday experience and social intimacy. People farm alongside and interact on a daily basis with their neighbours, and it is here that people are most likely to meet a potential "spouse". There is also an affective basis to marriage decisions: people do not usually want to marry a long way away from their family and friends, and "distant" marriages can be difficult, for a woman leaves behind what is familiar and marries into a village where things are done differently, for "each has their way of doing things according to the place they live" (*samby mana ñe fombany araka ñe faritra misy anazy*).

The tendency to marry within the locality has invariably been interpreted in light of the myths of colonial ethnology, a dislike for strangers, evidence of "closed societies" and minds, and a tendency toward insularity. Deschamps (1936:129-130) is again an eloquent promulgator of this point: "The stranger", he tells us, "is always the object of a sort of sacred terror" (1936:130), and the Tesaka exhibit a "latent xenophobia" (1936:129); marriage with "strangers" is therefore forbidden, a rule enforced by the threat of exclusion from the tomb. Yet he earlier notes the practice of *fafi vinani* [sic], a rite which "consecrates the marriage between two individuals of different tribes [*race*]" (1936:113). To be sure Temanambondro view the other peoples of Madagascar in different ways, and their historical experience has taught them to be more distrustful of some than others; they are accordingly more prepared to countenance marriage with certain peoples but not others. Yet marriages with "strangers" do take place, and the *fafi vinani* which Deschamps mentions is practised by the Temanambondro when they marry other peoples of the southeast. In addition, those who have migrated to other parts of the island have married people from more distant parts of Madagascar as well as Europeans. But with travel an option open to only a few, most Temanambondro live out their life in their "ancestral land" (*tanindrazana*), and it is here that they "search" for and choose their "spouse".[23]

Marriages with "close relatives" (*fianakaviana akaiky*) are by default marriages with people who are *fady*, those with whom sexual relations outside marriage are taboo. To have sex with such a person before marriage is to *mila fady*, "to have sex with a tabooed relative", an act which is rendered proverbially as *tratrabe ihaoñan'ñe elany* ("the big chest met by its wing"), a corporeal image of two parts of the body of a bird becoming spatially intimate. When a man is known to have had sex with a tabooed relative (being the one who "searches", the man is seen to be the guilty party) then he must perform the *sombilin'akoho* ("cutting the neck of a chicken"), a rite which actually involves the sacrifice of a small zebu or the payment of a small sum of money (*mividy ra-kena*, lit. "buying the blood of the meat") depending on circumstances. Yet the *sombilin'akoho* can be levied for people who are more distantly related than some married couples. The

wrongdoing of "having sex with a tabooed relative" thus lies in having sex without having performed the *tandra ran-akoho* and the *fafy*, rites which "take away" and "get rid of the taboo" (*mangala fady, mahafaka fady*).

Thus Temanambondro allow marriage between people who cannot have non-marital sex, between a couple who are said to be "no longer brother" and sister" when they become "spouses". The fine line between the prohibited and the possible can be seen in the fact that both the *sombilin'akoho* and the *fafy* involve the sacrifice of a zebu, and that both are talked of as "fines". The *sombilin'akoho* is most clearly a "fine", for all it does is expiate the transgressed taboo. However, as my friend Vangy put it to me, the *fafy*, which both "takes away the taboo" and makes a man a father, is a "fine of the will" (*sazy sitrapo*), something which one desires to do rather than something forced upon one for committing a wrong which one hoped would avoid detection. The difference is also enhanced spatially, for whilst the announcement of a *fafy* is greeted as "good news" and an event celebrated openly and by many at the house-group of the bride's father; a *sombilin'akoho*, a fine for "simply fucking without rhyme or reason" (*milely fahatany avao*), is performed "in the bush" (*añ-ahitra*) and attended by few. By "willingly" paying the "fine" that a *fafy* involves, a man establishes himself as a father, and in so doing removes the "taboo" that enables him to marry "close". But closeness is of course a question of degree, and whilst Temanambondro countenance marriage between those who are "taboo", there are those who are perceived as being so "close" that the "taboo" cannot possibly be removed.

Although Temanambondro appear to be unusual is the southeast for the degree to which they allow "close" marriage, as with all peoples of Madagascar there is an absolute prohibition on the marriage of "children of sisters" (*zanaky pirahavavy*), people who are seen as in some way so similar as to be almost identical.[24] In explaining the prohibition one man put it that "living people appear from within women" (*mipoitra amin'ñe apela ñe olombelona*) and several others said that "children of sisters" share "one stomach" (*troky raiky*), adding that because a man and woman are "children of sisters" they may have once shared the same "breast" (*nono*) as children. In fact people who are not "children of sisters" are related as being of "one stomach", and marriage between them is not only permissable, it is highly desirable and valued. Moreover, it is not only sisters who suckle each other's children. Rather, the reasons given above would appear to be idiomatic ways of putting across the point that in the end "children of sisters" are perceived to be, as some put it, "too close" (*akaiky loatra*).

Whilst "children of sisters" are "too close", "children of brothers" (*zanaky pirahalahy*) and "children of a brother and a sister" (*zanaky pianakavy, zanaky pianadahy*) are thought to be "not the same" (*tsy mitovy*), "they are close but not too close" (*akaiky izy fa tsy akaiky loatra*); but although "they are allowed to marry one another it is difficult" (*azo mifanambady izy fa sarotra*). Like "children of sisters", "children of brothers" and

"children of a brother and a sister" are of "one stomach" and the difficulty in their marrying can be seen in the fact that two *fafy* need to be performed, one with the "father" and one with the "mother" (that is at the house-groups of the bride's father and mother respectively). Such marriages are rare but do occur, and their difficulty is twofold: firstly, because the couple are so "close" "there are many sides entering into one another" (*misy ila mampiditra maro*), and thus "there are many taboos" (*misy fady maro*); secondly, the slaughter of two zebu doubles the cost of a marriage with someone more "distant".

But it is not just actual "children of sisters", "children of brothers", and "children of a brother and a sister" who are said to be of "one stomach", for the term is applied to all the "children" (*taranaka*) down the generations of a set of siblings, and Temanambondro greatly value marriages between people so related, marriages known as *fanambadiana mitroky* ("marriage [between those] of one stomach").

When asking Endrin'Zanatelo about *fanambadiana mitroky* she told me that she hoped to have her middle daughter marry one of the sons of a man from the house-group of her mother's brother. She explained the practice of such marriages as "marriage with the one true family, people who have one root" (*manambady ñe teña fianakaviana raiky, olo mana fototra raiky*), and later added that "it's good to join together again and again, that's what makes the family big.... They don't go far away" (*tsara mitambatra mitambatra mitambatra, izany mahamaro ñe fianakaviana.... Tsy mandeha lavitra izy*).

Hoping to get a man's perspective on this I asked Aban'Marozaza "what makes *fanambadiana mitroky* are good" (*ino mahatsara ñe fanambadiana mitroky*). As someone who had been married several times, each marriage completed with a *fafy*, he might see the practice as economically ruinous. But he told me of his eldest son's first marriage, a *fanambadiana mitroky*, which had ended, and of how his son was now living in a large town in west Madagascar and married to a Tandroy woman. He described the marriage as "too expensive" (*lafo loatra*) on account of the two zebu and large amount of cash his son had been asked to hand over to complete the marriage rites, and he still thought that *fanambadiana mitroky* was "good" (*tsara*) despite his own and his eldest son's failed marriages. "The life doesn't leave", he said, "the strength-of-the-body doesn't leave" (*tsy miala ñe fieñana, tsy miala ñe herim-bata*). But from his own experience Aban'Marozaza made it clear that there could be problems: "if [the marriage] is good then [things] are good, but if its bad then there's fighting" (*laha tsara izy de tsara kanefa laha ratsy de ady*).

Again we see how something thought of in terms of unity can lead to division; or how, to adopt Aban'Marozaza's image, rocks can turn into sand. For whilst it is "good" to "join together again and again", when things fall apart then it leads to "fighting".

The way in which people talk about *fanambadiana mitroky* involves the use of idioms and images which have cropped up elsewhere. The marrying couple are said to "return to the root" (*miverina am-pototra*), and to "have one root" (*mana fototra raiky*); they have "sides that enter into one another" (*ila mampiditra*), and are related as people of "one stomach" (*troky raiky*). As we saw in Chapter 4 people trace their "sides" to house-

groups, and the context of marriage is no different. A *fafy* is usually performed at the house-group of the "father", but in some cases "if the relationship is too close then the *fafy* must be moved to the place where the taboo is" (*laha maletry ñe fihavanana de tsy maitsy mamafy an'ñe toerana misy an'ñe fady*). The key term here is *maletry*, a verb meaning "to be too close" and also "to be cramped". When they are transplanted, rice seedlings must not be planted too close (*maletry*) otherwise they will not grow, and the two plants end up "fighting" (*miady*), their crop as a result reduced. So too the marriage, for when the relationship is "too close" then the taboo must be removed to make it flourish, its fecundity evident in children. So as to ensure that the marriage does flourish the *fafy* is "moved" to the place where the taboo is "strongest" (*teña mahery*), the house-group into which the couple "have sides that enter". Thus whilst "sides" are spatialized through the house-groups into which they "enter", taboos are seen to be located in the same places, the place associated with the ancestors who can "get rid of" and "take away the taboo".

By "joining together again and again" people who marry someone who is "of one stomach with them" (*troky raiky aminazy*) are likely have more than one "side that enters into another", and these may be traced to one or more house-group and even different villages. Yet the tracing of relatedness to different places is not thought of in terms of dispersal in this context, for when people talk of *fanambadiana mitroky* they emphasize spatial boundedness and the containment of movement. Hence Endrin'Zanatelo pointed out that people so married "do not go far" (*tsy mandeha lavitra*), an idea Aban'Marozaza phrased in terms of "not going away" (*tsy miala*). This idea of containment is also found in a proverb used to refer to *fanambadiana mitroky*: *taim-borony miharo menany*, "the faeces of a bull mixed with its peritoneum". Here the marrying couple who are of "one stomach" are imaged as parts inside the bull's own "stomach", and the explanation of the proverb is that "they are of one place" (*raiky avao ñe toerana misy anazy*). How being of "one place" is imagined is captured in another term for *fanambadiana mitroky*: *tsy le'bona*, "the blanket is not wet" (cf. Deschamps 1936:137). The image here is of someone visiting their in-laws' (*rafoza*) house at night and being caught by a sudden downpour; but as their in-laws are so close when they run home the reed blanket (*bona*) they drape across their head does not get wet (*tsy leña*).

A "close" marriage then takes place between people of "one place", an idea that can be seen to refer to the place their "sides enter into one another", the house-group of the "one root" they share and to which they "return" when they marry. The dominant images that capture the ideas about what such marriages entail emphasize spatial containment and close proximity, imaged in a bull's stomach and houses so close together that one does not get wet when going home in the rain.[25] These "close" marriages are contrasted with marriages that are said to be "distant", taking place for people of Manambondro village "on the other side" (*añ-ila*) of the Manambondro river, between people of different river valleys (*isak'vinañy*, lit. "each embouchure"), as well as with "different kinds of people"

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(*karaza'ñ'olo hafa*) from other parts of Madagascar.

In the past "distant" marriages were much more common, and genealogies reveal them to have been statistically predominant among those of the first few generations of settlers in Manambondro village. Men married Zafimananga women from villages "on the other side" of the river, as well as taking wives and marrying their sisters off at "each embouchure". The practice is seen from the present in purely pragmatic terms, as a way of "protecting oneself" (*fiarova teña*) against the violent intentions of others; once they had learned of a plot against one's village, "sisters" married "distantly" were supposed to warn one of what was to come.

Today a number of marriages are still made "on the other side", in other villages along the Manambondro, and further south too in villages along the Isandra and Iavibola rivers. With the *fafy vinañy* Temanambondro also marry peoples to their north and south, such as Tanosy, Tevato, and Tesaka. Further afield still, some marry "different types of people" (*karaza'ñ'olo hafa*) from other parts of the island, and even Europeans (*vazaha*), such marriages invariably being made by *rerelava*, migrants to other parts of the island, people who "go far away" (*mandeha lavitra*) and whose children are potentially "lost" (*very*).

There is a difference of gender here however, and it is one to which we shall return. For a man who makes a "distant" marriage, his children are "lost" only if he fails to complete the *vaky lela*, a rite which confers on his children his Ancestry identity, and so "makes" them Temanambondro (see below). On the other hand, for a woman who makes a "distant" marriage, her children are "lost" once her non-Temanambondro husband has completed the marriage rites in her home village, for then her children take on the identity of her husband's Ancestry. Hence to "go far" and "lose" one's children to one's Ancestry and "kind of people" is seen as an inevitable tendency of the "distant" marriages that women make. The idea is implicit in a term for the practice, for "distant" marriages made by women, defined as being with "people who are not relatives" (*amin'ñ'olo tsy havana*), are referred to as *mitoha zara* (lit. "to go far away and separate"), a term which would not be applied to the marriage of a man, no matter how "distant". But just as being "close" is a matter of degree, so too is being "distant" and being or not being "related".

Not all marriages made within Manambondro village are *fanambadiana mitroky*, for some are made between people who are said to be "related" (*mihavana*) but "quite distant" (*lavidavitra*). Such marriages are known as *fanambadiana mihavana* ("marriage [between] those who are related"), for they take place between "related" people, but people who are not *fianakaviana*, not "close".[26] Being of one village such people are of "one place" (*toera raiky*) and therefore related. But *fanambadiana mihavana* are also performed when someone from Manambondro village marries "on the other side [of the river]" (*añ-ila*). As we saw in the last chapter "there is relatedness between those who have one embouchure" (*misy fihavanana amin'ñ'olo mana vava rano raiky*), something evident in

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the placement of their tomb at the mouth of the river. Thus just as a *fanambadiana mitroky* is talked of in terms of "one place", so too is the *fanambadiana mihavana*, only in the latter case the "place" is more encompassing, a village or a river-mouth rather than a "stomach".

Whilst all Temanambondro are related through the "great trunk" (*fotora be*) of the Manambondro river, those of different river valleys are also imagined as being related through the various embouchures along the coast. Rivers are said to be "female" (*vevavy*), something evident in the generic term for them (*renirano*, lit. "mother of water"), and those which empty into the sea along the coast are said to be related as "sisters" (*pirahavavy*).[27] Although people related through "sister" rivers are not "relatives" (*havana*), Aban'Betongatra explained that they are "close to one another" (*mifanakaiky*) and "united in liking one another" (*miray mifakatia*); and the basis of what makes such people "close" despite being "distant" is emphasized in the name of the rite performed when people related through "sister" rivers marry, *fafy vinañy* ("*fafy* of the river-mouth").

There is however more to the term *fafy vinañy* than the idea that people are "close to one another" through rivers. As those for whom the *fafy vinañy* is performed are not "relatives" the rite does not involve a request to "take away the taboo" (*mangala fady*) as none exists; rather, it is a request for "blessing" from Zañahary and the ancestors in general (*razambe*), and it is with regard to "blessing" and ancestors in general that one can also understand the idea of the *fafy* being of the river-mouth. In the rite individual ancestors are not called from their tombs (*tsy miantso kibory*), and the ancestors in general, or the "ancestors mixed together" (*raza miharo*), residing themselves in their "houses" at the embouchure, are called upon to make the union fertile. Furthermore, the embouchure of a river (*vinañy, vava rano*) is thought of as the place in the landscape possessing the most "sacred efficacy" (*hasy*). Thus whilst the *fafy vinañy* makes reference to the places through which the couple are rendered "close to one another", it also involves an appeal to all the ancestors at the embouchure rather than those of a particular tomb, as well as referencing a place that is thought of as being especially "efficacious" (*masy*).

But like all *fafy* performed to complete a marriage, the *fafy vinañy* makes a man a father. In this way men of a "different kind of people" - such as Tesaka, Tanosy or whoever - gain "law" over the children that their Temanambondro wives bear; concomitantly a Temanambondro man who performs the *fafy vinañy* in the village of his wife similarly gains "law" of his children. However, marriages that Temanambondro make with "different kinds of people" who are more distant, and to whom they are not made "close to one another" through rivers related as "sisters", must be completed in other ways.

