

# Mahafaly pastoralists between structure and agency: Development, institutional change and adaptation in South-West Madagascar

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Johanna Friederike Götter

aus Stade, Deutschland

Gutachter: Prof. Dr. Frank Wätzold

Gutachter: Prof. Dr. Jörg Ganzhorn

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## **Preface**

This research has been conducted within the frame of the collaborative research project SuLaMa (Participatory research to support sustainable land management on the Mahafaly Plateau in South-West Madagascar, <http://www.sulama.de/index.php/en>) and was as such funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF, FKZ: 01LL0914G). The project promoted participatory research to support sustainable land use management on the Mahafaly Plateau in South-West Madagascar.

## **Abstract**

It is well known that the development and adaptation capacities of rural communities in the developing world largely depend on the flexibility of the communities' 'social structure', that is, the community as a norm-group itself, together with its 'institutions' as the legal, moral and ideological framework, including national and local rules, social norms, shared mental models, perceptions and ideologies. 'Structures' that have been identified by research as being crucial for rural livelihoods are found to be specific non-market security structures that are based on concepts of solidarity, reciprocity, and kinship, specifically in communities that base their livelihoods on livestock raising, and particularly in (semi-)arid areas. At the same time, it is now widely acknowledged that 'agency', which is understood as the decision-making and action-taking of individuals, including their aims to influence others, also plays a role. However, very little is known about the interplay between 'structure' and 'agency' and how this interplay shapes institutional change and adaptation. Specifically, proper analytical frameworks for analyzing this interplay are missing.

The research objectives of this dissertation are to contribute to our understanding of development and adaptation capacities of rural communities against the backdrop of current mechanisms of social security and their evolution, and to the interplay of different factors in such processes of institutional change, including a deeper look at the relationship between structure and agency, as well as to contribute to the required development of analytical frameworks appropriate for analyzing all these aspects. These objectives are tackled by conducting empirical research on the Mahafaly Plateau in South-West Madagascar with three detailed micro-studies on cases of change, analyzing them through the lens of *Contemporary Classical Institutional Economics* and using the *Framework for Modeling Institutional Change* (Ensminger 1992), then proposing suggestions on how to improve the framework.

The first case study focused on assessing the development of a new transhumance movement in the Mahafaly Plateau region. The new movement is on the one hand enabled by traditional mechanisms of trust creation, and by a shared concept of hospitality and group identity. On the other hand, limits to the movement arise from a change in these concepts of hospitality, shifting from unconditional to conditional hospitality and to a narrower definition of group affiliation. It is found that the new transhumance movement as an adaptation option to cattle raids is facilitated by herding families' decision-making freedom and the procedural liberty to institutionalize and thus socially justify their personal movement. At the same time, the mental models of the different actors are found to be diverging and partly an obstacle for adaptation.



## Abstract

The second case study analyzed the reasons for the failure of the coastal communities' attempts to curtail the privatization of the important fodder tree *samata*, as well as the privatization mechanisms themselves. The case study revealed that private property rights were created only through institutionalization by the cumulative behavior of individual users over time. A high bargaining power deriving from not shying away from open conflict further helped the privatizers to assert their rights and to prevent the enforcement of the new community-based rules curtailing privatization. The enforcement system turns out to be inappropriate as it contradicts the groups' ideology about resource use.

The third case study demonstrated how the long-standing funerary gift-giving system in the study region evolved and is influenced by individualization, consumerism, market integration, and changes of ideological values attached to life and death. While on the one hand the institutions are found to be adaptive and pro-social, including exit-options on gift-duties for people in economic difficulties, on the other hand the group created a social pressure that outstripped institution-based options. The accumulated action of funeral spectators in the form of gossip, as well the bereaved family's aims to get famous, are found to be crucial.

The case studies all reveal that indeed 'agency' is an important factor shaping institutional change on the local or regional level, at least in such small societies as the one studied. Institutional change is found to be both driven by collective action as well as evolutionary mechanisms, and consequently, analytical frameworks that are able to consider both are best suited. Importantly, agency is influencing both of these mechanisms of change. The results may be transferred to other rural societies of the developing world that also base the enforcement of their formal institutions on orality, ideologically value personal freedom and procedural liberty, and show a high diversity of institutions of all kinds. For such societies, the results suggest that the societal environment on the one hand favors adaptation on the level of individuals or small groups and allows these actions to evolutionary change institutions. On the other hand, adaptation based on designed institutional change and collective action is difficult to plan and execute.

The Framework for Modeling Institutional Change (Ensminger 1992) applied to the cases is shown to be suitable as it allows us to shed light on changes in institutions including ideology as a result of the interplay between individual actors and their behavior, changes in external factors such as relative prices, the constellations of actors, and their bargaining power. By modifying the framework by adding 'agency' as one of the core elements, however, the analysis becomes even more comprehensive.

## Zusammenfassung

Es ist inzwischen allgemein bekannt, dass die Entwicklungs- und Anpassungskapazitäten ländlicher Gemeinschaften in Entwicklungsländern stark von der Flexibilität ihrer ‚sozialen Struktur‘ abhängig sind, also von der Gemeinschaft an sich als eine Norm-Gruppe und ihrer ‚Institutionen‘, d.h. ihres legalen, moralischen und ideologischen Rahmens aus nationalen und lokalen Regeln, sozialen Normen, geteilten mentalen Modelle, Perzeptionen und Ideologien. Von der Forschung als elementar für ländliche Livelihoods angesehene ‚Strukturen‘, besonders in Gemeinschaften die von der Viehwirtschaft leben und hier insbesondere die in (halb-)trockenen Gegenden, sind die spezifischen nicht-markt-basierten Sicherheits-Strukturen welche auf Konzepten von Solidarität, Reziprozität und Verwandtschaft basieren. Gleichzeitig ist heute bestätigt, dass auch ‚Agency‘ eine wichtige Rolle spielt, verstanden hier als das Entscheidungen-Treffen und Handlungen-Durchführen von Individuen, unter anderem auch mit der Absicht andere Menschen und deren Ansichten und Handlungen zu beeinflussen. Nichtsdestotrotz weiß man noch sehr wenig über das Zusammenspiel von ‚Struktur‘ und ‚Agency‘ und wie dieses institutionellen Wandel und Anpassung beeinflusst. Insbesondere gibt es noch keine adäquaten Frameworks für die Analyse dieses Zusammenspiels.

Die Forschungsziele dieser Dissertation bestehen darin, einen Beitrag zum Verständnis der Entwicklungs- und Anpassungsfähigkeit ländlicher Gemeinden vor dem Hintergrund aktueller Mechanismen sozialer Sicherheit und ihrer Entwicklung, sowie des Zusammenspiels verschiedener Faktoren in solchen Prozessen des institutionellen Wandels zu leisten, einschließlich eines tieferen Blicks auf die Beziehung zwischen „Struktur“ und „Agency“, sowie zur erforderlichen Entwicklung geeigneter Frameworks. Dafür wird empirische Forschung auf dem Mahafaly-Plateau im Südwesten Madagaskars in Form von drei detaillierten Mikro-Fallstudien über Beispiele von Veränderungen und Anpassung durchgeführt und diese durch die Linse der zeitgenössischen klassischen Institutionenökonomie und unter Verwendung des *Framework for Modeling Institutional Change* (Ensminger 1992) analysiert, um dann Vorschläge zur Verbesserung des Frameworks zu machen.

Die erste Fallstudie konzentriert sich auf die Entwicklung einer neuen Transhumanz-Bewegung in der Region als Anpassungsmechanismus gegen Viehdiebstähle. Die neue Bewegung wird einerseits durch traditionelle Mechanismen der Vertrauensbildung und durch ein gemeinsames Konzept von Gastfreundschaft und Gruppenidentität ermöglicht. Andererseits ergeben sich durch eine fortschreitende Veränderung dieser Konzepte, weg von bedingungsloser und hin zu bedingter Gastfreundschaft und einer engeren Definition von Gruppenzugehörigkeit, für die

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Bewegung Grenzen. Außerdem wird das Entstehen der neuen Transhumanz-Bewegung auf der einen Seite durch die Entscheidungsfreiheit der Hirtenfamilien und die prozedurale Freiheit, ihren persönlichen Aufenthalt in der Gastregion zu institutionalisieren und damit sozial zu rechtfertigen, erleichtert. Auf der anderen Seite divergieren die mentalen Modelle der verschiedenen Akteure und stellen teilweise ein Hindernis für deren Anpassungsoptionen dar.