When a Temanambondro man marries a woman of a "different kind of people" who is not from the region of the "sister" rivers, his children are not recognized as Temanambondro through the performance of the marriage rite required of him by his wife's people, for he must in addition perform the *vaky lela* (lit. "breaking the tongue").[28]

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Similar to a *fafy* in that it requires a *velatry* and the sacrifice of a zebu, the *vaky lela* is performed at the man's own house-group and two alternative terms by which the rite is known highlight what is at issue, for the rite "makes the child appear" (*mampiboaka zaza*) and "stands the child up" (*manangan-daza*) before the Ancestors of the tomb called during the *velatry*. It is for this reason that all the house-groups of the man's Ancestry attend the rite, and until such a time as the *vaky lela* is completed the man's children are not considered Temanambondro, something evinced by the fact that they cannot be buried in their father's tomb nor sacrifice cattle (*tsy azo atao manombily*) on their father's "ancestral land" (*tanindrazana*), in particular in the plaza of his house-group. However the usual term for the rite, which is said to "make Temanambondro" (*maha-Temanambondro*) the child(ren) born of a woman who is of a "different kind", derives from the fact that once it is completed the man's child(ren) "have the right" (*mana zo*) to speak at political meetings (*kabaro*).

Because the *fafy vinañy* is performed when a couple are said to be "close to one another" through the "sister" rivers, the need to perform the *vaky lela* indicates that a man's marriage is "very distant" (*lavitra be*). However, there is no delineated region in which the *fafy vinañy* is performed, a point at which the rivers cease being related as "sisters". When some explained why rivers were related as "sisters" they pointed out that they "each became blocked" (*mifampifempy*) at the same time. Despite their size (the Manambondro river is some 150m across and more in places) rivers along the coast flow very gently for much of the year, and sand bars often form to block the mouth of the river during certain periods, particularly around November and December. However this would appear to be the case up and down the whole of the east coast, and there are some people, such as the Betsimisaraka for example, who live where rivers become blocked (*fempy*) but with whom Temanambondro do not perform the *fafy vinañy*. Deciding whether a marriage requires a *fafy vinañy* or not are therefore made "following those concerned" (*arakaraka ñ'olo*), which is to say on an ad hoc basis. When the marriage is with someone from a nearby river valley - for example the Mananteñina, or the Manañivo - then there is little doubt and no discussion is made as to whether the *fafy vinañy* is appropriate. However, when things are less certain then the Ancestry will likely hold a meeting and decide what is to be done in the light of past precedent.

Quite late on during the fieldwork period three men of the same house-group, all at the time resident in the capital, returned to Manambondro village to each perform the *vaky lela* for their children. Of the three, one was married to a Sihanaka woman, and another to a Betsimisaraka (peoples from the north and east of Madagascar respectively) and there was no doubt about the fact that a *fafy vinañy* was inappropriate. The third however was married to a Zafisoro woman whose village lay northwest of Farafangana, and it was decided in his case that he had to go to his wife's village and perform a *fafy vinañy*, and that there was no need for him to perform the *vaky lela*. It was explained to me that he had to do this because Zafisoro and

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Temanambondro were "friends" (*nama*), a relationship born of the fact that Temanambondro claim "origins" (*fototra*) close to where Zafisoro now live, and additionally because one Temanambondro Ancestry on the lower Manambondro claims Zafisoro origins.

Here the decision was based on an argument of common "origins" and the fact that there was an Ancestry on the Manambondro which "had appeared from the Zafisoro" (*niboaka tamin'i Zafisoro*). In a future case a man who has married a Zafisoro woman will be able to cite this example as a reason why the *vaky lela* is not required, and often the decision as to whether the *vaky lela* is needed or not hinge on knowledge of past decisions.

But whatever the decision, whether a *fafy vinañy* or *vaky lela* is needed to "make" a man a father and "make" his children Temanambondro, the marriage remains a "distant" one. It is not however a marriage which "divides", since it is made by a man who (ideally) brings his wife back to his home village with him, and whose children are part of his house-group and Ancestry. A "distant" marriage made by a woman however is a *mitoha zara*, "to go a long way and divide", and on marrying in this way her children are "lost" to her Ancestry. The spatial movement implicit in the idea of "to go a long way and divide" is in marked contrast to the ideas of spatial containment and bounded movement we saw associated with *fanambadiana mitroky*, "close" marriages between people of "one stomach". It is to this movement that we next turn, a process that as we have seen is highly gendered, for it is women and not men who are said to "divide" and "separate".

Gender and movement in marriage

In the last chapter I suggested that men have a constancy of place that women do not, an idea which I phrased in terms of the difference between "trunk planting" (*fotoboly*) and "trans-planting" (*voliavotry*), and although the image is my own Temanambondro themselves are quite explicit about the difference that gender makes in marriage, something which they phrase in terms of a process of "dividing" (*mizara*) and "separating" (*miparataky*) associated with women.[29]

The idea that daughters prototypically "leave" the house-group is clear in Aban'Betongatra's remark that a man with daughters and no sons is "dead and done for in the house-group" (*maty tanteraka am-patrange*). A daughter typically leaves her father's house and goes to the house and house-group of her husband where she "drops" her children. Things for a man without a son therefore "do not turn out" (*tsy tanteraka*) in his house-group as his "children" (*taranaka*) end up being "dropped" in the house-groups of others. As one of the idioms used to speak of "distant" marriages indicates (*mitoha zara*, "to go a long way and divide"), the movement of women "leaving" their father's house-

group leads to "division", and this is so even if the daughter does not "go a long way". When asked about this both men and women explained that "women make people scattered" (*mampiparataky olo ñe apela*), they "divide" (*mizara*) them, "throw them away" (*mañary*) "as if their children were lost" (*akao very ñe zanany*). These comments do not only refer to the moving away of women on marriage, but also to their children, and although no one elaborated on the point it can also be seen to refer to land.

The "children" (*taranaka*) of a woman usually inherit some land from their "mother's brother" as and when he and his house-group "divide the land" (*zaratany*). It is often the case that it this takes place so long after a woman married that it is her grandchildren or great-grandchildren who get equal title to the "inheritance" (*lova*), but a house-group will always expect to give some of its land to its "sister's children" (*zanak'anakavy*). In fact when the land is divided they often get the worst rice fields, the "red frogs" (*mena boketra*) rather than the best (the *lapaña* or *reny anaka*), although this is not always the case. At some later date, if the "sister's children" want to sell the land (usually to obtain cattle) then they are expected to inform their "mother's brother", from whom the land came, and he (or one of his "children") may exchange cattle for the land so that it "returns" (*miverina*).

There are similarities in the process by which land is given to "sister's children" only for it to "return" and the practice of *fanambadiana mitroky*, a marriage which prevents the "loss" of children that is a latent possibility in "distant" marriages.[30] Whilst a woman typically "leaves" her father's house-group on marriage, with the practice of *fanambadiana mitroky* her child, or more distant "children" (*taranaka*), are said to "return to the root" (*miverina am-pototra*) they stem from, such marriages being known as *miherim-boron'tsihy*, "the tattered mat returning". Here the woman returns to the house-group of one of her "mother's brothers", a house-group to which she is *anakapela* and where she has a "root" (*fototra*), although a different "root" to that of her father and house-group, her *teña fototra*. In the case of the woman being in actual fact the daughter of a woman who married out of the house-group, then the "return" to the mother's brother's house-group is literal; but as we have seen (Chapter 4), any house-group to which a woman is *anakapela* contains a "mother's brother", and so a woman may return as a "tattered mat" one or several generations after the woman she is a "child" (*taranaka*) of "left".

The temporal delay between "leaving" and "returning" can be seen to be imaged in the "tattered mat" itself. Mats are made by women, but the most relevant in this context would appear to be the mats that a woman takes with her as part of her marriage trousseau (the *enta pihaom-bao*, see above) and which can be understood as a metonym of the woman who originally "left" the house-group. Now, many years later her "child" is "returning", but the intervening years mean that the mat that originally "left" the house-group now returns "tattered" by the passage of time.

It is in the process of "returning" which characterizes *fanambadiana mitroky* that

the potential of women's marriages to lead to "division" is overcome, and *fanambadiana mitroky* and the "returns" they involve may even take place between people of house-groups of different villages and even different river valleys. For example the genealogy of one house-group in Manambondro village reveals that it has consistently married into a Tesaka Ancestry resident in a village close to the Masianaka river, with sometimes as many as four such marriages being made within the same generation, and involving both men and women of the house-group. In this way an initial "distant" marriage (a *mitoha zara*) has been succeeded by a number of *fanambadiana mitroky* which have led to a "joining together again and again".

However a "distant" marriage does not always lead to a "returning", and when it does not people talk of the woman's "children" (*taranaka*) as "lost". Yet this loss does not only occur due to women, but is an idiom employed to speak of *rerelava*, long-term migrants to other parts of Madagascar. Although the name exaggerates to some extent people's view of such migrants, it does highlight the fact that people are ambivalent about what long-term migration can involve. For whilst there are those who gain "renown" (*malaza*) through returning with the money they have earned to buy cattle and land, and build a house, there are others who "go here and there without any purpose" (*mirerirery*). The lack of "purpose" sometimes exhibited by *rerelava* ("those who go here and there without any purpose a long way away") is seen in their marriages. Although many *rerelava* marry other Temanambondro in the places they migrate too, there are some however who marry with people of the region they settle in but who "do not finish the custom" (*tsy vita fomba*); a woman *rerelava* may marry but fail to get her husband to complete the rites in her home village, and a man may marry but fail to return to the same place to complete the *vaky lela*. Having become "paired" with a "spouse" from a people who are outside the region of the "sister" rivers and therefore not "friends" (*nama*), the children they bear are "lost".

But although *rerelava* may lose their children and thus "go far and divide", the dominant idea about the process is that it is caused by women, although there are to some extent conflicting views about this. As we saw earlier, there is a degree of gendered agency in making marriage. Men "search" (*mitady*) whilst women "sit" (*mifitaka*) and "wait" (*mandiñy*); men perform the *fafy*, invoke the ancestors and kill the sacrificial animals (both black hen and zebu), whilst women remain out of sight. For some this becomes a difference between "making relations" and "causing separation", for as Aban'Marozaza put it "the father makes relations, the mother causes separation" (*ñe ray mampihavana, ñe reny mampisaraka*), and Aban'Finga was of much the same opinion: "women carry ancestry, [they] make ancestry divide and make the family scatter" (*minde razana ñe apela, mampizara ñe firazana de mampiparataka ñe fianakaviana*). In so far as they are the ones who confer Ancestry on their children fathers do "make relations". But Aban'Finga's comment that "woman carry ancestry" hints at what Aban'Marozaza's

remark conceals, namely that the children women "drop" are also "relations", for they are *anakapela*, "children of women".

That "having many family" (*tsara mana fianakaviana maro*) is indisputably a good thing would be accepted by any Temanambondro one cared to ask, and as Endrin'Lavavolo pointed out, after having herself said how women "divide" and "cause separation", "women make the family many, [they] marry here and they marry there" (*ñe apela mahamaro ñe fianakaviana, manambady atsy, manambady ary*). But, as we saw in Chapter 4, as long as they are "called" (*mitoka*) by the house-group from which the woman "appeared" (*miboaka*), her "root" (*fototra*), "children of women" are not "lost"; and once *anakapela* receive the "story" (*tantara*) it is for them to respond to being called. So as to avoid her "children" (*taranaka*) being "lost" it is for the woman's house-group to "give the story" (*manome tantara*) and for the "children of women" to attend the events to which they are "called". Yet the representation of this loss is that it is caused by women and their marriages, even though it is men who make marriages and men who "give the story" and respond to being "called".

As I have suggested the difference between men's constancy of place and women's movement between places is comparable to the difference between "trunk planting" (*fotoboly*) and "trans-planting" (*voliavotry*), an idea which can be elaborated on in light of the foregoing discussion. Etymologically speaking *fotoboly* comes from *fotora* ("trunk") and *voly*, the root of *mamboly*, "to plant" in the sense of planting rice, a tree and so forth. Certain plants are counted in *fotora*: for example, a person will say how many *fotora* of coffee or cloves they own, or how many *fotora* of manioc they uprooted when collecting the edible tuberous roots they grow from; that is, how many individual plants they have or uprooted. The term *voliavotry* comes from *voly* and *avotry*, the root of *mañavotry*, one of two verbs meaning "to uproot a rice seedling from a nursery [prior to planting it in a rice field]". As we saw in Chapter 1, "trunk planting" refers to the practice of planting species which permanently occupy the land, such as coffee, cloves and various fruit trees. On the other hand "trans-planting" refers to the practice of using land on a shifting basis, planting crops of a limited life span which are grown from cuttings or seed, such as manioc, sweet-potato, dry-rice and groundnuts.

The constancy of place exhibited by men can be seen in the practice of virilocality, in the use of the image of "roots" to speak of "fathers" (the *teña fototra*) and "mother's brothers", and in the things that men make and build, objects which, whilst in some cases having limited longevity, do not move: houses, tombs, and "memorials". Women on the other hand move at marriage, a movement from the house of the father who "gives" her to the house of the man who "searched" for her. The gendered agency of making marriages, of "searching" and performing the *fafy*, is also to be found in the "appearance" (*miboaka amin-drafoza, fiboahana*), at which the groom's spokesman "seeks" seed rice (*doria*) and sweet-potato cuttings (*tahon-drondra*) to plant in the newly cleared swidden. Here the man

has cleared the swidden and he will "plant" the seed and cuttings he seeks; once he has "finished the custom" he will also be the proprietor of the crop they produce, the children born to him and his wife. This idea of gendered agency also resonates with the image of the sweet-potato cutting itself. The cutting is taken and rooted in the ground, cut from its own roots and trans-planted to another place in which it will later produce "offspring" (*isiny*); the woman too moves, from the "root" (*teña fototra*) of her father's house to that of her husband's where she will hopefully produce children. In terms of agency the woman is moved by others, her marriage made by her parents and other elders; so too is the sweet-potato moved, cut from one place and transplanted to another.

The constancy of place exhibited by men thus contrasts with the movement of women in marriage, when they are sought out as a "sweet-potato cutting" to be "trans-planted", and in the image of the sweet-potato cutting is the basis of associating women with notions of "trans-planting", just as the constancy of place exhibited by men is the basis of their association with "trunk planting". But for all their rootedness, and the fact that men are said to "make relations", without women's movement and "dividing" and "separating" there would be no children through whom the relations could be continued, and perhaps in the fertility associated with movement in marriage one can see an analogy of another female gendered image of fertility possessing movement, the flowing body of the river, the "mother of water" (*renirano*), the "great trunk" (*fotora be*) and "root" of the Temanambondro.

Conclusion: the genderedness of relatedness

In Temanambondro marriage there are a variety of ways in which gender difference is constituted and performed. Men make marriages, inasmuch as they are the agents of bringing them into being: men "search", speak to Zañahary and the ancestors in the "invocation", and kill the sacrificial animals. This difference is most pronounced spatially with regard to place, for men have a constancy of place whilst women are said to "leave", "divide" and "separate".

The Temanambondro however are not unique in constituting gendered difference in marriage through space, place and movement. In commenting on the "rootedness" of men, Feeley-Harnik remarks on how sons are said to "'stay on the piece of land [on which a house is built]'", whilst daughters are said to "move" (1991b:179), movement which itself is likened to division in the term used for the wealth a man gives to get a wife to follow him and live in his own village (1991b:180). Similarly Huntington comments how, among the Bara, "Men are almost always rooted to a particular place and group for their entire lives. The same cannot be said for women, who circulate through the male world at

a dizzying pace.... The contrast between the fixity of a man's life and the fluidity of a woman's is significant" (1988:62). Finally, Chandon-Moet notes that "Save for marriage, nothing attaches [a woman] to the territory of the *fatrange* in which she lives" (1972:129), something which a Temoro from the village he writes about comments on by saying that "women don't have land on which to build a house [*tokontany*] ... because they are taken" (1972:130n.6).

These ideas about space, place, movement and movability point not only to the inherent genderedness of marriage, but also hint at the significance of gender in the conceptualization of relatedness, and it is on this issue that I want to conclude the present discussion. As I suggested in Chapter 3, the study of 'kinship', person and gender in Madagascar has produced in the main analyses which have tried to unite these three domains of anthropological enquiry, perhaps more so than has sometimes been the case elsewhere (cf. Howell and Melhuus 1993). Recently for example Rita Astuti (1993, 1995a:80-6) has written on the topics from the perspective of the Vezo, a fishing people of the west coast. The starting point of her analysis is the concept of *filongoa*, which Astuti translates as "kinship", "a system of ungendered relations" (1993:278), and "a system ... in which gender is a difference that makes no difference" (1995a:81). This proposal is based on the fact that both "filiation" and "parenthood" are "non-gender specific" (1993:279), such that people trace relatedness equally through both daughters and sons, and through fathers and mothers. Astuti concludes that "in Vezo kinship men and women are alike: to be a mother is like being a father; to be a daughter is like being a son; to have been born by a woman is like having been born by a man" (1993:280).

In the light of comparative ethnography however the Vezo case appears to be somewhat untypical for Madagascar, for the relevance of gender in the tracing of relatedness is widely reported throughout the island. In stark contrast to Astuti, Huntington for example comments that the "strong contrast between views of male-relatedness, on the one hand, and female-relatedness, on the other ... is an important theme in Bara culture and a major structural feature of Bara society" (1988:89-90). Although Huntington's analysis of gender and person is rather simplistic, grounded as it is in his interpretation of Bara procreation theory (1988:23), the importance of gendered relatedness is also noted by Middleton (1988) in her account of the Karembola. Here Middleton discusses how a father's relations with his sons and daughters are not equivalent, for sons substitute for their fathers directly, whilst daughter's do not (1988:99). In addition the contrast between relatedness through males and relatedness through females is said to be of great importance for the conceptualization of social hierarchy (1988:100), something which has significant implications in the values associated with different marriage practices (1988:192).

Whilst the Bara and Karembola have been described in terms of agnation and patriliny (Huntington 1988:55-60; Middleton 1988:81-90), the importance of gendered

relatedness is also to be found among the Merina, described as bilateral (Bloch 1971:46-50). Thus although Bloch states that "Merina descent is based on the irrelevance of gender to membership in and transmission of a descent group" (1987:327), he earlier notes a "slight leaning" towards patriliny which, he comments, manifests itself amongst other places in the idea that "the mother's side is somehow weaker than the father's" (1971:116; see also Bloch 1981; cf. Graeber 1995:268). The converse of this is the widely reported idea that the father's side or family, relationships traced through father's, or simply men in general are "stronger" (Kottak 1980:184; Hurvitz 1980:47; Huntington 1988:63; Middleton 1988:82; Feeley-Harnik 1991b:179), something which often coincides with ideas about men having stronger ties to the land (Hurvitz 1980:47; Huntington 1988:33; Feeley-Harnik 1991b:179 et passim). Finally, the difference that gender makes can also be seen in the contrast made between those related as "children of men" and those who are "children of women", complementary categories reported from various parts of the island (Baré 1977:60; Hurvitz 1980:46-7; Beaujard 1983b:149; Feeley-Harnik 1991b:65-113; cf. Middleton 1988).

Many variations on these themes are present among the Temanambondro as we have seen. Certain terms do not imply a gendered differentiation in the tracing of relatedness. The terms *havana* and *fianakaviana* for example refer to "relatives" without specifying whether relatedness is traced through men or women, and the terms for "child(ren)" (*anaka*), "grandchild(ren)" (*zafy*) and so on are similarly undifferentiated; in fact they are all *taranaka* ("children" in the widest of senses), again a category which does not distinguish links by gender. Finally, each person has "eight sides" (*valo ila*) to their ancestry, equally divided between both parents with "four on the side of the father [and] four on the side of the mother" (*efatra ila teña amin'ñe aba teña, efatra ila teña amin'ñe endry teña*). In all these categories gender is a difference that makes no (or relatively little) difference.

On the other hand, as we have seen, of these "eight sides" one in particular is singled out as the "strongest" (*teña mahery*), that of the father, the "side" of a person's Ancestry. Just as all sides are not equal, the undifferentiating category of *taranaka* occludes differences within it, for some *taranaka* are *lahiny*, "dropped in the house-group" (*latsaka am-patrange*), whilst some are *anakapela*, and "dropped" elsewhere. Thus Astuti's description of the Vezo, where "to be a daughter is like being a son; to have been born by a woman is like having been born of a man" (1993:280), describes a situation which is in certain respects the polar opposite of that found among the Temanambondro. For daughters are not like sons (although they are similarly referred to as *anaka*, "children") because daughters "leave" (*miala*) and "drop children" who become *anakapela*; whilst sons are part of how a man "prospers" (*tanteraka*) in his house-group, they are *lahiny*. Similarly being born by a woman is not the same as being born by a man, for as one proverb puts it, "it is better that one's mother is a slave than one's father" (*aleoleo ondevo reny to'zay*

ondevo ray); from the father comes Ancestry, the *teña fototra*, and the most important of a person's "roots", whilst from the mother a person receives "small talk" (*resaka madiniky*).

Whilst the Vezo concept of *filongoa* is non-gender specific, so too is the Temanambondro equivalent of *fihavanana*, ("relatedness", fr. *havana*). But as we can see, "being related" involves gendered relatedness, even if the category *fihavanana* does not. The content of *fihavanana* thus turns out to be more complicated than the term itself might imply, for there are categories of persons and relatedness that are clearly gendered, even whilst they fall within the domain of *fihavanana*, none more so than *lahiny* and *anakapela*, the one gendered male and the other gendered female. The genderedness of relatedness is also elemental to the conceptualization of Ancestry as well, for house-groups and Ancestries are conceptualized in male terms, and perpetuated by men who exhibit a constancy of place that is also evident in the objects they make, houses, tombs and "memorials"; women on the other hand "leave", "divide" and "separate". But whilst Ancestry is rooted in men and conceptualized in male terms, it is also the case that the constancy of place of men, house-groups and Ancestry is predicated on the movement and movability of women. For as the proverb has it "the shine bone does not give birth" (*tsy miteraka ñe vaovitsy*); or to take an image from the present discussion of marriage, whilst the man is two hearth stones to the woman's one, it is the third hearth stone "makes the cooking cooked", and a pan cannot stand on two stones alone.

Space, Place and the Sociological Imagination

An attempt to analyse Temanambondro concepts of personhood and ancestry in terms of their own categories, images and idioms, this thesis has been an exploration of another people's sociological imagination. Throughout the analysis I have tried to show how Temanambondro themselves conceptualize relatedness, and in particular how social relations are also imagined as spatial relations. It remains to draw together some of the threads of the analysis of personhood and ancestry, and relate certain aspects of this to the discussion of place, for the idioms and images people use to talk of social relations are the same as those they use to speak of what attaches people to place.

Personhood and ancestry

In choosing to focus on concepts of the person, one of the main aims of this thesis was to explore Temanambondro ideas of what it is to be human. In line with some recent work in this area I chose to analyse the person in terms of gender and its relationship to notions about the body and folk psychology, as well as trying to highlight the way in which a person's identity and selfhood is partly constituted through what they do (cf. M. Rosaldo 1984; M. Strathern 1988; Errington 1990). Of particular importance here is the concept of *fañahy*. As well as being something possessed uniquely by "living people" (*olombelona*) and broadly categorized as "good" (*tsara*) or "bad" (*ratsy*), a person's *fañahy* individuates, for everyone's *fañahy* is thought to be different. To the extent that it can only be seen in what a person does however, this "moral self" is relational, constituted through relations with others. Perhaps this is most clear in ideas about "nurturing" (*miteza*), for a person's *fañahy* is evident in the "nurture" they provide for others; those who do not "like others" (*tia nama*) however do not "nurture", for they only "like themselves" (*tia teña*). As I suggested, people evaluate their own lives and more especially the lives of others in terms of ideas about "good" and "bad" *fañahy*, "liking others" and "liking oneself", and in the ability to provide "nurture", ideas which arguably form the basis of an aesthetics of everyday life.

Aspects of a person's identity are therefore performatively constituted through

actions such as "nurture", and these are perceived as evidence of a person's "moral self", their *fañahy* (cf. Lambek 1992). But a person's identity is not merely constituted through what they do, for persons are also known through whom they are related to, and another aspect of what it is to be human is that all persons have relatives - they are part of a named Ancestry traced through "fathers", whilst also being *anakapela* ("children of women") to those whom they are related through the "sides" of ancestry that are traced through women. Temanambondro notions of the person are therefore highly relational: on the one hand, a person's "moral self" is primarily of significance in terms of their relations with others; on the other, a person's sociological identity comes through relations of ancestry.

Following Sahlins' (1985) concept of "performative structures" I have tried to show that certain aspects of ancestry, like certain aspects of personhood, are performative, such that relationships are made out of practice. Yet it is also clear that different relationships exhibit different degrees of performativity. Relationships of Ancestry traced through "fathers" are performatively constituted through the completion of the *fafy*, the marriage rite that "makes" (*maha-*) a man a father, and reconstituted through such acts as the placing of the placenta and umbilical cord. Whilst constituted performatively however, the relationship of Ancestry does not need to be continually reconstituted through practice in the way that relationships traced through women, for a person's Ancestry identity endures, exhibiting male-like qualities of "strength" and durability. Relations that render persons *anakapela* however need continually reconstituting, primarily through participation in rituals, and as such exhibit female-like qualities of "softness".

As well as trying to highlight the extent to which aspects of Temanambondro ancestry are performative, I have also attempted to frame the analysis in terms of the arguments of Schneider (1968, 1972, 1984) and Bloch (1991, 1992) on the conceptualization of "kinship", culture and society, and in so doing base the account of Temanambondro conceptualizations of ancestry on the categories, idioms and images people used to talk about social relations. Throughout this discussion ideas about gender, houses and space have emerged as concepts of fundamental importance.

As several people have noted, the field of "kinship" studies is no longer central to anthropological theorizing, although the subject has been rejuvenated to some extent by recent work on gender and the person (Collier and Yanagisako 1987; Howell and Melhuus 1993). In a recent overview of the study of "kinship", gender and person, Howell and Melhuus themselves note that "taking gender seriously requires some basic rethinking of our concepts, as few can be taken as *a priori* relevant and useful" (1993:49). However, it could be argued that too few people have actually begun to rethink our concepts and that much of the work in this area limits itself to analyses of gender *and* "kinship", rather than focusing on the genderedness *of* "kinship" and relatedness; that is, gender is often an add-on aspect of the analysis, rather than a means to rethink the subject of "kinship" itself.[1]

Following Schneider's insistence that one must ground one's analysis in the

explanation of people's own categories, it has become clear that Temanambondro themselves conceptualize relatedness as gendered, and nowhere do they do this more clearly than in the categories of *lahiny* (members of house-groups and Ancestries) and *anakapela* ("children of women"). As I argued, named Ancestries are conceptualized in terms of male links, and these links exhibit a greater durability than do links traced through women. This is evident for example in the difference between the constancy of place exhibited by men and the movement of women at marriage, ideas which also find expression in artefactual form, through the association of men with houses and tombs. As Alfred Gell has argued, "Human beings don't just reproduce themselves as other human beings, but also as artefacts (carvings, canoes, fine textiles, buildings) and as intangible entities such as songs, myths, spirit beings, etc." (1993:8). The idea appears to me highly relevant in the present context for Temanambondro Ancestries could certainly be argued to reproduce themselves as buildings - both houses and tombs - as well as in the form of commemorative monuments and the transformation of the dead into ancestors. In all these "reproductive device[s] in the imaginary or artefactual mode" (1993:8) men predominate: they build houses and tombs as well as make and raise the monuments that commemorate a person's attainment of ancestorhood. As we have seen the relations between those of an Ancestry are represented in male terms - "fathers", "grandfathers", *lahiny* - and this maleness finds expression in the artefactual mode and in what I have referred to as constancy of place. It contrasts with the movable and the potentially "lost", women and the *anakapela* that stem from them.

This is only one of the ways that gender manifests itself in the conceptualization of relatedness, but it would be wrong to suggest that the conceptualization of ancestry is wholly reducible to gender, such that other representations of relatedness are merely reflexes of gender. Yanagisako and Collier (1987:29-35) claim that gender and "kinship" as two fields of study are mutually constituted as a "single field" because they are perceived to be rooted in what are taken to be the "natural facts" of sexual reproduction; thus they propose that a study of "kinship" is a study of gender and vice versa. But if, as Yanagisako and Collier themselves advocate, we do not assume that "kinship" or gender is rooted in these so-called natural facts, then it is possible that we may find that "kinship" and gender *do not* constitute a single field, although there may well be a degree of overlap between the two. As we have seen Temanambondro conceptualizations of ancestry make much of images of gender. However, relatedness is also conceptualized in terms of houses and space, ideas about which are not reducible to gender.

If the study of gender and person has breathed new life into the study of "kinship", so too has the concept of the house, although there are problems with Lévi-Strauss's model of "house-based societies" (Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995; P. Thomas 1996). Although the house appears to be an important indigenous category in the social organization of many parts of the world, this is particularly so among speakers of

Austronesian languages, and here the Temanambondro are no exception. But as I suggested the Temanambondro house is a complex image of social relationships, and people use the house to speak of a variety of relationships - such as gender and marriage, as well as siblingship and inter-generational relations - something which they do with reference not only to the fabric of the house, but also to the spaces within and between houses. Thus just as one cannot reduce Temanambondro ancestry to gender, nor can one reduce it to the house such that the Temanambondro can be referred to as "house-based" (Lévi-Strauss 1982, 1987; Bloch 1993b:131) in any meaningful sense, for to reduce Temanambondro ancestry to the house would be to overlook the significance of the tomb, as well as gender and space.

Alongside the significance of gender and the house in Temanambondro conceptualizations of ancestry, I have also tried to highlight the importance of space and place in the imaging and imagining of relatedness. Certain acts of placing are basic to the conceptualization of personhood - such as the disposal of the umbilical cord - and the "sides" of people's ancestry are imagined spatially, traced to the house-groups into which they "enter". The discussion of architectonics has too emphasized the importance of the spatial aspects of relatedness within house-groups and Ancestries - such as in the spacing of houses, tombs and "memorials" - as well as the significance of the Manambondro river in the conceptualization of the collective identity of the Temanambondro. Along with the discussion of "close" and "distant" marriages, these aspects of the ethnography point to the fact that for Temanambondro social relations are spatial relations, and that social relations are made out of being of "one place", an idea that finds one of its most cogent expressions in the placing of tombs at the mouth of the Manambondro river.

All in all, gender, houses and space appear to me to be some of the basic concepts of the Temanambondro sociological imagination, ideas which are often expressed as metaphors and images. Yet as I have tried to stress, none of these concepts is in any way prior to the others, a root metaphor so to speak, for instead the concepts "participate in one another" to use Marilyn Strathern's (1988:188) phrase. Thus houses are gendered through being built by men, just as the genders are constituted through houses and the division of domestic space; or, to take another example, the spatial constancy of men and houses contrasts with the spatial movability of women and sweet-potato cuttings. In short, ideas about gender, houses or space are not reducible to one or another of these concepts, for the complex of associations that cluster around these ideas emerge from their inter-relationship; "each is a vantage point from which to think about [the] others" (1988:187).

As images and metaphors gender, houses and space are also "good to think". They are concepts which are applicable in a variety of contexts, infinitely adaptable: thus gender can be used to think about flesh and bones, houses and rocks; houses can be used to think about gender and marriage, "mother's brothers" and "children of women"; and space can be used to think about elder and younger, living people and ancestors. In being "good to

think" these concepts possess sense making capacity, and in some sense therefore possess aesthetic qualities. However, just as it would be wrong to posit an a priori concept from which all others stem in the conceptualization of ancestry, so too would it be a mistake to suggest that Temanambondro possess a central aesthetic, for it is the case that there are a variety of concepts and images that possess aesthetic qualities due to their sense making capacity rather than there being a single "focal principle" (Brenneis 1990:118).

There is however one aesthetic on which I would like to dwell a little longer, the spatial aesthetic - including the aesthetic of place - which I feel is crucial to an understanding of Temanambondro personhood and ancestry, and which frequently employs images of "roots", "trunks" and "branches" as a way of talking about the relations between people, and between people and place.

The "roots" of place

The suggestion made by James Fernandez that "aesthetics ... has as one of its primary concerns the manner in which values ... are formally arranged in space" (1966:53) is perhaps most clearly applicable in the present context to the complex of ideas associated with cardinal space. Those concepts accorded primary values in a variety of contexts are also spatially situated in accordance with the principle that east and north are "above" (and therefore of greater value than) south and west. Thus for example east is associated respectively with ancestors, men, and the head in contrast to living people, women, and the feet, whilst through the positioning of tombs north is associated with those who "came before" in contrast to south and those who "came after", and this spatial aesthetic finds tangible form in the positioning of houses, tombs, "memorials", bodies and corpses.

The attention that various Malagasy people give to the arrangement of things in cardinal space is evident in much of the ethnography, particularly with regard to the symbolism of the cardinal points and how this relates to houses and tombs and the bodies - both living and dead - that inhabit them.[2] But although the cardinal points provide a basis for the arrangement of values in space, various ethnographies also reveal the value associated with *places*, points in space whose significance does not derive primarily from their position within cardinal space. Rather it derives from features of the landscape - such as rivers - and items of built form - such as tombs - or places of origin, and these places are frequently associated with ideas about "roots" from which people grow.