Die zweite Fallstudie analysiert die Gründe für das Scheitern der Küstengemeinden die Privatisierung des wichtigen Futterbaums *Samata* einzuschränken, sowie die Privatisierungsmechanismen selbst. Die Studie zeigt, dass private Eigentumsrechte erst durch eine schleichende Institutionalisierung mittels des kumulativen Verhaltens der einzelnen Nutzer entstanden sind. Weiterhin half eine hohe Verhandlungsmacht der Privatisierer, basierend auf einer vergleichsweise Unempfindlichkeit gegenüber offenen Konflikten, ihnen ihre Rechte durchzusetzen und die Implementierung der neuen gemeinschaftsbasierten, die Privatisierung einschränkenden Regeln zu verhindern. Das System der Regel-Implementierung und -Einhaltung erweist sich als unangemessen, da es den allgemeinen Ideologien über die Nutzung natürlicher Ressourcen in der Region widerspricht.

Die dritte Fallstudie zeigt, wie sich das seit langem bestehende System der Beerdigungs-Geschenke in der Studienregion entwickelt hat und von Individualisierung, erhöhtem Konsum, Marktintegration und Veränderungen der ideologischen Werte bezüglich Leben und Tod beeinflusst wird. Während sich einerseits die Institutionen als adaptiv und pro-sozial erweisen, einschließlich einer Ausstiegs-Option aus der Schenkungspflicht für Menschen in wirtschaftlichen Schwierigkeiten, erzeugt die Gruppe der Beerdigungs-Zuschauer andererseits einen sozialen Druck der diese Optionen aushebelt. Die kumulierten Handlungen der Zuschauer in Form von Klatsch und Tratsch sowie die Begehren der trauernden Familie, mittels der Beerdigung berühmt zu werden, erweisen sich als entscheidend für die allgemeine Entwicklung.

Die Fallstudien zeigen alle, dass in der Tat "Agency" ein wichtiger Faktor ist, der den institutionellen Wandel auf lokaler oder regionaler Ebene prägt, zumindest in so kleinen Gemeinschaften wie der untersuchten. Es zeigt sich, dass institutioneller Wandel hier sowohl durch kollektives Handeln als auch durch evolutionäre Mechanismen angetrieben wird, und „Agency“ beide Mechanismen des Wandels beeinflusst. Folglich sind nur Frameworks geeignet die beide berücksichtigen können. Die Ergebnisse können auf andere ländliche Gemeinschaften in Entwicklungsländern übertragen werden, die ebenfalls die Durchsetzung ihrer formalen Institutionen auf das mündliche Wort gründen, persönliche Autonomie und Verfahrensfreiheit ideologisch hoch schätzen und eine hohe Vielfalt an Institutionen aller Art aufweisen. Die

## Zusammenfassung

Ergebnisse deuten darauf hin, dass in solchen Gemeinschaften auf der einen Seite das gesellschaftliche Umfeld eine Anpassung auf der Ebene von Individuen oder kleinen Gruppen begünstigt und deren Aktionen leicht zu evolutionärem institutionellen Wandel führen. Andererseits sind Anpassungen für die es einen geplanten institutionellem Wandel und kollektives Handeln benötigt schwer umzusetzen.

Das für die Analyse der Fallstudien verwendete *Framework for Modeling Institutional Change* (Ensminger 1992) erweist sich als geeignet, da es uns erlaubt Veränderungen in Institutionen, einschließlich Ideologien, zu beleuchten, und zwar als Ergebnis des Zusammenspiels zwischen individuellen Akteuren und ihrem Verhalten, Veränderungen externer Faktoren wie relativen Preisen, den Konstellationen der Akteure und ihrer Verhandlungsmacht. Das Hinzufügen von „Agency“ zu den Kernelementen des Frameworks erlaubt eine noch umfassendere Analyse.

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## List of Malagasy terms

<b>Malagasy term</b>	<b>English term</b>
<i>aloalo</i>	wooden tomb steles used by the Mahafaly
<i>basimena</i>	gift in form of money
<i>chef de fokontany</i>	elected head of a municipality
<i>commune</i>	administrative level between district and <i>fokontany</i>
<i>dahalo (dialect of the highlands)</i>	cattle raider
<i>dina</i>	local village community rule
<i>enga</i>	gift
<i>fady, faly</i>	taboo
<i>falintsitake</i>	
<i>falintata</i>	ceremony for good luck and good wishes for bride and groom at the the <i>mpitan-kazomanga</i>
<i>famaha</i>	counter-food
<i>fandeo</i>	act done in order to make the children “belong” to the father
<i>fandevena</i>	funeral
<i>fihavanana (dialect of the highlands, equivalent to <i>filongoa</i>)</i>	solidarity, kinship, hospitality
<i>filongoa</i>	solidarity, kinship, hospitality
<i>fisa (Mahafaly coastal plain dialect)</i>	game, amusement mostly used as synonym for a funeral party
<i>fokonolo</i>	(village) community
<i>fokontany</i>	municipality
<i>fomba</i>	custom or habit
<i>fomban-draza</i>	ancestral custom or habit
<i>gasy</i>	Malagasy
<i>hakeo (equivalent to <i>tsiny</i> on the highlands)</i>	moral blame
<i>havoria (Mahafaly plateau dialect)</i>	gathering mostly used as synonym for a funeral
<i>hazomanga</i>	ceremonial holy pale of the Tanalana clans, kept by the corresponding <i>mpitan-kazomanga</i>
<i>henatse</i>	shame
<i>kere</i>	hunger, lean season
<i>kialo (Mahafaly coastal plain dialect)</i>	livestock corral
<i>kine (Mahafaly coastal plain dialect)</i>	sincerity oath
<i>kivaleo</i>	reciprocal gift-giving duty
<i>laza</i>	fame
<i>laza</i>	fame
<i>lily</i>	rule

## List of Malagasy terms

<i>lilyn-draza</i>	ancestral rule
<i>longo</i>	personal kingroup including relatives and friends
<i>malaso</i>	cattle raider
<i>manaja lolo</i>	“hide the corpse” after death, put it in a temporary place before the permanent grave is ready
<i>manam’bvara [aomby]</i>	term used in funeral invitations indicating that the guest is expected to bring a zebu as gift
<i>mandiavay</i>	Act carried out during a funeral party of a husband’s family in law in order to make the marriage
<i>mandily</i>	command others based on a rule ( <i>lily</i> )
<i>mitalily</i>	term used in funeral invitations indicating that the guest has a free choice of gift
<i>monto</i>	non-agricultural area around the villages (“bush”)
<i>mpirahamba</i>	group of affines of the same role, e.g. the group of all sons-in-law
<i>mpiravetro</i>	group of affines of the same role, e.g. the group of all sons-in-law
<i>mpitan-kazomanga lava, mpitan-kazomanga fohe</i>	traditional authority of a Tanalana clan ( <i>lava</i> ) or lineage ( <i>fohe</i> )
<i>odigasy</i>	talisman with supernatural power
<i>orquestra</i>	music band (playing at a funeral party)
<i>pasiporon-dia</i>	passport (for zebu herds)
<i>peteroly</i>	gift-money given to the bride’s mother at a wedding
<i>raketa</i>	prickly pear cactus ( <i>Opuntia ssp.</i> )
<i>raza</i>	kingroup, ancestors
<i>rehareha</i>	pride
<i>rengerenge</i>	ostentation or boasting
<i>rorombola</i>	specific gift-giving day of a funeral
<i>samata</i>	<i>Euphorbia stenoclada baill.</i>
<i>sitoane/sintonene i ananey or sinintone</i>	act of parents of taking her daughter back and marry her to another man if the son-in-law does not bring a zebu at their family’s funeral party
soritroke (also called <i>sintake</i> )	act of marriage ritual between groom and his parents in law, involving the slaughtering of a zebu or minimum two goats and gifts
<i>sononanake</i>	act of sacrificing a zebu by the husband for his parents in law at the point that his wife is pregnant
<i>takomaso</i>	act of requesting the future wife’s hand in marriage at her parents
<i>tanin-draza</i>	ancestral land
<i>teteke</i>	slash-and-burn agriculture
<i>titike (Mahafaly plateau dialect)</i>	sincerity oath
<i>toake gasy</i>	“Malagasy rum”, distilled spirit

## List of Malagasy terms

<i>tombopoetse</i>	former act of marriage ritual between groom and his parents in law, today replaced by the <i>soritroke</i> (but more or less the same)
<i>tompo</i>	owner, master
<i>valan-aomby</i>	zebu corral
<i>valan-baiboho</i>	fenced field
<i>valan-boka</i>	fenced patch with grass
<i>vazaha</i>	stranger, non-local, white person
<i>voninahitse</i>	honor
<i>zanahary</i>	creator-God
<i>ziva</i>	blood brotherhood



# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1. Problem statement

Much research has been done on the development and adaptation capacities of rural communities towards survival in a changing world. It is thus now well known that these capacities largely depend on the communities' 'institutions' (Agrawal & Perrin 2008, Berman, Quinn & Paavola 2012, Carney & Farrington 1998, Dong et al. 2011, Engle 2011, Upton 2012). 'Institutions' here are understood as the legal, moral and ideological framework social life in a community is embedded in, including national and local rules, social norms, shared mental models and perceptions of the world, and ideologies in general (for the conception of adaptation and development see chapter 1.2.1., for 'institutions' see chapter 1.2.2.1.). Together with the community as a norm-group itself, these 'institutions' are often labeled as 'social structure' (Elder-Vass 2010).