Accounts of Malagasy "kinship" and politics have often resorted to the spatial framing devices of territory and residence as a means of delineating groups.[3] Yet in some respects this practice does not totally misconstrue Malagasy ideas, for Malagasy peoples appear to employ a number of "spatial strategies" (Feeley-Harnik 1991b:7) themselves in

their various forms of social and political organization. For example, although there is some ambiguity as to whether or not Merina "demes" are territorial groupings (cf. Bloch 1971:46-7; and Graeber 1995:261-2), it seems to be the case that these groups are defined principally in terms of tombs, and perhaps the significance of these items of built form does not lie simply in their being a "symbol of kinship" as is often stated but also because, as Bloch puts it, "tombs 'place' people in ancestral lands" (1987:326). Thus it appears that some groups are spatially constituted through focal places - such as tombs, or houses (Bloch 1995b) and other forms of origin point (Middleton n.d.b) - rather than through bounded territories. Similarly polities appear to be constituted through specific places, whether they be capitals (Kus 1987; cf. Belrose-Huyghues 1983), royal tombs (Feeley-Harnik 1991a, 1991b; cf. Baré 1977:79-84, Lombard 1986), or the embouchures of rivers (Hurvitz 1986).

The importance of places for the Temanambondro has been touched on at various points in the previous chapters, and it has been argued that house-groups, Ancestries and the Temanambondro as a whole are constituted through such places as the *fatrange* ("central plaza") with its "male" and "female" house, tombs at the river-mouth, and through the Manambondro river itself. But Temanambondro also refer to their relationship with these places, and to others to whom they are related through these places, using images of "roots", "trunks" and "branches", an idiom the Temanambondro share with other speakers of Austronesian languages.

As James Fox (1993a:16-23; see also Waterson 1990:124-6, 191-2) has noted, throughout much of the Austronesian-speaking world, and particularly in Southeast Asia, there is a concern with "origins" of various sorts which "constitutes a fundamental epistemological orientation and takes on a remarkable variety of forms" (1993a:16-17). This concern manifests itself in such things as the spatial and temporal themes that frame narratives of geographical and historical origins of peoples (see e.g. Fox 1979; R. Rosaldo 1980; Kuipers 1984), and in the "botanic idiom" used to talk of various social relations and which utilizes images of "roots", "trunks", and their outgrowth in the form of "tips" "leaves", "flowers" and so forth (e.g. Fox 1971; Traube 1986; Waterson 1986:97-8; Hoskins 1990:291; Howell 1991:256-7; McKinnon 1991). In addition, many of the words used to express these ideas in Austronesian languages are cognate terms containing the syllable *fu* or *pu* (see Fox 1980:14; Errington 1989:205 et passim).[4]

The refractions of these ideas in Madagascar are perhaps therefore variations on wider Austronesian themes, and the similarities are striking, for a variety of Malagasy peoples exhibit an interest in "origins" of various sorts. For example, Middleton (n.d.b) has discussed how the Hazohandatse of the arid south are "based" or "rooted" in land (*manompo tane*); furthermore, the Hazohandatse take care in ensuring that the umbilical cord (*foetse*) of their children are taken to be buried in a place from which they claim to originate, and to which they refer as the "root of our ancestors" (*fotorañ'razan'ay*), a

similar practice to that reported by Huntington (1988:31). Among the Vezo on the other hand men are said to be the "source" or "origin" of pregnancy (*fotoran'ateraha*), whilst Bemihisatra royal ancestors are referred to as the "fertile roots or genitals" (*fototra*) of the tree-person that is the royal tomb and which grows around them (Feeley-Harnik 1991a:136), employing a term which is used by Betsileo to refer to the "foundations" (*fototra*) of tombs and houses (Kus and Raharijaona 1990:29).

Each of these examples reveal a set of cognate terms containing the syllable *fo*, and certain of these terms have cropped up in the previous chapters. In the Temanambondro dialect the term *fo* itself refers to the "heart", whilst relevant cognates include *foitra* (umbilical cord), *fotora* ("trunk"), and *fototra* ("root, origin-root").[5] However this interest in "origins" is also an interest in place, because it is arguably "roots" which attach people to place, and there is no better example of this than the complex of ideas associated with rivers.

Rivers and water feature large in the ritual imagination of many peoples of Madagascar, something which is particularly evident in the ethnography of the southeast. One of the first to comment on this was Linton, who noted in a sometimes highly perceptive article that many peoples of the region have "a sacred river into which the umbilical cords of children are thrown" (1928:372), and only if this has been done can a person be buried in the group's tomb, a structure usually built near the aforementioned river. In fact various rituals among peoples of the southeast involve rivers and their water, apart from those accompanying birth and death, such as circumcision, the clearing of blocked river-mouths, and a number of ceremonies focusing on "rulers".[6] In addition Linton (1928:373) also noted that when a people move into a new locality they frequently re-name the river there in a rite involving water taken from the sacred river from which they have come, a practice to be found in the migration narratives of a number of peoples (e.g. Elle 1905-6:117, 121; Beaujard 1983b:35-96; Huntington 1986:301) and one which we have already seen in the story of Andriamaroary (see Chapter 1).

Others too have remarked on the symbolic importance accorded rivers and water in a variety of contexts. Commenting on the significance of water in Tanala political symbolism and its place in mortuary rites and those of circumcision and the washing of royal relics, Philippe Beaujard (1983a) notes the frequent importance accorded to river-mouths and confluents among peoples of the east coast, and remarks that "It appears ... that the apparent retracing of water to its source in the whirlpool of a confluent ... may be the basis of a religious attachment of rulers to these places" (1983a:314). Unfortunately Beaujard does not develop this interesting point, neither in terms of ideas regarding sources and origins, nor what is involved in attachment to places. But when one views the Temanambondro ethnography in light of these ethnographic jottings it appears to me that there is a very strong notion of attachment to places through "origins" or "roots", an idea which is most particularly developed regarding the Manambondro river.

It is hopefully clear from the preceding chapters that Temanambondro ideas regarding the river are rich and complex. The Manambondro river figures in their self-appellation, and as a people they are said be "children" (*taranaka*) of the river. Furthermore, the water of the river is said to possess "sacred efficacy" (*hasy*), a quality most strongly associated with the embouchure (cf. Hurvitz 1986), and this appears to be the basis of classifying the river as "female". But given the present discussion most important of all is the association of the river with ideas about "roots". When Andriamaroary named the river Manambondro he did so by pouring into it water from a river of the same name from the place he came from and which is referred to as the "root" (*fototra*) of the "children" (*taranaka*) of Andriamaroary and those who followed him. Other Ancestries too refer to the place they originate from as their *teña fototra*, the "real origin-root" from which they came. But although the various Temanambondro Ancestries have different geographical "origin-roots" they refer to the Manambondro river as "the root and basis of what makes [them] Temanambondro" (*ñe fototra iorenany maha-Temanambondro ñe Temanambondro*); the river is the "great trunk" (*fotora be*) of which all Ancestries are "branches" (*sokazana*). Finally, each end every Temanambondro is "rooted" to this river, for here their umbilical cord (*foitra*), the "root of life" (*fototra ñe fieñana*), is thrown into its waters not long after their birth.

People are associated with places then through "origin-roots" from which they came and the "root" or "great trunk" of the river to which they are attached through a "root" of their own body, and a place which gives them their collective identity. But as we have seen, people are "rooted" not only in places, for they also trace "roots" to other people, and here Temanambondro employ a wide repertoire of botanical images to talk of a variety of social relations. Every person has "roots", and although one "root" in particular is singled out as the most important, that of the "father", the *teña fototra* and "great trunk" (*fotora be*), "mother's brothers" are also referred to as "roots". The paths along which people trace relationships to these "roots" are "sides" (*ila*) or "branches" (*sampana*), and every person is said to have "eight" (*valo*) such sides (although as we saw in Chapter 4 people in fact have many more than eight of these). In addition, these "sides" or "branches" are structural equivalents of the "branches" or parts" (*sokazana*) of which house-groups and Ancestries are composed. Other botanical images abound, the more vivid referring to plants themselves. For example, "close" *anakapela* ("children of women") are referred to as "supports of a [fruiting] banana tree" (*tohan'akondro*), and bananas are also imaged in the proverb that notes "each has their stem attached to the branch" (*samby mana ñe lafiny am-pahiny*). Similar use of botanical images are to be found in marriage also, where a potential bride is referred to as "seed rice" (*doria*) and "sweet-potato cutting" (*tahon-drondra*), and when a newly-married couple are said in their absence to be off "planting bananas and taro".[7]

Both attachment to place and connectedness to people are thus imagined in terms of

"roots", "trunks" and "branches". But to the extent that all persons are "rooted" in places -house-groups, tombs, rivers - then relationships between people are also relationships between those people and places, and thus another variation on what I take to be an elementary idea of the Temanambondro sociological imagination, that social relations are also spatial relations. People could therefore be said to be multiply "rooted" in place, through connectedness to items of built form and features of the landscape, through people who are "relatives", and although little has been said on the matter, through the fields they work and the crops they grow there. However, as stories about migration testify, people in the southeast were (and to some extent still are) on the move. How then can one talk of attachment to place in the face of people's obvious mobility?

When people spoke of the migration routes taken by people as they searched for a new place to settle, the movement from one place to another was talked of in terms of an inability to become "attached to place" (*tama*).[8] Only in the land that people felt permanently settled were they said to be "attached to place", and the inability to feel "attached to place" was something I heard from nearly all those I spoke to about the time they had spent away from the Manambondro region in other parts of the country. It would seem therefore that "attachment to place" is very much to do with producing "roots" and that much Temanambondro ritual practice is in part about creating "attachment to place" through making "roots" in places. It is this that lies behind the practice of river-naming and other acts of placing, such as the disposal of the placenta and umbilical cord, and various of the acts involved in Temanambondro funerals (see P. Thomas n.d.).

It would be wrong however to assume that "attachment to place" is an end point of movement, for such places are often the starting point of migration to other places, for both are referred to as "roots": the place that a people come from is its "origin-root" (*fototra*), just as the river in the lands it comes to settle is a "root" also. Thus the "roots" people make can be "cut" when people move on to make "roots" in new places. Although the identity of Andriamaroary's Ancestry is not altogether clear, Beaujard's (1983b:35-49) analysis of Tanala migration stories would seem to suggest that Andriamaroary's ancestors were immigrants to the region in the north named Manambondro. In the shape of Andriamaroary and his followers these people moved on again, migrating south until they settled on the island of Antokonosy and named the river in which the island stood after that from which they had come. More recent still, this migratory process has occurred once more. In the wake of the encounter with French and Senegalese troops at Vodivolo in 1904, an event which for most marked the end of violent resistance to colonial rule, a number of people from villages on the lower Manambondro and Isandra rivers left their lands and fled south, finally settling some 150km away in what is now the village of Nosibe, a few kilometres to the west of Fort Dauphin. Now fully "attached to place" in their new lands, up until the mid 1960s these émigrés returned the bones of their dead for final interment in the tombs at the mouth of the Manambondro river. This they no longer

do, having permanent tombs and memorial sites in the lands they have settled. In founding these they had to perform the rite of "cutting the root" (*fira fototra*), for only then could they independently establish themselves in the new place they had moved to.

Making "attachment to place" and producing "roots" there is then part of a spatiotemporal process. A people establish themselves in a locality, put down "roots" by naming the river there, building houses, tombs and "memorials", inscribing their presence on the landscape. At some later date they move on and establish new "roots" in new places, "cutting" the roots that "attach" them to the old, the "origin-root" from which they came. But as with the roots of the cultigens they transplant, the "roots" people make in places take time to develop. Sometime after settling on the island in the middle of the river he renamed Manambondro, Andriamaroary returned to the north, to the river whose water he had drawn in a gourd. And on the death of his daughter she too returned to this "origin-root" where she was buried along with her father. Not until the deaths of her sons did the Temanambondro begin to bury the dead at the mouth of the Manambondro river. Only then had they become truly "attached to place"; only then did they begin to produce "roots" in their new lands; only then were they truly *zana tany*, "children of the land".

Thus whilst the concept of "roots" can be seen as one of the ways in which Temanambondro imagine social relations as spatial relations, it also reveals another aspect of the imagination, that the growth of people and Ancestries is conceptualized as a similar process to the growth of plants and trees (cf. Feeley-Harnik 1991b; Bloch 1993a), living things which take root and produce offspring, and which can be cut and transplanted to take root in places anew. And like the growing trees, the flowering plants, and the fruiting cultigens to which so much of Temanambondro life is likened, the image of "roots" reveals that "attachment to place" to be a living, growing and regenerative process.

Although both Relph (1976) and Tuan (1977) make occasional use of ethnographic examples to illustrate their own discussions of place, their analyses suffer from a rather static concept of place and how places are made and re-made. Tuan for example comments that "Place ... is essentially a static concept. If we see the world as process ... we should not be able to develop any sense of place" (1977:179), an idea allied to his discussion of the difference between rootedness and sense of place where he suggests that rootedness - "long habitation at one locality" - "is a state of being made possible by an incuriosity toward the world at large and an insensitivity toward the flow of time" (Tuan 1980:4). Nothing could be further from the truth as far as the Temanambondro are concerned, certainly as regards denying the importance of the temporality of places, and as I have tried to show "attachment to place" among the Temanambondro - Tuan's "rootedness" - *is* a process. Whilst the writings of both Relph and Tuan give us a way of thinking about what a sense of place might involve, an ethnographic discussion of the subject can help enrich the discussion of place, a subject to which anthropology has much to offer.

Conclusion

Among speakers of Austronesian languages, James Fox has recently suggested that the "concern with 'origins' is more than a concern with 'descent'. Indeed, in many Austronesian societies, the concern with 'descent' (as it has usually been defined) is of minor significance" (1993a:16; see also Fox 1987). This would certainly appear to be the case regarding the Temanambondro, and the complex of ideas about "origins" and "roots" appear to me to be a far better basis for understanding Temanambondro conceptualizations about ancestry than the notion of "descent" and many of the other terms that are the mainstays of kinship theory. If this should teach us anything it should teach us to take other people's metaphors seriously, rather than trying to represent them with our own. This at least has been my aim in attempting to explain Temanambondro ancestry and relatedness in terms of their own idioms and images - of gender, houses, "roots", "trunks" and "branches", as well as ideas about space and place - and in choosing to do so I hope I have shed some light on the complexity, subtlety and sometimes poetic beauty of another people's sociological imagination.

Notes

Notes to Chapter 1

1. The appellation Temanambondro is derived from the prefix *Te-* ("people of...") + *manambondro* ("where there are *vondro*", a species of reed). In fact there are no *vondro* along the Manambondro, but as we will see the name is that of a place from which some of the ancestors of the Temanambondro claim to have originated. In accounts of the peoples of the southeast, instead of using the prefix *Te-* it is usual to find authors using *Antai-*or *Ante-*, but these prefixes do not follow local pronunciation, and I have therefore decided not to use them: thus whilst Deschamps (1936) refers to the people who live in and around the town of Vangaindrano as Antaisaka, I have chosen instead to speak of the Tesaka. In addition, it will be noted by some that the Temanambondro dialect exhibits a number of idiosyncrasies in its written form in comparison to other dialects of Malagasy, and this is due to the fact that as far as orthography goes I have chosen to render the spoken vernacular as closely as possible. Like that of the Tesaka (see Deschamps 1936:11-12; Deschamps and Vianès 1959:106), the dialect of Malagasy spoken by Temanambondro omits and suppresses a large number of the diphthongs, euphonic consonants, and final syllables that are to be found in the official dialect.

2. The story of Temanambondro origins is known quite widely among late middle-aged and elder men in Manambondro village, although points of detail (and embellishment) vary. Known a lot less widely among younger men, and women in general, some of the names and events are however recognized by them, even if not thoroughly contextualized within the narrative as a whole. Other versions of this story are to be found in Deschamps (1936:160-1), as well as in Elle (1905-6:121-2), who mistakenly attributes it to the Tevato.

3. The interest in "Arabic" origins among peoples of the southeast goes back to Flacourt's (1913:77-89) account of the Zafiraminia, the ruling Ancestry among the Tanosy at the time of Flacourt's stay at Fort Dauphin in the mid-seventeenth century, whose founder was said to have come from "Mecca"; the subsequent bibliography on the Zafiraminia and other "Arabs" is large, the most significant work relating to the southeast being that of Ferrand (1891, 1893). For two perceptive discussions of the "Arab" influence on political symbolism, see Raison-Jourde (1983) and Hurvitz (1986); cf. Kent (1970). Most of what has been written on the Temoro has focused on the "great writings" of the *sora be*; for a recent analysis which does not fetishize these texts in the manner of most, see Rajaonarison (1994).