At the same time, is widely acknowledged that besides the importance of the 'social structure', it would be a shortcoming to treat a rural community as a sum of undifferentiated individuals (Taylor 2003). Instead, research on adaptation and development must acknowledge that community members may have their very own ways of seeing the world, perceiving the problem, and strategies to adapt (Brousseau, Garrouste & Raynaud 2011, Wood 2016). Consequently, research and development policies do well to combine the analysis of "the benefits and costs of individual action" with an "accurate understanding of how people actually think and behave [...], especially for addressing some of the most difficult development challenges", taking into account "the specific psychological and social influences that guide decision making and behavior in a particular setting" (World Bank Group Open Knowledge Repository 2015:without page number). Furthermore, research must shed light on the interplay between 'social structure' and 'agency', the latter being understood as the described decision-making and action-taking of individuals, including their aims to influence others (Hiroe & Pascual 2012, Steins & Edwards 1999).

However, scholars still understand very little as to if and how exactly rural communities manage (or do not manage) to adapt to the changes they face. Specifically, which role exactly 'structure' and 'agency' play is far less known and more research is needed. While on the one hand more or less universally applicable factors may be found that determine rural communities' adaptation capacities and the underlying institutions – including institutional change that may arise with adaptation or be a precondition for it – on the other hand there are also very particular ones. Thus, "detailed micro-studies of communities, societies, and cultures [...] are invaluable for understanding and solving concrete, real-world problems" (Wood 2016:xiii). In addition,

these micro-studies should have the character of “in-depth, longitudinal analysis of complex, interacting factors, [...] with long-term trends combining with unpredictable events and shifting narratives” (Catley, Lind & Scoones 2013:5).

‘Structures’ that have been detected by research for being crucial for rural livelihoods in the developing world are found to be those determining the economic social security of households, and, as a consequence, the economic development of regions. Here, the developing world today still largely depends on non-market institutions closely interwoven with informal safety nets based on concepts of solidarity, reciprocity, and kinship (Dercon 2002, Dobuzinskis 2003, Hahn, Riederer & Foster 2009, Morton 2007, Platteau 1991). At the same time, empirical studies on local social security have long attracted little attention in development studies (Von Benda-Beckmann & Von Benda-Beckmann 1994), although local institutions of social security are seen as crucial for our understanding of development, adaptation and institutional change (Von Benda-Beckmann, Von Benda-Beckmann & Marks 2000, Merten & Haller 2005, Platteau 1991).

Examples of classical social security structures that are still central in the developing world are on the one hand patterns of institutionalized gift-giving, e.g., gift-giving during weddings or funerals (Baird & Gray 2014, Berking 1999, Dobuzinskis 2003, Eisenstein 2011, Godelier 2004, Platteau 2006). These patterns of gift-giving represent a good example of ‘structure’ as they consist of institutions interwoven with a norm-group: Although gift-giving is “structured in the language of generosity characteristic of gifts” (Johnson & Earle 2000:131), it is seldom voluntary but an obligation tied to group membership (Johnson & Earle 2000, Mauss 1954). As Eisenstein (2011, 8) has put it: “Unlike a modern money transaction, which is closed and leaves no obligation, a gift transaction is open-ended, creating an ongoing tie between the participants”. This “circle of the gift” can therefore be seen as the basis of community (Eisenstein, 2011:12), defining relationships between individuals or groups of people of the same norm-group. These often highly determined characters of relationship between gift-giver and receiver (e.g. in terms of kinship relations), together with institutions such as social norms and traditional customs, regulate gift-giving (Sherry 1983).

Besides gift-giving, safety nets and social security institutions also persist in other forms of moral obligations and social norms towards sharing and redistribution (Davies & Bennett 2007, Di Falco & Bulte 2011, Galaty 1981, Getachew 2001, Van Dijk 1994). Regarding ‘structure’, these sharing and redistribution mechanisms are not only based on institutions, but also determine the relationship in the way that they enforce collective action and cooperation within the communities (Platteau 1991). Such non-commercial relations in modern market societies of the developing world, as well as insights into how they transform, are claimed to deserve a more

prominent place in research (Godelier 2004) and their study is assumed to “shed light not only on the past but also on the present and future” (Godbout & Caillé 1998:19).

Social security structures are especially prominent in communities that base their livelihoods on pastoralism<sup>1</sup>, particularly in (semi-)arid areas (Bollig 2006, Evans-Pritchard 1940, Niamir-Fuller & Turner 1999). Here, abundance or scarcity of the pastoral natural resources is highly irregularly spread over time and space. This favors the development of mechanisms of redistribution of livestock and concepts of solidarity and makes these a central part of the communities’ ways to use their pastoral resources.

While today many pastoral and other rural communities are observed to face problems in adapting their systems of natural resource use when facing problems such as the degradation of their resources (Dong et al. 2011), in the last decades these systems have also already undergone wide-ranging institutional changes, e.g., from common property or open access regimes (with resources called ‘commons’) to private property and back again (e.g., Ensminger 1997). Nevertheless, institutional change is one of the most “neglected topics in the commons literature” (Laborda-Pemán & De Moor 2016:522). Typically, studies on change in ‘commons’ focused on the drivers of change (e.g., Behnke 2008, Kamara, Swallow & Kirk 2004), or their effects (e.g., Beyene 2011, Ensminger 1996, 1997, Lesorogol 2003, 2008a, Woodhouse, Bernstein & Hulme 2000), but not on the process of change itself.

This research gap becomes even more significant as at the same time scholars complain about a general lack of understanding of pastoral systems and their institutions (Fernandez-Gimenez & Le Febre 2006). This is due to the fact that the most popular subjects for field studies on ‘commons’ have been participatory protected areas and forest management (see for example Agrawal 2007, Carney & Farrington 1998, Gibson, McKean & Ostrom 2000, Ostrom 1999), fisheries (see for example Basurto & Coleman 2010, Cinner et al. 2012, Haller & Merten 2008, Young 2010), and irrigation systems (see for example Ostrom 2008a, Sarker 2001, Svendsen 2005). Empirical evidence for natural resource use and institutional issues from pastoral or agro-pastoral societies is much less dense (for some well-known works see Agrawal 1999, Bromley 2001, Ensminger 1996, Ensminger & Rutten 1991).

In a nutshell, more research is needed to understand social security mechanisms in rural (pastoral) communities, their role in (un-)successful adaptation, and their change. At the same

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<sup>1</sup> Pastoralism is defined as “an economic activity and land use system with its own distinct characteristics and it is a way of life for people who derive most of their income or sustenance from keeping domestic livestock reared in conditions where most of the feed is natural rather than cultivated or closely managed” (Sandford 1983:1).

time, there is a need to develop “better tools to study the evolution of institutions” in order “to reduce emphasis on institutional mono-cropping that currently dominates much of social science thinking” (Ostrom & Basurto 2011:337). Besides the already cited factors for shedding light on communities’ development and adaptation capacities, a suitable research approach and analytical framework must also be able to put the relation right “between *structure*, in terms of what drives the development process and produces distinctive patterns in particular periods, and *agency*, in terms of the way individual agents develop and pursue their strategies” (Healey & Barret 1990:90, also see Sen 2004, Yousfi 2011).

## **1.2. Research objectives and contributions**

The research objectives and aimed contributions of this dissertation concern research on two different levels which are presented consecutively: First, the general global level as described in the previous section, and, second, the level of the research on Madagascar.

First of all, the purpose of this dissertation is to contribute to our understanding of development and adaptation capacities of rural communities. Second, the dissertation is concerned with the interplay of different factors in such processes of change, including a deeper look at the relationship between structure and agency. Third, the work aims to contribute to the required development of analytical frameworks appropriate for analyzing all these aspects. Fourth, the dissertation aims to shed light on current mechanisms of social security in the developing world and how these evolve.

These research objectives are tackled by conducting empirical research on the Mahafaly Plateau in South-West Madagascar. In the challenges they face, the agro-pastoral people of the study region can be seen as exemplary for pastoral societies: While it is found that in the last decades (agro-)pastoral communities around the world primarily struggled with the consequences of climate change, a growing competition over natural resources, and a growing insecurity caused by violent conflicts (Fratkin 2013), this set of challenges is completely mirrored in the case study region. At the same time, development and adaptation there has not been easy: The region is known as a ‘project cemetery’ (UNICEF 2011), with very little or no effective progress in terms of income, improved yields, and general livelihood improvement (Hanisch 2015).

I first carry out three detailed micro-studies on cases of change (chapters 2, 3, and 4), analyzing them through the lens of *Contemporary Classical Institutional Economics* and using a specific analytical framework for modeling institutional change (Ensminger 1992), then proposing suggestions on how to improve the framework (chapter 5).

## Chapter 1: Introduction

The case studies concentrate on social security mechanisms, namely those of solidarity and reciprocity concerning pastoral mobility and resource use (chapter 2 and 3), and in terms of funerary gift-giving (chapter 4). Social security mechanisms have been proved to be highly important in the study region (Hänke 2016), as well as in contemporary Madagascar in general (Harvey et al. 2014). This is not surprising, as such mechanisms of social security are said to be fostered by scarcity of (economic) resources. Moreover, since the work of Evans-Pritchard (1940) it is assumed that the higher the resource scarcity in the community is, the more relevant they are. Today, scarcity is perceived to be very high by residents of the study region, and more than 85% of local households classify as 'poor' according to the people's own wealth classification (SuLaMa 2011).

Regarding 'structure' as the ensemble of institutions and norm-groups, funerary gift-giving is assumed to be a more than suitable mechanism to study, as funerals in the South-West of Madagascar are known to be highly shaped by institutions and, at the same time, to be events when "bonds between people are broken or restored" (Cole & Middleton 2001:27, also see Fee 2000). Regarding mechanisms in the context of natural resource use, institutions such as local or ancestral rules, customs, and social norms are said to play a dominant role, as does the affiliation of users to different groups such as clans and families (Andriamarivololona & Jones 2012, Astuti 1995b, Fritz-Vietta et al. 2011, Horning 2003, Jones, Andriamarivololona & Hockley 2008, Thielson 2016, Von Heland & Folke 2014).

With regard to my research aims related to research gaps concerning Madagascar, first of all, the case studies all deal – in one way or another – with zebu cattle, which are, in "most of rural Madagascar", "closely interwoven in the social and economic fabric and are central to rural life and beliefs" (Klein, Réau & Edwards 2008:1). However, despite its socio-economic importance and also its huge impact on Madagascar's natural resources, "(c)ompared to the African continent, pastoralism in Madagascar remains understudied" (Kaufmann & Tsirahamba 2006:238) and is mostly neglected in research<sup>2</sup>, for example when issues of natural resources and biodiversity conservation are addressed (Klein, Réau & Edwards 2008). Also its role for development and risk management is only insufficiently studied (Hänke & Barkmann 2017).

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<sup>2</sup> The global discourse on nature conservation in Madagascar centers around the loss of forest due to slash and burn agriculture and rice production (Klein, Réau & Edwards 2008), although around 32 million hectares or 55% of Madagascar's territory is devoted to livestock production (The World Bank 2003). In the study region, livestock, or better said cattle, is assumed to have a strongly negative impact on biodiversity in the region (Kaufmann & Tsirahamba 2006, Ratvonamana et al. 2013).

Second, though much social research has been done on the traditional livelihoods and culture of the Malagasy societies (see for example the work of Bloch (1968, 1971a, 1971b, 1971c, 1973, 1977, 1989, 1992), Astuti (1995a, 1995b), Cole (2001), Cole & Middleton (2001), Decary (1951, 1962), Eggert (1981, 1986), Kottak (1971, 1980), Lambek (1992, 2001, 2007), Lambek & Walsh (1999), Evers (1999, 2006), Evers & Spindler (1995), Middleton (1988, 1997, 1999c, 1999a, 2009, 2013a, 2013b), the Malagasy societies are (and maybe always have been) in a process of economic and social transition: “Malagasy history, culture, and society has been one undergoing radical change and transformation, [and] has never been still” (Bloch 2001:293-294, also see Delcroix & Fauroux 1994, Fauroux 1989a, 1997, Kaufmann 1998, 2011, Marcus 2008, Lebigre & Belera 1997). Here, on the one hand, research clearly lacks an ‘update’ of contemporary realities and social life in Madagascar. This results, among other things, in “assumptions about human-environment interactions [that] are often based on oversimplified narratives” (Hänke 2016:106).

This lack of an ‘update’ of knowledge on Malagasy societies results from the strong focus of recent social research: It puts an emphasis on political ecology and the challenges of community based (co-) management of natural resources, especially in protected areas, and with special attention to the problems of deforestation and slash-and-burn agriculture (see for example Andriamalala & Gardner 2010, Cinner & Fuentes 2008, Cinner et al. 2009, Cinner, Fuentes & Randriamahazo 2009, Cinner et al. 2012, Elmqvist et al. 2007, Elmqvist, Pyykönen & Tengö 2010, Ferguson et al. 2014, Fritz-Vietta & Stoll-Kleemann 2008, Fritz-Vietta, Röttger & Stoll-Kleemann 2009a, Fritz-Vietta et al. 2011, Gardner et al. 2008, Gardner 2014, Kull 2002a, 2002b, 2004, Horning 2000, 2004, 2008b, 2008a, Jones, Andriamarivololona & Hockley 2008, Jones, Qiu & De Santo 2013, Keller 2008, 2009b, 2009a, Marcus 2007, 2008, Muttenger 2006b, Nykvist & Heland 2014, Pollini 2009, 2010, Tengö et al. 2007, Tengö & Hammer 2003, Tengö & Von Heland 2011, and Von Heland & Folke 2014).

Regardless of the focus, newer social research on the broader study region is anyhow sporadic, and the Tanalana and Mahafaly people have generally received relatively little attention by social scientists (see the work of Battistini (1964), Eggert (1981, 1986), Esoavelomandroso (1989b, 1989a, 1984, 1991), Fritz-Vietta, Tahirindraza & Stoll-Kleemann (2017), Kaufmann (1998, 2001, 2004, 2008, 2011), Kaufmann & Tsirahamba (2006), Middleton (1988, 2009, 2013a), Schomerus-Gernböck (1968, 1970, 1971, 1981), Tahirindraza (2019), and Thielsen (2016)).

On the other hand, this social and economic transition of Malagasy societies has hardly been tracked by social scientists, as most of the work only deals with a static situation at a specific point in time. Specifically, the evolution and adaptational flexibility of institutions in Madagascar

has been barely described, and if so, then almost exclusively for village community rules (*dina*) and ancestral customary rules (*lilyn-draza*) in the context of natural resource use (see for example Bérard 2011, Horning 2003, Muttentzer 2006b), but not against other backgrounds such as social security mechanisms.

Furthermore, in contrast to ‘structure’, ‘agency’ is almost entirely neglected in the research on Madagascar. But, as anthropologist Oyvind Dahl (1940:95) has already noted, “individualism is not dead in a collectivist society”. Thus, only when depicting this whole background, we will be able to understand how the societies are able to cope with today's and future challenges driven by factors such as climate change, political instability, impoverishment, and market transition.

In a nutshell, my research contributions concerning Madagascar aim to add to our knowledge on pastoralism on the Island and to contribute to our understanding of how Malagasy societies evolve and adapt, hereby focusing on issues of social security and explicitly addressing institutional change and the interplay between structure and agency.

### **1.3. Theoretical framework**

#### ***1.3.1. Defining development and its relevant factors***

Development is a concept which can be entangled from different perspectives. Here, I understand development as “as a process of change leading to improvements in the well-being of people [...]” (Platteau & Peccoud 2011:247). This ‘well-being’ is, besides some other factors<sup>3</sup>, predominantly determined by the level of economic progress and prosperity – at least in societies with widespread economic poverty such as the study region. Here, development cannot be separated from poverty alleviation on the level of individuals.

As Sen (1999) has shown, poverty alleviation is based on an individual's enhanced possibilities to participate in economic life, going hand in hand with a fortified autonomy and substantive freedom. Besides this (economic) autonomy, development can also mean first of all overcoming a stage wherein the individual is not able to participate in the relevant system of exchange, be it a form of market exchange or other exchange systems like gift-giving (Douglas 2004, also see Feldman et al. 2016), and in social security networks in general.

On a societal level, development can then be (partly) understood as the fortification of social security networks and of systems of exchange in a way that many individuals are able to profit economically from these changes. These social security structures are often only marginally

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<sup>3</sup> Well-being in Sen's definition can be understood as the aggregation of the individual's collection of ‘functionings’ (Sen 1985), including for example health.



addressed when looking at development (Von Benda-Beckmann & Von Benda-Beckmann 1994), but are of high importance in many developing countries. Thus, they are crucial for our understanding of development, social organization and change (Von Benda-Beckmann, Von Benda-Beckmann & Marks 2000, Merten & Haller 2005, Platteau 1991). Informal safety nets based on kinship, friendship or membership in a specific group such as a village community are often more important than formal security nets provided by the state (Hahn, Riederer & Foster 2009, Morton 2007). This is not only very true for Madagascar (Harvey et al. 2014), but also for the case study region (Hänke 2016).