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4. The major ethnographic work on the Tesaka remains that of Deschamps (1936), whose chapter on the Tesaka in the volume on peoples of the southeast (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:90-107) adds little that is not contained in his earlier writings. Subsequent contributions include Raharijaona's (1967) account of Tesaka history, and Edholm's (1976) study of kinship and social change, which, due to the short period the author spent in the field, contains little that one cannot glean from Deschamps' own work, as well as some erroneous information about the Temanambondro (1976:9-10).

5. For an account of colonial rule and the *politique des races*, see Thompson and Adloff (1965:13-33). Virtually all of the work on coastal southeast Madagascar is a product of colonial ethnology. Apart from the work of Elle, a Norwegian Lutheran missionary, there is that of Lieutenant Sainjon (1901), the Adjoint de 1er Classe des Affaires Civiles, Marchand (1901), the Médecin Indigène de Colonisation, Henri Rajohnson (1908), and the doctors Fontoynont and Raomandahy (1939). Deschamps served as colonial administrator in Vangaindrano between 1933 and 1935 (see Deschamps 1975:147-162) and was himself one of a group of several colonial administrators, such as Raymond Decary (1961), Gustave Julien (1908), and Charles Poirier (1939), who produced a large amount of colonial scholarship. To my mind the influence of this work on subsequent research has been too little discussed; a notable exception to this is Feeley-Harnik's (1984; 1991b:115-151) work on the relationship between colonial scholarship and French attempts to end the southern Bemihisatra monarchy as well as extract labour from its subjects.

6. les antaisaka [sic] vivent toujours sur leur propre fonds, isolés en un monde à part qui persévère énergiquement dans son être, loin de tous les courants modernes. Ils constituent ainsi une vivante rétrospective de la civilisation malgache ancienne (Deschamps 1936:185).

7. This much at least can be gleaned from the following sources: on the Tambahoaka, Deschamps and Vianès (1959:20); on the Temoro, Poirier (1939) and Deschamps and Vianès (1959:37-49); on the Tefasy, Fontoynont and Raomandahy (1939); and on the Tesaka, Deschamps (1936:161-7) and Raharijaona (1967); see also Marchand (1901:481-491) and Elle (1905-6).

8. On the Temasianaka, see Elle (1905-6:119), Deschamps (1936:80, 158). On the Tevato, see Marchand (1901:481, 485, 489), Elle (1905-6:121-2), and Deschamps (1936:80, 158, 165); Marchand (1901:481) notes that there are three branches of Tevato, and Vianès (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:74-5) remarks that the Tevato on the Matitanana river are "kin" with the Tevato further south.

9. The notion of "ethnicity" is a highly problematic one when applied to Madagascar, as virtually every ethnographer has noted, and here again colonial ethnology looms large for the *politique des races* can be said to have invented the groups which its practice was to administer, groups whose reality was also invented in ethnological accounts about them. On the question of "ethnicity" and collective identities, see e.g. the general comments of Covell (1987:12-13, 81-4), and the ethnographic analyses of Eggert (1986), Hurvitz (1986), and Astuti (1995b).

10. The themes discussed in what remains of this section are picked up and elaborated on in the following chapters. Concepts of personhood and ancestry are central to Chapters 3 and 4, whilst the organization of Ancestries and "great houses" is an issue explored in Chapter 5. The latter chapter also includes a discussion of the ritual basis of the polity and aspects of collective identities, whilst Chapter 6 centres on a discussion of marriage practices.

11. The political significance of the *sombily* in seventeenth century Anosy is clear in Flacourt's account of the structure of the polity headed by the Zafiraminia (1913:25-6, 160; cf. Kent 1979:86). Accounts of the Tesaka (Raharijaona 1967:13), Tefasy (Fontoynont and Raomandahy 1939:3, 9, 24), Temoro (Ferrand 1893:32; Poirier 1939:24-5; Faublée 1968:106; Kent 1970:107-8), and Tanala (Linton 1933:33; Beaujard 1983b:312-5) also reveal that the right to perform the *sombily* was one of the prerogatives of rulers, and one of the ways that they imposed their authority; among the Temanambondro, Tesaka and Temoro this right lasted up until the wars between ruling and subject peoples that took place in the 1890s (see below).

12. By distinguishing between Temanambondro perceptions of the past and European history, my aim is to emphasize the fact that "history" is only one and a particular way of viewing the past. For discussions of "history" and other perspectives on the past, see e.g. Thornton (1980:157-224), Sahlins (1985:32-72), and Hoskins (1993:306-332).

13. On the trans-oceanic economy of the Indian Ocean see Chaudhuri (1985), especially his accounts of Islamic merchants before the arrival of Europeans (1985:43-62), and the trading practices of the Portuguese, English, Dutch and French (1985:63-97). On the Portuguese and other Europeans in Madagascar, see Deschamps (1960:63-91) and Brown (1978:30-130).

14. On Flacourt and the French at Fort Dauphin, see esp. Flacourt (1913, 1920); see also Deschamps (1960:67-74), Brown (1978:49-54), and Vérin (1991:127-135).

15. Sporadic unrest among the Tesaka culminated in 1895 in a revolt against the Rabehavana and other ruling Ancestries by subject groups who combined forces under the names of Zafimananga and Zafimahavaly (see Deschamps 1936:175-6; Raharijaona 1967:23-6). A similar event occurred among the Temoro in 1892, the origins of which go back to the 1850s, when the subject peoples grouped together under the name Ampanabaka and moved against the ruling Anteony and Antalaotra (see Poirier 1939:27; Deschamps and Vianès 1959:47; Faublée 1968:108-110; Kent 1970:92). One of the outcomes of these uprisings was the end of the rulers' ability to deny the former subject peoples' right to perform the *sombily* (see above).

16. Deschamps similarly observes that although "the influence of the missions is not entirely negligible" (1936:199), "The Antaisaka remain strongly attached to their religion and their customs" (1936:198); and elsewhere he points out that, with a few exceptions, for the southeast as a whole "Among the converted ...

ancestral beliefs often remain very much alive and participation in ceremonies continues" (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:13). Within the southeast it would appear that Christianity has had the greatest affect on the Temoro; cf. e.g. Deschamps (1936:198n.2), Deschamps and Vianès (1959:13, 71), Chandon-Moet (1972:180-1).

17. The results of this colonial cartography are to be found in Marchand (1901), Elle (1905-6), Deschamps (1936), and Deschamps and Vianès (1959). The idea that "tribes" have "territories" with precise boundaries was also an idea held by the British. In anthropology it is one model of the relationship between society and space, the roots of which can be traced back to the writings of Maine and Morgan (see Thornton 1980:8-13), and which was to later find its way into the model of African political systems put forward by Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (1940:10-11). However, the issue in most Malagasy polities was not control of land and territory, but control of people (cf. Gardenier 1976:114; Hurvitz 1980:97; Middleton 1988:112; Feeley-Harnik 1991b:124). In addition, polities did not so much have boundaries as centres, and among the peoples of coastal southeast Madagascar these centres were usually rivers and their embouchures (cf. Hurvitz 1986).

18. It is interesting that Deschamps' comment on "the classical country of insubordination [*le pays classique de l'insoumission*]" immediately followed his noting that the Temanambondro region "is the country of *tavi* [swidden agriculture]" (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:95). French enthusiasm for "ecology" appears to have been widespread, and in the Manambondro region they set aside regions of protected forest by fencing them (!) and established plantations of eucalyptus. However, I suspect that the ban placed on swiddening stemmed not only from its perceived ecological effects, but also because its practice was seen as a defiance of colonial authority. I hope to do some research on this and related issues at a later date.

19. The exception to this generalization is the trade in lobster that has recently flourished, but which is more significant to the south of Manambondro, especially on the Isandra. However, in the villages of the Manambondro river few people are involved in the trade, and from an economic point of view it is relatively insignificant.

20. The phrase *efa mandroso* is strictly speaking grammatically incorrect: the adverb *efa* ("already") refers to things done in the past, while the verb *mandroso* is in the present tense. However, this is the idiom used by those I spoke with.

21. Because people in Manambondro rarely find what they have said entombed in writing, so as to ensure that people cannot be held accountable for what they told me I have chosen to use pseudonyms wherever reporting direct speech; in most cases I have referred to people by using teknonyms, such as Aban'Iano, "father of Iano", and Endrin'Iano "mother of Iano". As well as using pseudonyms for living persons, the names of some ancestral persons and named Ancestries mentioned in what follows have also been changed whenever it seemed expedient to do so.

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1. The tendency to view kinship in this manner is most apparent in British social anthropology where up until the late 1960s there existed a particularly impoverished concept of culture, such that culture was seen as comprising customs which functioned to maintain social cohesion (e.g. Fortes 1970:74-5). Andrew Strathern has pithily remarked that for Fortes culture is "almost everything that is left after 'social structure' has been abstracted from the processes of social life" (1973:23); the problem is at its most acute in the study of kinship, where culture is secondary to social structure, and "real kinship" is not seen to have a cultural basis. Thus even though Leach's (1954b:101-195) account of Kachin social structure uses Kachin categories as its starting point, it does not explore these in any way but simply glosses them in the language of kinship theory, and Leach has a tendency to view culture as mere frippery - "the 'dress' of the social situation" - in comparison to the more fundamental object of study, structure (1954b:16-17). In fact, when one looks at the terms themselves, Kachin frequently talk of social groups, political hierarchy, marriage and descent in terms of the house (see P. Thomas 1996).

2. Although there are obvious differences in the way Schneider and Bloch conceptualize culture, their work exhibits a number of similarities. Both highlight how the theory they criticize produces accounts in terms of that theory (Schneider 1984:67-78; Bloch 1991), as well as pointing out how these theories derive from our own folk theories (Schneider 1984:175; Bloch 1991:190); finally, both advocate using people's own concepts as the staring point of analysis. However, as Ortner (1984:130) points out, Schneider's brand of symbolic anthropology has a tendency to divorce culture from practice, something quite antithetical to the intentions of Bloch (see e.g. 1991:187). As for Fernandez, Bloch (1993a:118) has criticized his use of the term metaphor, and from Bloch's point of view he could perhaps be accused of concentrating too much on the narrative forms of the images he sees as central to culture. For his own part, Fernandez has criticized the "instrumental bias in the study of culture ... [whereby] the importance of expressive elements has been underrated" (1973:194), a criticism which could be levelled at Bloch's definition of culture, "that which needs to be known in order to operate reasonably effectively in a specific human environment" (1991:183), a definition which is perhaps unduly stresses effectiveness at the expense of affectivity.

3. Sahlins (1976) offers a stimulating criticism of the varieties of structuralism on offer, the more simplistic of which he later disparagingly referred to as "yin-yang structuralism" (1985:xvi). Often both Durkheimian and Lévi-Straussian varieties are to be found in conjunction, especially in Anglo-Saxon anthropology, see e.g. Cunningham (1964), cf. Ellen (1986). For those following a more continental trend, see e.g. Tambiah (1969), Bourdieu (1979), and Hugh-Jones (1979); see also Sahlins' own analysis of Fijian domestic proxemics (Sahlins 1976:32-47).

4. By concentrating on place I do not mean to deny the importance of domestic space in the constitution of gender identity, an issue touched on in Chapter 6, and something I have discussed in more detail elsewhere (see P. Thomas 1995).

5. Remarks on views, visuality and seeing are to be found in virtually all the contributions to Hirsch and O'Hanlon, eds. (1995). Aspects of the visuality of landscape are also discussed by those who have made a sub-discipline out of place and landscape, human and cultural geographers, although there is disagreement as to whether or not the visuality of landscape is problematic; see e.g. Tuan (1974:64), Relph (1981:58), Cosgrove (1984), Penning-Rowsell (1986), Daniels and Cosgrove (1993), and Smith (1993). On the history, ideology and politics of the landscape idea, see e.g. Cosgrove (1984); for critiques of visual bias in anthropological understanding, see Clifford (1986:11-12), and Stoller (1989).

6. Although this sketchy definition is my own, my thinking on the subject is heavily indebted to the geographers Edward Relph (1976, 1981, 1985) and Yi-Fu Tuan (1974, 1977, 1980). However, I feel somewhat ambivalent about certain aspects of the work of both Relph and Tuan, not least the un-anthropological use of ethnography in their writings.

7. The method is common to many other studies of aesthetics: cf. e.g. Chernoff (1979), Keil (1979), and Rasmussen (1995) on aesthetic idioms in musical and non-musical contexts in West Africa. For a recent and stimulating collection of papers in this area, see Coote and Shelton, eds. (1992).

8. The tendency to fetishize objects in discussions of aesthetics is commented on in a recent debate on aesthetics as a cross-cultural category (Weiner, ed. 1994). Several contributors to this interesting debate however display a similar tendency in their fethishization of the notion of aesthetics.

9. My use of the term image here and elsewhere derives in the main from my understanding of the work of James Fernandez (1982, 1986d), whose own usage is an adaptation of that of Lévi-Strauss (see Fernandez 1986b:66n.1; cf. Ricoeur 1979). I emphasise the phrase "my understanding", because Fernandez's writings are sometimes as inchoate as the pronouns seeking predication he discusses. I am in broad sympathy with Fernandez however, for like myself, Fernandez is uneasy about the term symbol, which he notes "has been used to cover a great variety of apparently dissimilar modes of behaviour" (1986b:30), a term which as he puts it is "luminous but not really illuminating" (1986b:30). To my mind one of the important aspects of Fernandez's thinking on the subject are his ideas regarding images, a form of pictorializing or visualizing ideas (see 1986c:215-6; 1986e:164-5), "mental pictures" (1982:541) used as "organizing metaphors" (1982:279); several Temanambondro ideas take this form as it will be seen. My use of the term is less refined than that of Fernandez however, and I leave aside here his discussions of sign-images (1986b:31) and the "argument of images" (1986e). Furthermore I realize that my use of the term is perhaps not consistent with that of cognitive psychology; see e.g. the discussion of image metaphors in Lakoff (1993).

10. As well as being grounded in Brenneis's ideas on social aesthetics, this position is arrived at from a variety of writings, and is arguably implicit in several of the authors already mentioned. Although in places different from my own, Hardin's discussion of aesthetics in terms of the redundancy and repetition of forms across different domains of experience is particularly useful (1993:11-14, 122-3, 150-160); see also

Beidelman's (1986:5-6) discussion of the aesthetic and ethical role of metaphor in imagination; and Blier (1987) on metaphor, experience, and the repetition of forms in Batammaliba architecture and aesthetics. For a psychological perspective on the aesthetic dimensions of metaphor, see Sternberg, Tourangeau, and Nigro (1993).

Notes to Chapter 3

1. Most of the data in this section comes from conversations with women, mostly middle aged and with children, and they were the ones most interested in talking about the subject. What little men had to say however was in no way inconsistent with their views.

2. See Chapter 6 for the way in which these idioms relate to marriage. Whilst people know of ideas associated with *vintana* ("destinies"), these appear to be unimportant in people's lives (cf. Deschamps 1936:120-2), and although the idea is implicit in the Temanambondro practice of "divination" (*sikidy*) I never heard it mentioned or discussed, nor used to explain events (such as why a woman became pregnant), a person's disposition, or the compatibility of spouses (cf. Bloch 1992:137). On *vintana*, see Ruud (1960:27-65); Malagasy divination practices have been widely discussed, see e.g. Vérin and Rajaonarimanana (1991).

3. There are parallels to these ideas, of compatibility and the "same kinds" of things, in the relationship terminology and the marriage. The bilateral terminology (formally speaking "Hawaiian") does not create difference between lines (between siblings and cousins), so there is no terminological difference determining the choice of spouse such as one finds in systems which distinguish between two lines or more. In short the terminology does not necessitate spouses being different, i.e. "cousins" not "siblings" (cf. Middleton 1988:181). Furthermore, the marriage rite presumes that it is "sisters" and "brothers" who marry (see Chapter 6), which suggests that the couple are in some sense seen as the same. Terminology and marriage rite therefore do not presume difference between spouses, and neither do people's ideas about conception.