Beyond an individual's economic condition defining the level of autonomy or "ownership or command over resources and monetary incomes", social security deals with "the conversion of resources into actually (un)fulfilled social security needs, or 'living standards' in Sen's terminology (Sen 1988), at whatever level of poverty or wealth" (Von Benda-Beckmann & Von Benda-Beckmann 1994:11).

Tied to these described aspects of development is the possibility of executing a certain level of individual agency. Agency is often used to refer to the general human capacity to choose actions, as well as human action itself. More theoretically, it means the ability to make a free choice from an opportunity set, making use of the calculation of the behavior of others (Giddens 2007 (1979)). Specifically, it can be understood as "the ability to make decisions based on social experience combined with the capacity to manipulate social relations and to enroll others into his or her project" (Steins & Edwards 1999:544). For example, in a classical setting of common pool resource use, agency also defines "the capacity of an actor to choose their action, more specifically whether or not to conform to the rules/norms prescribed" (Hiroe & Pascual 2012:3).

Besides common day-to-day decisions, agency is also the capacity to "create institutional change, introduce new institutions based on "reflexive deliberation"" (Hiroe & Pascual 2012:3). In the development context, agency allows the poor to influence their society in a such way as to "produce a cultural consensus that best advances their own collective long-term interests in matters of wealth, equality and dignity" (Yousfi 2011:29). For a broader discussion of agency in different theoretical schools, see Chapter 5.

Adaptation capacities is another factor relevant to the understanding of development as applied here (Cannon & Müller-Mahn 2010, Sherman et al. 2016). Adaptation refers to a positive long-lasting change in order to deal with negative impacts, going far beyond more autonomous, 'ad-hoc' and superficial short-term coping strategies which may allow one to 'get by' through a certain period of difficulties (Brooks & Adger 2005). This change may include a long-lasting

change in livelihood strategies (Scoones 1998), typically starting with a diversification of livelihood strategies, for example from pure pastoralism to agro-pastoralism. Adaptation capacities do, however, not only touch the level of individuals, but also of a society itself, e.g., its institutions.

In Madagascar, adaptation capacities of local rural livelihoods are said to be determined largely by 'cultural factors' such as customs, taboos and oral traditions - in other words, local institutions (Andriamalala & Gardner 2010, Stoudmann et al. 2017). Furthermore, it is now widely acknowledged that the adaptation capacities of individuals as well as societies are shaped by culturally determined perceptions (in the institutional language mainly 'mental models'), for example those regarding risk and uncertainty (Angassa & Oba 2008, Bollig 2006, Cashdan 1990, McCarthy et al. , Smith, Barrett & Box 1999).

In South-West Madagascar, the view on the Mahafaly's and other (agro-)pastoral people's development and adaptation capacities is shaped by a global phenomenon known as "the cattle complex" (Herskovits 1926): Although, on the one hand, pastoralists are found to be often capable of developing flexible institutions and practices, for example for allowing persistent success in rangelands over the long term (Butt 2011, Fernandez-Gimenez 2002, Li, Jun & Zhang 2007, Scoones 1994), following the 'cattle complex', (agro-)pastoral people are often labeled as "conservative herder[s], bound by a primitive cultural imperative to build [their...] herd[s] for the sake of ego and prestige, and sell as few animals as possible" (Catley, Lind & Scoones 2013:6). In other words, the pastoral societies' informal institutions, especially mental models on animal husbandry, hinder them to adapt and develop.

Although, globally, voices are being raised to take the 'cattle complex' as a "policy and development myth" (Catley, Lind & Scoones 2013:6, also see Rugumayo 2000), for South-West Madagascar the literature very much stresses the mystical side and social or religious connotation of livestock keeping, especially for the zebu cattle (Fauroux 1997, 1998, Hoerner 1990, Réau 2002, Von Heland & Folke 2014). For example, it has become a cliché to state that Malagasy pastoralists mainly accumulate their animals as a kind of "sacred capital" (Von Heland & Folke 2014:257) used for sacrifices in several kinds of rituals related to the world of the ancestors. It is only very recently that some scholars call this view into question (Feldt et al. 2016, Hänke 2016, Middleton 2013a). I base my work on the findings made by Catley, Lind & Scoones (2013) who argue that pastoralists are able to develop 'plural pathways' which are thoroughly shaped by innovation, ingenuity and aspiration. This includes a conceptual shift from a mere systems approach to a systems-and-actor approach, taking into account individuals, their

aims, aspirations, understandings, strategies and practices which may translate into institutional agency.

Individual differentiation beyond the societal level is crucial when analyzing “how pastoralists are responding to the diverse drivers of change that are impinging on them”, because “not everyone succeeds, and processes of quite extreme differentiation are unfolding in some places, with direct consequence for those who lose out” (Catley, Lind & Scoones 2013:14). For research of development and change in pastoral communities, this differentiation may lead to “contradictions and complexities of multiple, competing pathways of change”, making “these places difficult to understand” (Catley, Lind & Scoones 2013:20), calling for an adapted research design<sup>4</sup>. Besides the thorough analysis of individual strategies and pattern, at the same time Catley, Lind & Scoones (2013) emphasize the importance of making the link to the larger context and changes therein, such as growing security problems, climate change, and growing competition for natural resources such as land.

Development is often also an issue of institutional change, not only in countries with relevant state policies. Also in regions ‘at the margins’ like most of rural Madagascar where people’s lives are largely defined by the set of local institutions, our understanding is distorted when we start “treating culture<sup>5</sup>, taboos, local rules and ethnic identity as unchanging” (Scales 2014:138). In such regions, development happens per se “under-the-radar, and outside the influence and control of aid interventions or state policies” (Catley, Lind & Scoones 2013:8). This may not only be due to a weak presence of the state. In some rural regions, small-scale societies have developed the ‘art of not being governed’<sup>6</sup> (Scott 2009) and social life is managed solely through

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<sup>4</sup> I respond to this challenge with a research design that builds its qualitative research based on interviews with Mahafaly people on both the societal as well as the individual level. For the latter, I try to cover the whole range of individual aspirations, mental models, strategies and actions, and, for the former, to detect common as well as individual understandings and perceptions of the institutional setting, as well as the whole angle between commonly-agreed (or “theoretically applied”) as well as individually practiced ways to translate institutions into action (e.g. different levels of rule compliance). This approach is mirrored in the conduction of the interviews themselves (e.g., interview questions differentiating between societal and individual level), as well as in the high number of interviewees (and so interviews). For a detailed description of my interview conception, see the chapter on research design.

<sup>5</sup> From an institutional perspective, culture can be understood as “the intergenerational transfer of norms, values and ideas” (North 1994 384).

<sup>6</sup> As Catley, Lind & Scoones (2013 12) describe it, while being “[p]hysically, culturally, economically and politically removed from the calculus of power and the central state, these people and areas have always resisted incorporation, avoiding taxation, resisting external imposition, and maintaining an apparently aggressive war-like stance in relation to state efforts”. This description shows similarities to the study region, where, at least in colonial times, the people were known for their heavy open reluctance to colonization (Middleton 1999d). The region was known for its ‘disguised’ villages hidden between cactus thickets. Today, Malagasy people are, in general, often described as dealing with unwanted authorities in a way of “agree heartily [and...] do whatever it takes to make them happy until they go away, then ignore them [and...] try to go on living one’s life as if the incident had never happened” (Graeber 2007:20). Along

local institutions. Today, it is widely acknowledged that such local institutions are not necessarily stable, and that even “institutions that involve deep-rooted social norms and beliefs have succeeded in changing with stunning regularity over time” (Platteau & Peccoud 2011 250). The importance of understanding local institutions and their change, as well as the contributions to this perspective from different disciplines, is further developed in chapter 5.

### ***1.3.2. Institutions and institutional change***

‘Institutions’ and their change are understood or defined in many different ways, depending on the different disciplines using this concept, but also depending on every single author (and the time he/she wrote something about institutions<sup>7</sup>). The theoretical framework for dealing with institutions and their change I apply here (for a deeper discussion of the framework see chapter 5) is mostly rooted in a stream of literature which Vatn (2005:101) has described as “Contemporary Classical Institutional Economics”, in contrast to New Institutional Economics and Old/Classical Institutional Economics<sup>8</sup>. Vatn (2005) labels the Contemporary Institutional Economists as follows: The individual is assumed to be socially formed and multi rational, meaning that maximizing individual utility is only one form of rationality amongst others<sup>9</sup>. Preferences and values are socially constructed and “[w]hat is right or wrong depends, moreover, on the kind of situation in which one finds oneself” (Vatn 2017:31). Institutional arrangements are not only shaped by positive transaction and information costs, but also by the struggle for the protection of rights, values, interests, and by power relations. Institutional arrangements are not understood as the outcome of struggling equilibrating forces, but of the

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the same lines, people are said to have developed ‘the art of not being governed’ in the sense of refusing to give the state basic information about themselves and their life. For example, in the study region, many people are not formally registered anywhere, so as to say they officially do not exist. As Eggert (2001:318) has put it, a “major impediment to producing accurate records for the south and southwest has always been that the people living there do not want the government to know who they are or how many cattle they possess. To keep this information secret, they have refined various strategies for deliberately misinforming government officials about basic demographic information.”

<sup>7</sup> The most prominent example of different definitions of institutions by the same author is probably the one of scholar Douglas North, who sometimes defines ‘mental models’ as part of the set of institutions (e.g., Denzau & North 1994), sometimes as some kind of factor shaping institutions (e.g., North 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Although, as Caballero & Soto-Oñate (2015 960) note, “in recent years, many contributions have permeated the boundaries” of the differences between New Institutional Economics and Classical Institutional Economics.

<sup>9</sup> “The idea of maximizing individual utility as the only form of rationality finds little support. It is not irrational behavior that is emphasized, or so much bounded rationality, as the thought that what is rational depends crucially on the institutional setting. The kind of rationality involved is defined by the meaning and expectations as given by each context. Considering what is right and wrong is an alternative form of rationality compared to the calculus of individual gain” (Vatn 2005 102). “In some contexts, like a market, institutions seem formed to support choices that ensure what is best for the individual, e.g., ‘individual rationality’. In the family context, care is the formative logic, constituting a type of ‘social rationality’” (Vatn 2017 31).

evolution of actions, perceptions, preferences and values. Thus, institutional change is possibly of evolutionary character, besides processes of planned change.

### **1.3.2.1. Understanding of institutions**

The most commonly used understandings of institutions are those following scholar Douglas North: “[Institutions] are made up of formal constraints (e.g. rules, laws, constitutions), informal constraints (e.g. norms of behavior, conventions, self-imposed codes of conduct), and their enforcement characteristics” (North 1994:360). For this work, however, I use a distinction between formal and informal institutions following Hodgson: ‘Established’ (formal) versus ‘embedded’ (informal) institutions. Formal institutions are socially transmitted and customary normative injunctions evidently known to the individual (Hodgson 2006). Along the same lines, formal institutions are legal rules which are created and enforced through sanctioning by some explicit collective process (Knight & Sened 1995, Schmid 2004), in the Malagasy context, for example, the local rules created by the village communities (*dina*). As Ostrom puts it, rules are “shared prescriptions (must, must not, or may) that are mutually understood and enforced in particular situations in a predictable way by agents responsible for monitoring conduct and for imposing sanctions” (Ostrom 2008b:824).

Informal institutions are immanent normative dispositions (Hodgson 2006). Deviations to informal institutions cannot be formally sanctioned, but their enforcement relies on expressed disapproval of other individuals, for example, through gossip and ostracism (Eggertsson 2013, Schmid 2004). The most ‘famous’, or most often treated informal institutions are unwritten codes of conduct or social norms, being defined as “social standards of behavior and/or thought” (Dequech 2006:473), or, in other words, “shared prescriptions known and accepted by most of the participants themselves involving intrinsic costs and benefits rather than material sanctions or instruments.” These norms are “social facts that are not changeable by the individual” (Ostrom 2008b 824-825).

These shared institutions allow the individuals to predict the likely behavior of others and adapt their own behavior to one that is supposedly socially accepted (Dequech 2006). By doing this, they on the one hand constrain certain patterns of behavior, but on the other hand enable other patterns. However, institutions also do this without a necessary interaction with other individuals: Institutions also shape and guide a person’s thinking, their perception of the world and what the world should look like, their explanations of what is going on, and thus how he or she should (re-)act. This set of institutions is often called ‘ideology’ and most prominently includes so called shared mental models. Mental models can be seen as “the crucial factor in explaining the choices people make” (Knight & North 1997:216) and as enhancing the

“durability, power, and normative authority” of all other types of institutions, while the other way round those institutions standardize mental models by creating “strong mechanisms of conformism and normative agreement” (Hodgson 2006:7).

Institutions not only differ in the degree that they are evidently or immanently known to people, but also to the degree that they are shared with others. As institutions are “used by humans in repetitive situations” (Ostrom 2008b:824), the other way round repetitive action can become institutionalized also on an individual level, creating more or less ‘individual’ institutions that are not necessarily shared one-to-one with others. Ostrom, for example, explicitly includes individual strategies in her set of relevant institutions, together with rules and norms. These strategies are understood by her as “regularized plans that individuals make within the structure of incentives produced by rules, norms, and expectations of the likely behavior of others” (Ostrom 2008b:825). Most scholars working with institutions neglect, or at least do not focus on strategies as institutions, however, it may help the analysis to consider these (see Chapter 4).

Despite this strong embeddedness of human thinking, aspiration and action in the web of institutions, an “individual always has some freedom”, as the institutional setting is “always incomplete” (Sjöstrand 1993:14), institutions may be more, but also less specific when applied to a certain situation, and, beyond that, are “flimsy structures” (Ostrom 2008b:823) without stability over time.

### **1.3.2.2. Approach of institutional change**

For the analysis of institutional change itself, I use the framework for modeling institutional change from “New Institutional Economic Anthropology”, an approach developed by anthropologist Jean Ensminger (1992) in her seminal book “Making a market” (also see Acheson (1994)), which in its understanding of change is very similar to the one described by Vatn (2005). Although this framework fits very well to my research objects, it is not fully comprehensive. Thus, in chapter 5 suggestions on how to improve this framework are made. For a discussion of the framework and the underlying assumptions on institutional change see chapter 5.

In general, one can say that although there is a diverse body on theoretical literature<sup>10</sup> on institutional aspects and also change<sup>11</sup>, institutional change still remains undertheorized (Dixit

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<sup>10</sup> There is often no clear distinction to be made between theoretical and empirical work on institutional change, as there is important work that provided a new theoretical explanation on institutional change but that is based heavily on a case study (see for example the work of Ruttan & Hayami (1984) and Ensminger (1992).

<sup>11</sup> For a review on theoretical literature on institutional change, see Brousseau, Garrouste & Raynaud (2011), Caballero & Soto-Oñate (2015), Haller (2002b), Kingston, Caballero-Miguez & Caballero (2009), Schmid (2008).

2009 cited by Brousseau, Garrouste & Raynaud 2011) and there is – with good reason – no comprehensive theory on institutional change (Ostrom 2008b, Schlüter 2007). As Caballero & Soto-Oñate (2015:949) put it “there is not one best theory of institutional change and [...] the different theories can be useful in analyzing different processes of institutional change over time and across space.” And even if some general findings about these described processes could possibly be transferred to other types of institutional change, “all leading approaches to institutional analysis [...] face problems in explaining institutional change” (Mahoney & Thelen 2010:4). That is, the theories or approaches fail to be able to completely explain the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of change and the interdependency and logics of the relevant factors.

Most existing theories of institutional change (mostly from mere Institutional Economics) address the formation of new institutions as institutional responses to abrupt exogenous shocks (e.g., in state economies), but overlook the gradual and often endogenously driven institutional evolution. Also, this kind of theoretical literature deals with formal institutions only, but neglects the impact of informal ones. However, informal institutions are found to play an important role when dealing with change in societies or communities. Furthermore, the theory has to fit to the general institutional context and level, so a theory on change of state economies may not be of much help when analyzing change on a regional or local level (e.g., in a community), or even not when analyzing on the same level, but in a different country with a very different culture. Ostrom (2008) even suggests to develop theories on institutional change for every single sector of a level, for example for commonly managed irrigation systems, or commonly managed forests. Today, the state of the art is still far from offering an approach, method or theoretical framework for every sector or at least every level.

As already pointed out above, a good theory or approach to analyze institutional change should be able to explain the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of change and the interdependency and logics of the relevant factors. Today, there is – at least for the ‘regional’ or ‘community’ level – very little literature presenting a real ‘theory’ or at least theoretical literature (without a ‘theory’) on change that meets these expectations. Besides a lack of real ‘theories’ at all, most existing approaches for analyzing institutional change focus on only one driver, process or outcome – for example efficiency, or alternatively bargaining. But, as also Schlüter (2007:203) has pointed out, a “complete theory of institutional change should contain all aspects [competition/efficiency, bargaining/distributional effects, etc.], because nearly all processes of institutional change are based on both mechanisms and are motivated by both effects.” Thus, most insights into institutional change can and must be drawn from the study of case studies, meta-studies, and of other works not explicitly dealing with theories of institutional change.