4. The marking of the status of persons through burial is common throughout Madagascar, and the practice of disposing of the corpses of infants in places other than tombs is widely reported (Poirier 1939:22; Wilson 1967:144; Gardenier 1976:155; Hurvitz 1980:179-180; Kottak 1980:218; Beaujard 1983b:468; Huntington 1988:31; Astuti 1993:95-6). What is interesting here is the way in which notions of the person are revealed in such practices. For example, along with those who "do not fill months", sorcerers (*pamosavy*), quintessential anti-persons, are denied burial by Temanambondro, and in the past they were burned alive, their body left where it fell to be scavenged by dogs and birds, as horrific and ignominous a fate as Temanambondro can imagine (cf. Deschamps 1935). Also, children whose umbilical cord has not

been disposed of properly (see below) are denied burial in the tomb, as are children born of a non-Temanambondro mother and for whom the rite of *vaky lela* ("breaking the tongue") which legitimates their status as Temanambondro has not been performed (see Chapter 6). Although most Temanambondro ancestries dispose of children who "do not fill months" in the way described, it should be noted that two ancestries in Manambondro village share the use of a separate tomb for the burial of such children, a situation also reported among the Temoro (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:53). Whilst this may at first appear to contradict the argument it should be noted that this tomb is situated in a spatially inferior position, being close to and due south of the village rather than due east and at the embouchure. Furthermore, the biography of this tomb reveals that it was built for an in-married woman of low rank who had married a high ranked man of the village. As her ancestral tomb was too far away for her to be buried in when she died she asked to have a tomb built along with the others at the river mouth, but because of her rank this could not be done. Having been granted a site for her tomb away from the embouchure (but still close to the river), she then asked that all the children born of her husband's ancestry who "do not fill a month" be buried with her so that she would not be lonely. That ancestry has since split in two, having separate tombs at the river mouth, but in accordance with her wishes children of both ancestries who die within the first three months are buried in her tomb as she requested.

5. In the dictionary of Abinal and Malzac (1987) *fanahy* (the spelling of term in Official Malagasy, which lacks the phoneme of the velar /ñ/) is given as "esprit, âme; *fig.* bonne nature, bonté, droiture, conduite" (1987:143); the more recent Diksionera suggests "the spirit, the soul; an attitude or temperament" (1973:18). Nineteenth century missionaries (who included Abinal and Malzac) translated the Holy Spirit as the Fanahy Masina. As virtually all dictionaries of Malagasy are based on the highland dialects, particularly that of the Merina, it is worth noting that there are differences between Temanambondro and highland ideas about *fañahy/fanahy*. Both Bloch (1971:125-7) and Kottak (1980:219-220) mention two soul-like concepts among Merina and Betsileo respectively, *ambiroa* and *fanahy*, which in certain respects appear to be merged in the Temanambondro concept of *fañahy*. There are interesting parallels too with Lambek's (1981:29, 45; 1993) discussions of *rohu* and *nyora* among Malagasy speakers of Mayotte, although here the concepts exhibit a degree of religious doxa due to the presence of Islam absent among the Temanambondro. Cf. also Rajaonarivelo (1968), and Dubois (1978).

6. *Tsy fantanao ñe fañahiny fa hitanao ñe fieñana andavanandro - laha mazava fo, mazava saina. De mahita mazava saina amin'ñ'olo tsara, olo tsotry - mahazo fañazava taminazy, findraresaka. De mahita vokoa amin'ñe fomba atao.*

7. *Samby mana fañahy hafa ñe olombelona. Ambony ñe hasy de mana haza ñe lelahy. Nefa ñe saina - misy lelahy mieritreritra tsy mazava ñe sainan'apela fa misy mitovy avao. Nikabaro ñe apela taloha nefa halan'ñe lelahy. Tsy mahay resaka, hoe izy. Farany tsy mamonzy kabaro sanaka ñe apela.*

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8. It is interesting that French colonial ethnology was particularly struck by the status of Malagasy women. Marchand for example (somewhat mockingly) suggests that, with respect to their degree of political solidarity, "The conduct of Sahavoay women [of the southeast] could perhaps be an example to the leaders of the feminist movement in Europe" (1901:578). Later authors also comment on the "freedom of women", something not unconnected with ideas about their perceived "sexual liberty" (see e.g. Deschamps and Vianès 1959:16; Condominas 1960:111).

9. As Feeley-Harnik (1986:157-161) points out work is expressive as well as instrumental and practical, and can have moral, philosophical and aesthetic aspects (see also Feeley-Harnik 1987). The importance of aesthetic dimensions of work, where work is seen to exhibit qualities of the person who performed it, have long been noted in Melanesia; cf. e.g. Malinowski (1935), Schwimmer (1979), and Gell (1992).

10. For accounts of body marking practices, see Cotte (1947:220) and Astuti (1993:285) on the marking of certain categories of people in marriage; Feeley-Harnik (1991b:56) on the marking of royal followers; and Bloch (1993b:127, 129) on marking parents at the time of naming a child. The marking of the possessed during spirit possession is also widespread; cf. e.g. Estrade (1977), Lambek (1981, 1993), Feeley-Harnik (1989), and Sharp (1993). In addition types of white earth are reported as being used in funerals by Cotte (1947:222) and Feeley-Harnik (1991b:401-440); and in rites of first entry into newly made houses on the east coast by Cotte (1947:167-8), Vernier (1955), and Hurvitz (1980:195n). As we will see in Chapter 6, Temanambondro also use forms of marking bodies during marriage, although they do not use white earth for the practice. Although I failed to think to ask anyone about it during fieldwork, I strongly suspect that the aesthetics of clarity are implicated in the Temanambondro ritual of clearing a blocked river mouth (saotra vinañy), a practice found along much of the east coast (see e.g. Cotte 1947:150-2; Deschamps and Vianès 1959:21, 79; Rahatoka 1984:77-9).

Notes to Chapter 4

1. Although I could find no such idea, some ethnographers have alluded to notions of substance in their discussions of kinship. However, it is often unclear just whose metaphors we are dealing with, those of the anthropologist or those of the people studied. Kottak (1980:202) for example mentions "male substance" and "female substance" but does not explain what he means by these terms, nor whether they are ideas held by the Betsileo he is describing; similarly Bloch (1981:7-8) talks of people who "share the same substance" and who are "consubstantial" without elaborating on Merina ideas on this matter. Huntington (1988) is only a little more precise, stating that mothers pass on substance in their blood (1988:24, 28), adding that relationships of substance between fathers and children are less clear (1988:26). The case described by Middleton remains the clearest, and she claims that the Karembola hold an idea of common substance (1988:96, 213), for which she gives the term *sambe enta lehilahe* ["that which each

man carries"?], although she also notes that they have no developed procreation ideology (1988:300-1). In a comparison of the sharing of substance and the sharing of activity among the Buid of Mindoro, the Philippines, Thomas Gibson concludes a theoretical argument by proposing that "if we are to retain 'kinship' at all as a cross-cultural category, we must restrict it to the comparison of the varying social implications of the symbol of shared physical substance" (1985:409). If such be the case then the Temanambondro present us with an example of "no substance, no kinship". As the following will hopefully show however Temanambondro employ a variety of categories of persons and relations which underlie practice which would be usually described as "kinship", so the restriction of the term to relations of shared physical substance would appear to me to be unduly limiting. Of course this may lead one to question the usefulness of the concept of "kinship" as a cross-cultural category, another issue altogether.

2. In speech act theory the term "performative" comes from Austin (1962); cf. Searle (1969). In anthropology discussions of performativity have in the main been restricted to ritual speech acts, utterances which do not *describe* a state of affairs but *bring about* a state of affairs through the act of enunciation (see e.g. Bloch 1974; Tambiah 1981; cf. Gardner 1983); however the emphasis here is not on ritual speech acts but on aspects of practice which bring about a particular state of relatedness.

3. In what follows the term "Ancestry" (with capital) denotes paternal ancestry, and is a translation of the term *karazana* (see below). I use "ancestry" (no capital) to denote relatedness traced through the "sides" that link people to their various forebears, these "sides" traced through one or more women as well as through the father. Whilst "ancestry" in general does not specify the nature of the link between a person and a forbear, "Ancestry" denotes the tracing of links back through men, through the F, FF, FFF etc.

4. Throughout much of Madagascar relationships traced through fathers are talked of in terms of "strength" or as "stronger"; cf. e.g. Bloch (1971:116), Hurvitz (1980:47), Kottak (1980:184), Huntington (1988:63), Middleton (1988:82).

5. Translating the term *teña fototra* presents considerable difficulties. Abinal and Malzac give *tena* as "1. Personne, corps, se, soi, soi-même, lui-même.... 2. la substance, le fond des choses, ce constitue un être, ce qui lui est propre, les éléments des choses.... 3. Véritable, vraiment, tout à fait, beau" (1987:694); whilst the Diksionera gives "the self, the very thing, the body" (1973:91). In the Temanambondro dialect *teña* has all of these senses, although as with the Official Malagasy *tena*, the sense depends on context. By contrast *fototra* is less problematic and means "origin" or "root" (although the term is not applied to the roots of plants). In the case of *teña fototrá* the use of *teña* denotes the superlative, as in the grammatically identical case of *teña mahery*, "strongest" (*mahery*, "strong"). A clumsy translation would therefore be "rootiest root", "very root" or "real root", none of which is satisfactory. Given these difficulties I have decided to leave the term untranslated, but given that the *teña fototra* is said to be the "strongest" I hope the reader gets the idea of what the term implies.

6. Fines (*sazy*) can be imposed for many things, whether rape or the kicking of a woman (1 zebu), through murder (3 zebu) to elopement with another man's wife (3 zebu, previously 6). Openly impugning another's ancestry however, by whatever means, can result in a fine of 10 zebu.

7. This does not mean that their status cannot be the source of interpersonal animosity. In one tragic case a man was convicted of killing his ZS by "sorcery" (*vosavy*), exiled from the village and finally committed suicide; the man's ZS "had no father" and stood to gain a share equal to his own of his father's sizeable coffee plantation. It has occurred to me since leaving the field that *zanak'adrao* might not be able to take on the office of *lonaky* ("headman"), but I am not sure and think it unlikely. For the Tesaka Deschamps (1936:126) claims that children born "outside marriage" whose father "remains unknown" are prevented from being interred in the Ancestry tomb; this is not the case for the Temanambondro however, and certain aspects of Deschamps' discussion of "filiation" seem to me to be questionable. The structural position of children who "have no father" is interesting as it questions the usefulness of the notion of lineality; for similar cases elsewhere in Madagascar, cf. Rajohnson (1908:183), Linton (1933:292-3), Gardenier (1976:85-6), Huntington (1988:119), and Astuti (1993:282).

8. A man can become a recognized father of a child after it is born if the mother's family agrees. This may happen when a man marries a woman after they have had a child together, but in some instances a man asks to have himself recognized as the father without marrying the mother through performing the rite of *mañaran-daza* ("following the child").

9. The careful disposal of the placenta and its status as quasi-sibling are widely reported throughout Madagascar (e.g. Feeley-Harnik 1980:580; Huntington 1988:30-1; Bloch 1993b:126); elsewhere in the southeast the placenta is usually buried in or near to a house, or in a particular river (see Linton 1933:283-4; Deschamps 1936:134; Deschamps and Vianès 1959:56, 88; Beaujard 1983b:499). As Bloch (1993b:126) notes, similar ideas and practices are widespread throughout Southeast Asia. However, it is noteworthy given the oft discussed origins of the Malagasy that strikingly similar ideas and practices are also to be found in parts of Africa: see esp. Fernandez (1982:86, 447) on the Bantu-speaking Fang; cf. also Blier (1987:125, 254n.4) and Hardin (1993:93) on placentae and umbilical cords.

10. The invocation neglects to say "gone east" as this is a euphemism for death. Although the disposal of the umbilical cord is practised for all Temanambondro, the event is now rarely accompanied by the invocation. As the person who wrote it down for me said, people today "do not know how to do custom" (*tsy mahay fomba*); his text ran as follows:

Mitadidy aminao Ranon-draza ty. Hañary ñe foitrin'Iano. Ndre niañavaratra. Ndre niañatsimo. Ndre niañkandrefana. Ndre de hotaman-tany añy de anao Rano e Manambondro ty avao tsy hohadiñony.

11. On the disposal of umbilical cords elsewhere in the southeast, see Linton (1933:284-5), Deschamps and Vianès (1959:59), Chandon-Moet (1972:102), Beaujard (1983b:499); for elsewhere in Madagascar, cf.

Huntington (1988:31), Bloch (1993b:127), and Middleton (n.d.b).

12. On the west coast one finds that this set of relationships is referred to as the *valo raza*, "eight ancestors"; see Lavondès (1967:37-56), Feeley-Harnik (1991b:25-6, 170-2), and Astuti (1995a:87-92). Similar categories are also reported in other parts of the island; cf. e.g. Hurvitz (1980:42), Kottak (1980:178), and Beaujard (1983b:151).

13. It has been noted by some, especially those working in west Madagascar, that genealogical knowledge is often limited, rarely extending beyond three generations (Lavondès 1967:102; Baré 1977:51; Feeley-Harnik 1991b:57; Astuti 1995a:84), although authors also note that this situation applies much more to "commoners" than "nobles" and "rulers", among whom genealogical knowledge is much more extensive and of far greater significance (see Baré 1977:65; Feeley-Harnik 1991b:69-88; cf. Astuti 1995b:475-7). However, among Temanambondro I found that a number of men of various Ancestries possessed genealogical knowledge stretching back as many as ten and eleven generations to those who first arrived in the region (cf. Kottak 1980:167). In terms of remembering this knowledge it is important to note that the information is reasonably regularly enunciated, for during the "invocations" at which people seek blessing from the ancestors of their Ancestry names of ancestors in succeeding generations from those who first settled in Manambondro up to the present are recited. Whilst "invocations" therefore keep the knowledge very much alive, as I argue below and in the next chapter, so too does the way people remember relationships in terms of places.

14. It is interesting to compare this with the case of the Sa'dan Toraja of Sulawesi reported by Roxana Waterson, who notes that whilst genealogical memory is shallow (1986:93), "membership of houses" establishes that a relationship exists "even where a precise kin tie can no longer be traced" (1986:105). As with the Temanambondro, lack of genealogical knowledge does not mean lack of knowledge of relatedness. In a recent paper Janet Carsten (1995) has argued that for Malays of Pulau Langkawi, "kinship - or a sense of connectedness to place and people - is not derived from past ties but must be created in the future" (1995:326), a situation she sees as more widely applicable among cognatic societies of Southeast Asia as a whole, and one reason for the widely reported incidence of "genealogical amnesia". As the Temanambondro and Toraja cases illustrate, "kinship" among cognatic peoples certainly does involve "connectedness to place and people", but aspects of this connectedness may well result from "past ties", and "genealogical amnesia" does not necessarily mean loss of knowledge of relatedness. Nor should an interest in ancestors immediately make one assume that relatedness is reckoned in terms of "descent", for just as on Pulau Langkawi, people trace relationships back to sibling sets rather than to apical ancestors. Finally, although I say little on the matter here, certain aspects of Temanambondro ancestry is "downward looking" (Geertz and Geertz 1964:105, quoted by Carsten 1995:325) and oriented to the future in the manner Carsten discusses: people are to a great extent remembered through their children, both because of teknonymy (a practice which "makes one's name living", *mahavelo ñe anarany*), and because one's children should be the ones most involved in burying and commemorating one. For other arguments on the significance of

parent/child relations in Madagascar, see Gardenier (1976:78, 108-9), Kottak (1980:219-220), and Bloch (1993b).

15. In a different context, Feeley-Harnik (1978:411) has discussed the loss of "histories" (*tantara*) with far greater consequences among the Bemihisatra Sakalava; see also Feeley-Harnik (1991b:22).

16. The fact that Ravavy's father's Ancestry was not changed as the result of burial makes the Temanambondro an unusual case in terms of the arguments of other ethnographers working in Madagascar who suggest that burial is the means for defining group membership (see above, main text). Although the story of Ravavy's father is very unusual in that it is the only one I know of where a man did not "follow his father", the practice of "following the mother" is more common among women; however, as with Ravavy's father, the practice does not change their Ancestry, nor that of their children. Based on what I know of other cases where a man chooses to link themselves to a house-group other than that of their father (a very rare occurrence), the following options were open to Ravavy's father. He could do as he did, and simply live in his mother's brother's house-group; however, he would never be eligible for the role of "headman" (*tsy azo atao lonaky*), but his children could be buried in the tomb of his mother. If he set himself up as a new house-group of his mother's brother's Ancestry he would probably not be able to perform sacrifices there (for marriages, circumcisions, funerals etc.), and instead would have to go to his "mother's brother's" house-group to have them performed. Finally, he could establish a new Ancestry, and therefore become "headman" of his own house-group, and be able to perform his own sacrifices. Unfortunately I neglected to ask much about this scenario, but would imagine that the number of cattle that must be sacrificed to "cut the root" to found a new Ancestry would be more than the single animal required to establish a new house-group.