My review of this bundle of literature from different disciplines and schools indicates that one should take the following aspects and factors into consideration when analyzing institutional change on the community level: individual and community behavior and rationality shaped by ideology, social values and norms, expectations, preferences, experience and knowledge, and history (Bromley 2001, 2008, Knight 1995, Sick 2008, Vatn 2008), attitudes in general (Niederle 2007), and especially those towards risk and uncertainty (Cashdan 1990, Musole 2009, Ostrom 1993), tied to the perception of the problem or threat demanding a change (Brown et al. 2010, Homann et al. 2008, Kassahun, Snyman & Smit 2008, Katjiua & Ward 2007, Marin 2010, Tyler et al. 2007), the skill of collective action (Ostrom 2004), and issues of power (Ensminger 1992, Haller 2007).

The skill of collective action depends on parameters such as social cohesion, heterogeneity of interests, trust, and the group size (Agrawal 2008, Baland & Platteau 1997, Cleaver 2000, Johnson 1983, Ostrom 2000, 2005). The issue of power or bargaining power (Bardhan 2001, Knight & North 1997, Knight & Ensminger 1998, Platteau & Sekeris 2010, Sick 2002) leads to a strong focus of empirical work on the role of authority, elites and kinship (Cleaver 2002, Haller 2002a), and to questions of authority, decision making, conflicts, monitoring and sanctioning, solidarity and cooperation, depending often on concepts of ethnicity, lineage, kinship, and networks of patron-client and friendship (Agrawal 1997, Bollig 2006, Næss & Bårdsen 2015, Nugent & Sanchez 1993, Thébaud & Batterbury 2001, Van Ufford & Zaal 2004). Effects of the changes on economic wellbeing are mostly addressed in a sense of wealth distribution and especially inequality among community members (Andersson & Agrawal 2011, Bardhan, Ghatak & Karaivanov 2007, Beyene 2009a, Galaty 1981, Lesorogol 2003, Sick 2008, Rodima-Taylor 2012). Also discounting rates (Haller 2002a) are found to play a role. Efficiency is a topic rarely explicitly addressed in such a context of institutional change (but see Clark 1998), as is the question of pareto-superior or inferior outcomes (but see Agrawal 1999, Hundie 2006, McCarthy et al.). Also transaction costs seldom play a role (Béné et al. 2009, Haller & Merten 2008). Not surprisingly, these many aspects and factors in their entirety are not covered by any single scholar or any single work on institutional change (be it a theory, a framework for analysis, or a case study). But the framework for modeling institutional change by Ensminger (1992) is able to display most of it, and to give room for analysis beyond what is displayed (see chapter 5).

### **1.4. Research design**

The insights gained through this work mainly draw on three qualitative case studies on change in the study region: (1) Change in transhumance pattern due to cattle rustling, (2) privatization



of the coastal regions' main fodder resource *samata*<sup>12</sup> and attempts at curtailment, and (3) changes in funeral parties, specifically in funerary gift-giving. Given the scarcity of written documentation on the region, the case studies are based principally on primary data gathered from fieldwork. The primary data was collected by in-depth, explorative and semi-structured interviews, structured interviews, participatory observation, and, for the case on *samata*, also on discussions with a local while inspecting different *samata* stocks around the villages.



Figure 1: Mahafaly Plateau region (source: SuLaMa)

The study area – defined by the villages where field work was done – extends from the village of Soalara/Salare in the North to Vohombe in the South, and from Ambatry in the East to the ocean in the West and is part of the Mahafaly Plateau region (see Figure 1).

The field work started in 2011 with participation in the SuLaMa-project's first qualitative baseline study. With the aim to familiarize with the study area and to generate a general understanding of life in the region, two weeks of exploratory research in the four villages of Efoetse, Marofijery, Itomboina and Miarentsoa was done, applying different tools of the approach 'Participatory Rural Appraisal'. This research turned into a joint research report (SuLaMa 2011). From this base line study, ideas for my own research topic and field work developed.

The base line study was followed with in-depth data collection for my thesis during field work from May-June 2012, August-September 2012, and August-September 2013 (see Figure 2). During each phase of field work, I was accompanied by one of my two Malagasy research assistants (Léopold Clément Andrianjohary and Lazandrany Fahamaro Eltos) who helped with interpretation of the interviews (English - Malagasy). This consecutive interpretation, taking time, allowed me to keep comprehensive, very detailed minutes (having the character of transcripts) during each interview. After each phase of field work, my minutes were transcribed into digital documents by me or a student assistant. Afterwards, my assistants helped to check through and replenish my minutes with help of the audio records taken during the interviews, or in some cases completely transcribed the interviews from the record. Additionally to my own

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<sup>12</sup> While Kaufmann 2011 emphasizes the importance of the prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia* spp.) for the (Tanalana-) Mahafaly society in general, in the study area *samata* makes up to 80% of the dry season's cattle and goat fodder (T. Feldt, unpublished data). However, some people also prefer to feed prickly pear cactus, as they say it makes the cattle fat and strong. Very few interviewees reported that they still have access to grass in the *samata*-season, growing in fenced areas for protecting private grass (*valan-boka*).

interviews, between November 2012 and April 2014, my assistant Léopold Andrianjohary conducted several kinds of structured interviews on different topics, based on interview guidelines developed by me, as well as some open interviews on zebu herd history<sup>13</sup>.

2011						2012						2013						2014															
7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4

Figure 2: Overview on periods of field work by me and my assistants (yellow), and my assistant alone (green)

Of course, oral ad-hoc translation is not only a direct translation between two languages, but also already a slight interpretation of what was said (especially when translating between two so different languages such as Malagasy and English), as well as a summary. This may have, to a certain degree, shaped the information and impressions which I got during the interviews. I tried to minimize these effects by getting written translations of the audio-records of many interviews, by having a high number of interviews about the same topic, and by discussing interviews, information and preliminary findings directly with my interpreter.

Talking about the same topics with many different interviewees was also an approach to minimize the negative effects of certain possible biases typical for interviews, e.g., the interviewer bias. For the topic of funerary gift-giving, some aspects could be additionally triangulated with the participatory observation. Furthermore, the interviews conducted by me were complemented by structured interviews held by my research assistant without my presence, who specifically asked for interviewees' individual gift-giving behavior in specific funerary occasions in order to avoid certain biases such as the warm glow bias.

Especially for the case study on gift-giving, I expected a certain difference between what people are expected to do, or what the official custom is, and people's real behavior, in the sense that the societies' self-perception including their narratives may differ from real life. I carefully addressed this fact by including it in the conceptual frameworks of the case studies, making a

<sup>13</sup> Interviews held by my assistant centered on funerary gift-giving, zebu passports, and *samata* plantations (see all interview guidelines in the Appendix). The interview guidelines on *samata* plantations were developed together with Dr. Regina Neudert. For the case study on funerary gift-giving, I designed five different interview guidelines: One guideline asked men and women about their experience of being a guest at a funeral party and their perception of changes (N=20), another guideline asked men about their experience of organizing a funeral party (N=11), a further guideline asked young people (age 17-25) about their knowledge of funeral parties and their perception of changes (N=16), and a very short guideline asked people to list all of this year's funeral parties in the region they have heard of with the respective amount of gifts given, and to tell about a very famous former funeral party and the amount of gifts given, as well as the reason why it got famous (N= 34). For the narrative interviews on zebu herd history, cattle owners were asked to recount the development of their herd over the decades, explaining how often and for what reason they sold animals or gave them away, or lost animals due to diseases or droughts (N=14, A=28). The interviews on *samata* plantations as well as on herd history were conducted with the aim of feeding the information into both the work of Dr. Regina Neudert as well as my own.

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difference between information on the level of the society versus the individual on the one hand, and 'real facts' about the society and life in the region, including individual behavior versus narratives and discourses on the other hand. Regarding 'real facts', the transhumance topic is the one with the highest degree of data considered by some interviewees as 'sensible' in the sense of being careful about which data on cattle herds to share with us.

Most interviews were held with only one or two interviewees, a small number with three or more people. I decided to not make use of the method of (focus) group discussions, as my observation of group discussions during the base line survey and the beginning of my own field research was that in such a setting mostly one or two older men take over the floor and all others just listen and nearly never intervene or even contradict. Thus, my interviews with four people or more always developed spontaneously out of interviews meant to be held with one or two people – as life in the villages mostly takes place outside, interviews were normally held somewhere out of doors and thus in public space, so often people just approached us and decided to take part in the conversation.

Interview partners were chosen according to different parameters like expected or proven knowledge on the topic, representativeness for a certain group (e.g. youth/elder; women/men; Mahafaly/Tanalana/Vezo; (no) ownership of cattle and/or *samata*; traditional authority/municipality head/'normal' citizen), and their availability and willingness to be interviewed. Consequently, in absolute numbers more interviews were conducted in bigger villages, and also more interviews were held on the coastal plain, compared to the plateau (as the plateau is much less densely populated and the *samata*-plant chapter 3 is dealing with does not grow here).