Notes to Chapter 5

1. Significantly enough, Lévi-Strauss himself does not actually mention the importance of native categories in his analysis, and it is particularly ironic, given that the origin of Lévi-Strauss's theory is usually taken to be his re-analysis of the Kwakiutl *numayma*, that *numayma* does not mean "house" but "one kind" (Boas 1966:37); Lévi-Strauss seems in fact to have appropriated the term "house" from the Yurok (Lévi-Strauss 1982:172-3; 1987:151-2). Although the results are mixed, the most extensive exploration of the house is to be found in recent work on Southeast Asia (cf. e.g. Waterson 1986; Errington 1987; Macdonald, ed. 1987; Carsten and Hugh-Jones, eds. 1995); a number of Africanists have also focused on the "house" as an important native category, with some of this work (although by no means all) being explicitly formulated as a critique of descent theory (cf. e.g. Blier 1987:140-5; Schloss 1988:31-106; Saul 1991; Kuper 1993). As for Madagascar, Bloch (1992, 1993b, 1995b) has made the most extensive analysis of the house; but see also Feeley-Harnik (1980), and Kus and Raharijaona (1990).

2. For comparative material on east coast houses, see Rajohnson (1908:181-2), Deschamps (1936:60-4), Cotte (1947:28-30), Deschamps and Vianès (1959:12, 28-9), Chavanes (1969:88), Chandon-Moet (1972:25-7), and Hurvitz (1980:194). In a comparative analysis of Southeast Asian architecture Roxana Waterson (1990) suggests that pile building is a trait of Austronesian architecture, and many similarities, both symbolic and technological, can be found between Temanambondro houses and the various Austronesian dwellings she describes (see also Fox 1993a). However a note of caution needs sounding, for whilst Madagascar undoubtedly exhibits its Austronesian heritage in many ways it cannot be incorporated wholesale within the Austronesian region. For example, most Malagasy houses are not built on piles, and as close to the Manambondro region as the Iavibola river one begins to see the style of architecture found in most of Madagascar where houses have a floor of compacted earth surrounded by walls built up from or terminating in the ground (cf. e.g. Feeley-Harnik 1980; Kus and Raharijaona 1990). Furthermore, parallels between houses and tombs that hint at variations on an Austronesian theme (Waterson 1990:199-228) must be viewed in light of the fact that in the southeast one of the words for tomb (*kibory*) is of Arabic origin.

3. Of the eleven Ancestries and fifty-seven house-groups in Manambondro village five are composed of one house-group, whilst the largest ancestry is composed of twenty-eight. As house-groups rarely number more than twenty households, those Ancestries comprising only one house-group are demographically speaking the smallest. The largest Ancestry in number of house-groups and persons is the one from which "rulers" (*rondriana, panzaka*) formerly came, and its size is mainly due to the practice of polygyny among past rulers, with "children" of different wives often establishing themselves as different house-groups.

4. As with many things concerning houses, there is a male bias, and the office of *lonaky* is no exception. Of the fifty-seven *lonaky* in Manambondro village during fieldwork, only two were women. They held the office, and performed the duties it entailed because no able man was available to perform it, and both looked forward to giving up the post as soon as circumstances permitted.

5. During fieldwork three *fira fototra* establishing new *trañobe* were performed in Manambondro village, and the number was seen as quite untypical over such a short period of time; no new lines of "memorials" were established. The founding of a new Ancestry is rare, and it sometimes happens that a new "branch" of the Ancestry will form by establishing a new tomb which is still seen as being of the "one tomb" of the Ancestry. In Manambondro village only one Ancestry has split in two, for reasons which are too intricate to go into here, but it is notable that the split occurred between a "ruler" and his younger brother, with the "ruler" establishing a new Ancestry whose tomb was founded in the superior direction of north, an event from which came the Ancestry name Andonakavaratra (locative + ruler + north). Cases where a house-group has "cut the root" and grafted itself onto another Ancestry are rare and exceedingly difficult to get information on. As with impugning the Ancestry of one's father (see Chapter 4) openly disputing the Ancestry of a house-group is a grave offence. In the one case I know of, it was admitted that the house-group was now "following its mother's brother" (*miaraka amin'ñe endrilahiny*). However, the fact was not

openly mentioned and known only to a few: "Eventually people will forget" (*farany hohadiñon'olo*) one elder told me, somewhat disingenuously I am sure as knowing the "history" (*tantara*) of such things is a valued form of knowledge.

6. Dictionary definitions give *taranaka* as "descendants" (Abinal and Malzac 1987:684; Diksionera 1973:90), and in the language of kinship theory the term can be glossed as "those related to a given person by undifferentiated descent". The term is therefore also ungendered, in that it does not imply links traced exclusively through men or women, a point to which I return in the conclusion to the next chapter. The term is used by Temanambondro in two ways: firstly, a person can have "many *taranaka*" (*mana taranaka maro*), and secondly, a person can be said to be "*taranaka* of X" (*taranak'i X*); however, the term is not used with a possessive, such that a person could say "my/her/our *taranaka*" etc. Although as wary as myself about translating *taranaka* as "descendants", Feeley-Harnik's (1991b:158) rendering of the term as "generations" (in the sense of "those generated by a person") appears to me problematic given its standard usage. As Feeley-Harnik (1991b:532n.3) herself notes, the term derives from the root *anaka* ("child") and the substantive is formed with the addition of the prefix *ta-* which refers to "those things having essentially the property of the root, as: *tafotsiny* (root *fotsy*, white), the white of an egg" (Richardson 1885:594). Therefore I have chosen to render *taranaka* as "children" in the sense that whether children, children's children, or children's children's children etc. all were generated by someone regardless of whether they are in the next or a subsequent generation, and are therefore all "children" as they have "essentially the property of the root" in being child-like.

7. The root *lahy* is also employed as a male suffix, such as in *aombilahy* ("male zebu, bull"), and *akoholahy* ("male chicken, cockerel"). Although *lahiny* may be glossed as "those who belong to the house-group" I unfortunately neglected to enquire as to whether the term can be used as a category of relatedness such that someone could be said to be *taranaka lahiny*, "children through men", i.e. someone related to a given person through exclusively male links, and therefore of the same house-group. I do not recall the term being so used, only ever hearing it in the sense of "person of the house-group". It is for this reason that I have said those of a house-group stand to the "one father" as both *taranaka* and *lahiny*. The *taranaka* of a person who remain members of their house-group can however be specified by saying *taranaka latsaka am-patrange*, lit. "*taranaka* dropped [i.e. born] in the house-group".

8. The terms *trañobe/tranobe* and *fatrange* are found throughout southeast Madagascar, and are part of a fairly uniform set of terms used to designate social groups and categories of relatedness, although the referents of these terms exhibit minor variations. For accounts of social organization among peoples of the southeast, see Linton (1933), Deschamps (1936), Deschamps and Vianès (1959), Chandon-Moet (1972), Edholm (1976), Beaujard (1983b), and Rolland (1984); cf. also Faublée (1954) and Huntington (1988) on the Bara of the central south, who are sociologically similar in certain respects to peoples of the southeast.

9. An alternative term for the *fañary*, and one common throughout the southeast, is *fatora* (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:13). Contrary to Deschamps' (1936:94) assertion, Temanambondro do (or rather did) possess *fañary/fatora*, although they have now largely disappeared: out of fifty-seven house-groups in Manambondro village only two still have a *fañary*. When I asked why this was so I was told that when *fañary* became "broken" (*simba*) no one could be bothered to replace them; however, I saw a *fañary* erected during a circumcision ceremony in the village of Befeno in 1992. The term *fañary* itself was said to come from *mañary*, "to throw away", but no explanation of the etymology was forthcoming. The word *fatora* comes from *fatotry*, "that which is tied/linked" (Deschamps 1936:94), and perhaps refers to the fact that cattle are/were tied to the post prior to being sacrificed.

10. Among the Tesaka it appears that the *lonaky* is expected to reside in the *trañondonaky* (Deschamps 1936:93; Edholm 1976:152-3). Both Poirier (1939:25) and Deschamps (Deschamps and Vianès 1959:81) report that among the Temoro of Vohipeno and the Zafisoro respectively the term *lonaky* refers not to the "ruler" but to the "ruler's" house (cf. Abinal and Malzac 1987:412, s.v. *lonaka*).

11. The term *sokazana* was explained to me in two ways. Firstly it was illustrated using the hand and forearm: the forearm is the *fatora* ("trunk"), the fingers the *sokazana* (the term *ratsana*, "fingers, toes", can also mean "small branch"). Secondly, the posts, beams, planks, roof and so forth are the *sokazana* of a house. Unlike *sampana* ("branch"), the term *sokazana* is not used to refer to the anatomy of plants, and as the example of the house seems to suggest, the idea of *sokazana* is of parts that make up a whole, conceptualized as "branches" or "parts" of that whole.

12. In fact not all tombs are sited at the river mouth. Since the end of the old polity (c.1896) a few Ancestries in villages relatively distant from the embouchure have moved their tombs closer to their village so as to cut out the long journey down river that burial entails. In addition several Ancestries on the Isandra have moved their tombs from the Manambondro to the Isandra river. However, even though some tombs have been moved the dominant image of tomb location is that of the embouchure of the Manambondro.

13. As well as there sometimes being different tomb buildings for men and women, a few Ancestries have different tombs for different "branches" of the Ancestry; however the Ancestry is still said to "have one tomb". The practice of separating men from women in burial appears to be universal in the southeast (Toussaint 1912:378; Deschamps 1936:95; Poirier 1939:22; Deschamps and Vianès 1959:52, 79), and is widely reported elsewhere (Baré 1977:87; Huntington 1988:35; Wilson 1992:108; cf. Hurvitz 1980:182); the practice is of course in marked contrast to the well known mixing of genders in Merina tombs (Bloch 1971). When asked why men and women could not be buried together most emphasized that for a man and woman of the same Ancestry to "lie" (*mandry*) together would be "incest" (*fady*); the verb *mandry* has the sense of "to lie down", "to sleep" and "to have sex with someone" (cf. Deschamps 1936:95n.1).

14. The practice of referring to people as "children" of a river is also found among the Tanala; see Beaujard (1983b:24). The use of *taranaka* in this context is another reason why the term can only be misleadingly glossed as "descendants" (see above).

15. The reason I emphasize "made immanent" is that people stated that what gave Temanambondro land and the Manambondro river "sacred efficacy" (*hasy*) was the "respect" (*haza*) they gave it. Thus Aban'Marozaza explained: "The masters of the land make the land sacred, they give it respect.... The masters of the land make the embouchure sacred [also]. People [have] sacred efficacy if they bless the river mouth, and then [it] will be no longer blocked" (*Ñe topontany mahamasy ñe tany, manome haza anazy.... Mahamasy vinañy ñe topontany. Masy ñ'olo laha misaotra vinañy de tsy ho fempy sasy*). The logical corollary of this idea is that failing to give respect will cause a diminution of "sacred efficacy", and this is most clearly manifest when the mouth of the river becomes blocked. In one case I heard of an elder suggested that, in light of someone's remarks that advocated a change in "ancestral customs", he would "not be surprised if the river mouth became blocked" (*tsy mahagaga laha ho fempy ñe vinañy*). For comparative data one being groups considered "elders" and the rights they perform, see Deschamps (1939:111, 133-4) on the Tesaka, and Poirier (1939:23) and Chandon-Moet (1972:71) on the Temoro.

16. The "relationship" is based on the claim that both Andriamaroary and the Zafitsiry are ultimately of "Arab" origin, a claim which they place by saying that they "appeared from" the Matitanana river, the region currently occupied by the Temoro.

17. For examples relating to the southeast, see Chandon-Moet (1972:69), Edholm (1976:171), and Beaujard (1983b:148); for those relating to elsewhere in Madagascar, see Condominas (1960:114), Kottak (1980:178), Huntington (1988:62), Middleton (1988:457), and Wilson (1991:164). Perhaps the emphasis placed on the tomb (as opposed to the house) in studies of Malagasy "kinship" stems from what Gudeman and Rivera (1990:183-4) see as a bias toward the study of "corporations", for which the tomb and not the house has repeatedly been seen as a symbol.

18. I am by no means the first to voice my doubts about the usefulness of the notion of "descent" in Madagascar, although others have expressed their disquiet differently. Regarding the discussion of "kinship" in Madagascar as a whole, Southall (1986) has remarked that discussions about whether Malagasy "kinship" is agnatic or cognatic is misplaced. For the west coast, Gardenier (1976:86) and Astuti (1995a) note that "lineages" and "descent" are only relevant regarding the dead, whilst regarding the Tsimihety of the north Wilson (1991:105-113) takes a different tack and opts to talk of "ascent" among the living (see also Hurvitz 1980:37-45). Finally, Feeley-Harnik (1991b:225-9) stresses the importance of siblingship, friendship and marriage over ties to ancestors; whilst in his work on the Zafimaniry Bloch (1992, 1993b, 1995b) has emphasized the importance of the house, although some of his discussion is still phrased in the language of "descent" (e.g. 1995b:81-2).

1. Of course, although the sacrifice of zebu means marriage does not involve capital accumulation, it does entail capital depletion, either through the diminution of the size of the herd, or through the sale of land to buy cattle for sacrifice. As yet however this has not resulted in a situation whereby a man will marry uxorilocally in lieu of completing the marriage rites (cf. Bloch 1987:325-6; Middleton 1988). For an interesting discussion of the difference between "sacrificial" and commodity economies, see Hoskins (1993:213-7).

2. Unusual among Malagasy peoples, Temanambondro married women give birth (or rather gave, as births now take place in the hospital) to all their children in their husband's house, including the first-born. Elsewhere however it is usual for a woman to return to her parent's house for the birth of her first child, and sometimes others: for the southeast, see Rajohnson (1908:179), Deschamps and Vianès (1959:62), Chandon-Moet (1972:102), and Beaujard (1983b:499); for other parts of the island, Kottak (1980:192), Huntington (1988:30), Middleton (1988:352-3), and Bloch (1995b:77).

3. In referring to Temanambondro marriage as "housed" my aim is to stress that *conjugality* is thought of in terms of the house, but not marriage as a relation of "alliance". In his discussion of "house-based societies" Lévi-Strauss talks about the house as an objectification of the relation of *alliance* (1987:155), and although he mentions the importance of the conjugal couple in this context, his emphasis is not on conjugality but on marriage as a structural relationship of alliance. In some societies "houses" are groups which intermarry in a manner akin to (but not wholly in the manner of) that posited by alliance theory, e.g. the Lovedu (Krige 1975), the Kachin (Leach 1954b; cf. P. Thomas 1996), and, although in no straightforward manner, some of the peoples of eastern Indonesia (e.g. Traube 1986; McKinnon 1991; cf. Howell 1995). However, Temanambondro marriage is not thought of as taking place between "houses" (neither individual dwellings nor house-groups) but rather brings into being a "separate house" occupied by the conjugal couple; hence I stress that the house is about conjugality and not alliance (cf. Bloch 1995b:71).

4. The pairing of things with a "spouse" is also common during funerals (see P. Thomas n.d.); cf. Feeley-Harnik (1991b) who also comments on the significance of pairs in the context of marriage (1991b:202) and in Sakalava royal funerals (1991b:401ff.).

5. A man's relationship with his in-laws is less problematic as he is very rarely dependent on them for anything, and due to virilocality is not in daily contact with them. Contrary to Edholm's (1976:9-10) assertions, Temanambondro *do not* marry uxorilocally, and nor are a remarried woman's children affiliated to the group of her new husband. Throughout Madagascar uxorilocal marriage is rare and carries with it negative connotations, and the situation is no different among the Temanambondro; cf. e.g. Kottak (1980:172-3), Bloch (1987:325-6), Middleton (1988:104-119), Feeley-Harnik (1991b:180-3), and Astuti

(1995a:70-2). Among Malagasy speakers of Mayotte however uxorilocality appears to be the norm (Lambek 1981:202n.3).

6. The idea that parents "exchange" their children at marriage appears to be common throughout Madagascar: see e.g. Bloch (1978, 1992:138), Huntington (1988:102), Astuti (1995a:67-9); cf. Middleton (1988:334). However, although Bloch and Astuti link the idiom of exchange to the attempt by both parties involved to achieve overall parity, such is not the case among the Temanambondro, where sons-in-law are counted among the anakapela, a term whose status implications clearly illustrates their subordinate position (see Chapter 4).

7. The tota hita is so named as it was previously customary to give bundles of firewood to all the houses of the bride's house-group (see also Deschamps 1936:137); during fieldwork typical amounts were c.1500-3000FMG, i.e. 70p-£1.10, or one or two days pay for a man's wage labour. The work of collecting firewood is typically men's work, especially that of married men, and a son-in-law will be asked to contribute firewood to his wife's house-group during rituals they host throughout the rest of his marriage.

8. As with all Malagasy "relationship terminologies", formally classified as "Hawaiian", there is no distinction made between "siblings" and "cousins", and so "spouses" are therefore also "siblings" (cf. Middleton 1988:181). For discussions of the similarities and differences between "siblings" and "spouses", see Huntington (1988:78-91), and Feeley-Harnik (1991b:186-229).

9. Marriage rites referred to as fafy are ubiquitous in southeast Madagascar, although they are always discussed in the literature in terms of removing the taboo that exists between "close kin": see Rajohnson (1908:183), Linton (1933:301), Deschamps (1936:136-8), Deschamps and Vianès (1959:16, 24, 80, 88, 105), Dubois (1968; 1978:27-41), Chandon-Moet (1972:121-2), Beaujard (1983b:366), and Rolland (1985:110).

10. The term velatry refers to an invocation of the ancestors rather than one in which Zañahary alone is addressed, the latter simply being referred to as a zoro. The verb form of velatry is mamelatry, which is homophonic with the verb meaning "to unroll, to spread out"; however, the idea that the velatry is an explanation to Zañahary and the ancestors which "unrolls" or "spreads out" a state of affairs before them in speech is an idea which I failed to follow up. As for Zañahary, this is a concept which is hard to define (cf. Deschamps 1936:84-5); the being(s) is/are neither clearly gendered nor clearly singular or plural (despite being addressed in the singular). The name derives from ary ("to create, bring into being") and might therefore be awkwardly rendered as "creation deity".

11. This is a composite and edited example of the velatry drawn from two tape-recorded speeches, notes taken during attendance at several fafy, and checked against a written text of the velatry found in Kerin and Rabe (n.d.). Whilst the form of the velatry is followed by each speaker, the major difference lies in the

many names of ancestors that the speaker "calls" from the tomb. In the original:

Samba tany samba lanitra aminao Zañahary. Tokavina hanao aloha fa hanao nanamboatra tomboka aman-
taña. Ao ñe vositra be tandroka mara-menaka. Fafin'i Apela sy Lelahy mangala fady. Hoy hanao: azonareo
mifanambady akaiky laha vonoy aomby. Ho soa ho tsara izy mivady io. Hiterabavy. Hiteradahy. Hamboly
hahavokatra. Hiteza hahabe. Hamiapia. Hisondrotry ñe voniñahitra, hiteradahy, hiterabavy. Izany ñe
angatahana aminao Zañahary. Tapitra aminao Zañahary.

De avia hanao Andriavoalohany [named "master of the tomb"]. *Ho soa ho tsara tsy manan-draha*
mañano. De avia koa hanareo i ababe [named male ancestors...] *Laha ba misy tsy fantatranay de antsovinao*
koa. Tapitra aminao i ababe.

De avia koa hanareo renim-pianakaviana ao an-kibory ao. Avia [named female ancestors ...] *Avia*
ñe fantako. Avia ñe tsy fantako.

Homana soa homana tsara aby hanareo mifomboa hanareo aby. Ba ahivo ho salama fañahy aman-
batana ahay.

12. *Modia añy aby hanareo fa hihinana ñe anay izahay. Añy añ-ilan-dreky hanareo mirary. Ndre laha*
mitange lefona, mitange trañambo de ty rano Manambondro ty ñe hetry.

13. The division of the meat (*mirasa*) is a highly complex practice and cannot be detailed here. Those I asked had nothing to say about whether there is any symbolic basis for the division, but it is notable that the bride's father receives the "arms" and "legs" (i.e. fore and rear legs) of the animal, those parts of the body referred to in the *velatry* as having been created by Zañahary. Women receive the intestines and some other items of offal, the same parts of the animal they receive at funerals.

14. An interesting comparison here is that of Bloch's (1995b:75-6) analysis of the ritual of blessing the new house established at marriage among the Zafimaniry, a rite which involves the use of taro, a plant recognized as being able to multiply on its own. See also Middleton's (1988:424-5) comments on the significance of female livestock in Karembola marriage exchanges; and Gardenier's (1976:80) explanation of why a newly married couple's first meal contains duck.

15. The word *fady* is a generic term for "taboos" of all kinds, and refers to prohibitions on such varied things as foodstuffs, words, and sexual relations (cf. Lambek 1992). The term *mila fady* ("to have sex with a tabooed relative") therefore supplements the generic "taboo" with the verb *mila*, which variously means "to have sex with someone", "to harvest or gather", and "to need"; cf. Huntington (1978:35; 1988:95-6).

16. When I enquired into the etymology of *aringelo* I was told by two different people, one of them a "diviner" (*ombiasa*), that the term derives from *arina* ("charcoal") and *helo* (a type of "spirit"); however, the dialect term for charcoal among the Temanambondro is *baikafo* (lit. "hot thing of the fire") and I never heard the word *arina* used. In light of the effects of *aringelo*, it is possible that the etymon may be *ary*, root of *mañary*,"to throw away", given that *aringelo* is said to "get rid of" (*mahafaka*) the *helo*. Regarding *helo*

elsewhere in the southeast, Rajohnson (1908:180-1) refers to *helo* and *bilo* "ceremonies" among the Tanosy, the purpose of which was to alleviate an illness internal to the body. With reference to the Tesaka, Deschamps (1936:89) classes *helo* along with *bilo* and *tromba*, types of possession spirit; whilst Huntington (1988:114) refers to *helo* as one of a category of bush spirit "capable of causing illness and even death".

17. In suggesting that the *tandra* "makes clear", I am guilty of appropriating a Temanambondro idiom where it is not explicitly used. No one I spoke with explained the *tandra* as a "making clear" (*manazava*) in the sense of it being an act of "explaining" (*manazava*), although the *tandra* is in effect just that. However, as I suggested in Chapter 3, there is perhaps a common theme of "making clear" in certain Malagasy marriage rites. Astuti's (1993:285) account of the Vezo rite of *soritse* would seem to be a "making clear", in the sense that it is a practice that marks out one group of people as different from another. Similarly, Bloch (1995b:76) describes the final Zafimaniry marriage rite of *fanambarana* as a "making evident" (1995b:72), and later notes that "a marriage is 'made clear'" through the woman bringing to the groom's house her marriage trousseau (1995b:74). In the light of comparative ethnography I do not think therefore it is too much of an interpretative liberty to suggest that there are ideas about "clarity" implicit in the *tandra*.

18. Black hens are sometimes used to cure an illness when divination reveals that "sex with a tabooed relative" (*mila fady*) has taken place; a number of taboos also surround the work of blacksmiths, which when transgressed, also require the killing of a black hen.

19. Although I here concentrate on the *tandra ran-akoho*, an analysis of the *tandra ra-kena* that accompanies the fafy is pursued in the next section of the present chapter.

20. Although the gender of Raomby and Raolombelona are left unmarked in the story, I have rendered them both male for convenience; in Malagasy the third person singular (*izy*) is non-gender specific. Variants of the story appear to be widespread throughout the southeast, and an almost identical version of the story which explains the origin of the *fafy* among the Tesaka is given by Deschamps (1938:120); cf. also Dubois (1978:33), and Huntington (1988:43). In addition, the use of blood from the heart of the sacrificed animal during the *fafy* is also variously noted: see Linton (1933:301), Deschamps (1936:136-8), Deschamps and Vianès (1959:88).

21. It is difficult to say how far in the past *fafy taoka* were practised as all those now alive completed their marriage with the *fafy mena*, and no one I spoke to could say when the practice of *fafy taoka* ceased. Throughout the southeast there appears to be a contrast between "close" and "distant" marriages, implicit in the fact that, as noted above, authors mention that a *fafy* involving the sacrifice of a zebu is required in cases of marriage between "close kin". In Rolland's (1984:110) account of the Temoro for example he notes that a *fafy aomby* (*fafy* with a zebu) is required for marriages between *havana akaiky*, [lit. "close

relatives"], or as he puts it "close kin as far as the third cousin in the uterine line or belonging to the same agnatic lineage"; this is contrasted with the *fafy akoho* (*fafy* with a chicken) which "most often sanctions a marriage between the great-grandchildren of a brother and a sister, or of two sisters" (cf. Deschamps and Vianès 1959:61-2); see also Huntington (1988:95) on Bara "marriage with kin ... and marriage with others".

22. On the distinction between "distant" and "close" *anakapela*, see Chapter 4.

23. Travel beyond the region is costly, both in time away from making a subsistence livelihood, and in the money needed to pay for transport. At wage-labour rates extant during the fieldwork period, it would have cost a woman 20 days and a man 10 days pay to go and return by vehicle to the town of Vangaindrano 60km away; to journey to the capital cost six times as much.

24. The Temanambondro practice of marriage between "children of brothers" and "children of a brother and a sister" is unusual in a region where there is a widespread prohibition on marriages between children of siblings, something extending in some cases as far as five generations (cf. e.g. Deschamps 1936:136; Deschamps and Vianès 1959:24, 80, 83, 88, 105; Chandon-Moet 1972:119-120; Rolland 1984:104-118). The prohibition on marriage between "children of sisters" appears to be universal throughout Madagascar.

25. An obvious comparison here is Middleton's (1988) analysis of "patrilateral parallel cousin marriage" among the Karembola, a practice depicted in images which emphasize unity and a distinction between "inside" and "outside", and which is said to take place "within one house" (see esp. 1988:271-6). Temanambondro however make little of ideas about "inside" and "outside" (see P. Thomas 1995:349-351) and regarding the practice of *fanambadiana mitroky* do not elaborate on the difference between marriages between those of the same and those of a different house-group. In fact, although Temanambondro do not practice house-group "exogamy" as some people of the southeast are reported to do (e.g. Chandon-Moet 1972:55-6; Rolland 1984:109; cf. Edholm 1976:175) marriages between people of one house-group are rare, and *fanambadiana mitroky* usually occur between people of different house-groups, and even different Ancestries. Ideas of unity and containment therefore do not refer to the "house" but rather focus on "one stomach" and the process of "joining together again and again" such that "there are many sides that enter into one another".

26. As do other peoples of Madagascar (cf. e.g. Bloch 1971:58-68), Temanambondro differentiate *fianakaviana* (usually translated as "family) from *havana* (usually translated as "kin"); a better basis for the distinction in the present case however would be that *fianakaviana* are thought of as "relatives" who are "close", whilst *havana* is a more encompassing category including those who are more "distant".

27. Although *vevavy* can also mean "woman", because the usual dialect term for "woman" is *apela* I have chosen to translate *vevavy* as "female". The genderedness of the river was explained by some as being

because the river "cleans" (*manadio*) and "looks after" (*mikarakara*) things, two activities associated with women; but the river's water also possesses "sacred efficacy" (*hasy*) and in various contexts Temanambondro image the especially fertile as "female". For example a very fertile rice field is known as a *reny anaka*, "mother of children"; such items can be contrasted with some of those that are male-gendered, such as the *afon-dahy*, the "male fire" that "does not give birth". However, the male gendering of things does not always imply lack of fertility, but in certain contexts can for example refer to ideas about durability, such as the *vatolahy*, the "male stone" erected as a "memorial".

28. Unfortunately it appears from my fieldnotes that I neglected to ask questions about the opposite scenario, viz. when the man comes from outside the region of the "sister" rivers and the woman is Temanambondro; this is something I will have to ask about when I next return...

29. Adopting a perspective different from my own, others have also noted that marriage involves forms of movement and their cessation. Both Feeley-Harnik (1980, 1991b:155-301) and Bloch (1992, 1995b) for example contrast the locatedness of marriage as a "housed" relationship with the wandering of men as bachelors beforehand; and Astuti (1995a:67-70) discusses how, in the context of striving to overcome the hierarchical implications of marriage, the "pendulum-like movements of the son-in-law towards and away from his in-laws over time achieve an overall equity between the two sides" (1995a:69; cf. Bloch 1978, 1992:137-9). However, I have chosen here to emphasize the genderedness of space, place and movement rather than concentrate on relations between spouses or between sons-in-law and their wives' parents. For an analysis along similar lines, and one which has helped frame my own thoughts, see McKinnon's (1991) discussion of the values associated with marriage forms and gender among the peoples of Tanimbar, eastern Indonesia.

30. Although some people pointed out that *fanambadiana mitroky* is similar to the Merina marriage practice of *lova tsy mifindra*, "inheritance which does not move away" (see Bloch 1971:54), the similarity lies in the closeness of the relationship between spouses rather than in an explicit attempt to avoid the dispersal of land.

Notes to Chapter 7

1. As well as being stressed by Yanagisako and Collier (1987) and Howell and Melhuus (1993), the inherent genderedness of kinship was noted by Rubin (1975). For analyses that have in one form or another addressed the issue, see e.g. M. Strathern (1987), Schloss (1988), Hoskins (1990), McKinnon (1991), Busby (n.d.), and Howell (n.d.); with regards to Madagascar, cf. Bloch (1987), Middleton (1988), Feeley-Harnik (1991b), and Astuti (1993).

2. On the cardinal points, see e.g. Hebert (1965); on houses and tombs, see e.g. Feeley-Harnik (1979, 1980, 1991a), Hurvitz (1980:172-212), Huntington (1988:48-53), Kus and Raharijaona (1990), Middleton (n.d.a).

3. The use of territory to define groups is to be found in colonial ethnology (see Chapter 1) as well as in later analyses, some of which see in residence a means of solving the so-called "problem" of "cognatic kinship", viz. how to form discrete groups in a context of "bilateral" or "non-differentiated descent". On kinship, territory and/or residence, cf. e.g. Lavondès (1967:143-169), Bloch (1971:43-50), Hurvitz (1980:37-8), Beaujard (1983b:141-224), Huntington (1988:47-77), Middleton (1988:82-3); cf. Wilson (1991:37-45).

4. In Malagasy the phoneme /u/ is written as an "o"; thus the Malagasy *fo* is pronounced "foo", as in "fool".

5. The word *fo* refers to the anatomical heart of people as well as animals, and in humans is said to be centred in the middle of the chest and above the *vava fo* ("mouth of the heart"), located at the base of the sternum; *fo* is also found in many terms for "thoughts" and "feelings", e.g. *sitra-po* ("will, desire"), *mihetsiketsika fo* ("to feel", lit. "moving, agitated heart"). The term *fotora* is used to refer to plants that grow upright, such as manioc and trees; *fototra* on the other hand is not used to speak of plants, but is used to refer to the "origin" of a thing, e.g. *foto'teny* ("root of a word", i.e. etymon); for other examples of its usage, see main text.

6. On the use of river water during circumcision rites, see Rajohnson (1908:178), Deschamps and Vianès (1959:22-3, 60), and Beaujard (1983a:314). The clearing of blocked rivers is reported by Cotte (1947:150-2), Deschamps and Vianès (1959:21), Chandon-Moet (1972:52-3), and Rahatoka (1984:77-9). For rites concerning "rulers", see the accounts of the annual "bath" among the Temoro by Chandon-Moet (1972:67) and Rolland (1984:118-120), and Beaujard's (1983a, 1983b:332-7) description of the washing of Tanala "royal relics".

7. On these and similar images, see Chapter 6 and the comparative references therein. In addition, the idiom of "bananas" is reported by Hurvitz (1980:271-7) and Razafindratovo-Ramamanjisoa (1986:234) for the northeast and central Imerina respectively; Feeley-Harnik (1991b) also discusses a number of botanical idioms and images with regard to local Ancestries and the Bemihisatra monarchy.

8. Maurice Bloch (personal communication) has pointed out to me that in the highlands of Madagascar *tamana* (the Merina dialect term of Temanambondro *tama*) means "enjoyment", sometimes although not always of place; among Temanambondro however one would not ask, as one evidently does in the highlands, if one is "enjoying" an event using the word *tama*. I only ever heard Temanambondro use the word with reference to contexts of place, although I would accept that part of "attachment to place"

involves "enjoyment" of being in that place. See also Sharp's (1993:94-5) discussion of *tamana* among migrants in the northwest town of Ambanja; Sharp translates the term as "contentment", and comments that "it is used by those who feel they belong [in a place]".

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