Table 1 gives an overview of visited villages and numbers of interviews per village, while Table 4 on page I gives a comprehensive overview of all interviews.

Table 1: Overview on villages where interviews were held

area	village or hamlet	number of interviews	inspection of <i>samata</i> stocks
coastal plain	Ambahivahy	10	
	Ambola (Vezo village)	13	
	Ampasinabo	1	
	Anakao	6	
	Anakaraka	6	x
	Andranotohoke	1	
	Ankalindrano	2	
	Ankilibory (Commune de Beheloke/Efoetse)	22	x
	Ankilibory (Commune de Itampolo)	7	x
	Ankilimivony	2	x
	Ankiririza	5	x
	Antanandranto	11	x
	Behazomby	5	
	Beheloke haut	17	x
	Beroka	5	x
	Besambay (Vezo village)	4	
	Efoetse	58	x
	Kaikarivo	4	x
	Manasy	6	x
	Marofijery	41	x
	Maromena (Vezo village)	9	
	Maromitilike	13	x
	Maytelime	6	x
	Soalara	4	
	Tariboly (Vezo village)	3	
	Vatolalake	4	
Vohombe	4		
plateau	Ambatry	17	
	Ambory	2	
	Andremba I	23	
	Andremba II	3	
	Ankazomateila	2	
	Behalitany	1	
	Itomboina	27	
	Maroarivo	5	
	Miarentsoa	26	
	Sainta	3	

Table 2 presents the different topics covered by the interviews, and the respective number of interviews per topic. Detailed information on interview topics and the interviewees is given in the respective method sections of each case study chapter.

Table 2: Overview on number of interviews and topics covered

type	total number	number of interviews covering the following topics (several topics per interview possible)						
		transhumance, cattle raiding	privatization of samata (Tanalana-villages)	privatization of samata (Vezo-villages)	funerals	weddings and other customs	socio-economic change, lifestyle, livestock and investment	herd history
open and semi-structured, held by author	245	83	81	15	86	26	46	
structured, held by assistant	85		30	8	47			
very short structured ones, held by assistant	34				34			
open, held by assistant	14							14
IN TOTAL:	<b>378</b>							

The minutes and transcripts of the interviews were analyzed after each period of field work in the manner of an inductive content analysis (Patton 2002). The analysis is based on different types of coding (descriptive, pattern, in vivo, attribute, and causation coding (see Saldaña 2013)) and network views of the codes, making use of the QDA software Atlas.ti (see Smit 2002).

The understandings and data gathered from each field trip fed into the revision and further development of my research topics, study focus and questions, as well as interview guidelines. The revision and development of the research, especially the theoretical assumptions, were also guided by relating and comparing the data from the field with insights from comprehensive literature reviews conducted before and between the field trips. In addition, I frequently took the opportunity to discuss my research at different research seminars, workshops and conferences.<sup>14</sup> This research design can be described as an “iterative, inductive and interactional process of data collection, simultaneous analysis, and emergent interpretation” (Goulding 2005: 296), which is typical for ethnographic research (Morse 1994) and similar to the procedure known from Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss 2009).

<sup>14</sup> I presented and discussed my research at the following workshops and conferences: research seminars of the chairs of environmental economics at BTU Cottbus (Prof. Dr. Wätzold) and of the chair for environmental and resource economics at HU Berlin (Prof. Dr. Hagedorn), workshops of the German Network for New Institutional Economics, the LAMA conference (Berlin, 2013), the 3rd IASC European Meeting (Umeå, 2014), the 15th IASC Biennial Global Conference (Edmonton, 2015), the International Madagascar Workshop (Avignon, 2016), the 3rd Witten Conference on Institutional Change (Witten, 2016), and the 15th EASA Biennial Conference (Stockholm, 2018).

Because of the iterative research manner, all interviews (in total 378) helped to get a thorough understanding of the study area, to develop the research questions, and to provide detailed information for the case studies. However, in the end not all interview data fed directly into the case studies (e.g., those on privatization of *samata* in Vezo-villages, on changes in weddings and other customs, and on funerals and weddings among Vezo people<sup>15</sup>). In the methods sections of the case study chapter, the respective number of interviews that directly fed in is given.

The analysis is underpinned with unpublished data from a region-wide quantitative household survey undertaken by Dr. Regina Neudert, myself, and other colleagues in 2012 (see Neudert et al. 2015) and for cattle prices from the monitoring of 5 regional markets in 2013 and 2014 (Neudert, Bautze & Andrianjohary 2015).

### 1.5. The study region

The Mahafaly Plateau region is situated in South-West Madagascar in the administrative region of Atsimo-Andrefana in the dry forest ecoregion south of Toliara. Today, Madagascar is among the world's poorest countries (World Bank Group 2016) - the country is ranked 158th out of 187 countries in the Human Development Index (UNDP 2016). Analogous to the general impoverishment of Madagascar,<sup>16</sup> also the people in the region have become poorer. Today, 72% of the rural population in the Toliara region can officially be classified as poor (Stifel, Razafimanantena & Rakotomanana 2014).

Madagascar is currently also a state known for "suffering from fragility" (Marcus 2016:4). Public activity is generally reduced after a coup d'état in 2009 which caused foreign support, formerly providing around 40% of all governmental spending (Ploch & Cook 2012), to diminish substantially. However, life in the region is anyhow relatively little influenced by the Malagasy state, its functioning, and politics. The region is one of the most disadvantaged in terms of general infrastructure, governmental extension services, market access, education, and health (Minten & Barrett 2008). Besides, official policies and mechanisms today give quite a substantive share of power to the local or regional level to govern local or regional issues, such as the administrative level of the commune as a body and area and body of varying extensions and

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<sup>15</sup> Interviews revealed that customs and dynamics are very similar between Tanalana/Mahafaly and Vezo communities in the study area. The only differences in funerals among the Vezo seems to be that Vezo have more modern, smaller tombs, bury the corpse at most one week after the death so that they do not need to "hide the corpse" (*manaja lolo*) like the Tanalana/Mahafaly do before the permanent grave is ready, and that Skara-Vezo people do not use a coffin (while Taykaroke-Vezo do). Funerary rituals including the party and gift-giving are merely the same and show the same dynamics of increases in gifts and in social competition. Customs in weddings and their dynamics seem to be completely similar to those of the Tanalana/Mahafaly.

<sup>16</sup> With real per capita gross domestic product (GDP) in 2010 being approximately one third of that in 1960 (World Bank Group 2016).

numbers of associated municipalities, the municipalities usually covering a village and its surroundings (*fokontany*), and the *fokonolo[na]* as the village community itself. For a general overview on local governance mechanisms see Thielsen (2016).

The inhabitants of the region live in conglomerations varying between small hamlets of a handful of people and bigger villages of approximately 3,000 people, with many villages having a population of around 500 inhabitants (unpublished project data from a village base line survey, 2012). Regarding their political economy and character of relationships, the villages may be classified as 'multiclan corporate groups' (Johnson & Earle 2000) which consist of some linked clans and are governed by an assembly of older high-status persons who are assigned due lineal descendant and/or achieved respect. Fauroux (1994, 2006) describes the society as being hierarchized and determined largely by personalized client-patron relationships and a certain domination of strong and powerful people.

The Mahafaly plateau region is geographically divided into the plateau zone itself (with an altitude of approximately 350 m.a.s.l.) and the coastal plain next to the sea. It is inhabited by three groups of people: The Vezo-people who live directly on the coast and traditionally make their living from fishing, and the Tanalana and Mahafaly people who are (mostly) agro-pastoralists and subsistence farmers. For a comprehensive overview on agriculture in the region see Hanisch (2015) and on livestock raising see Feldt et al. (2016). According to the official classification of Malagasy ethnic groups, the Tanalana people are part of the Mahafaly. However, both Mahafaly and Tanalana mostly consider themselves as an independent group (Thielsen 2016) or even refuse the broader classification (Eggert 1986).<sup>17</sup> Daily living, social structure and culture are for the most part similar or even identical, but not completely: For example, the Tanalana-people have a traditional authority on clan and lineage level called *mpitan-kazomanga* who is in charge of the *hazomanga*, a holy pale. The Mahafaly do not have such a holy pale (or other item) and also do not know such a traditional authority. Another example of cultural difference is the wooden grave stele (*aloalo*) for which the Mahafaly are famous, but which is not used by Tanalana people.

For the agro-pastoral people of the study region, the number of a man's livestock is synonymous with his economic wellbeing and social status (Fauroux 1997, Wüstefeld 2004). In this 'cattle civilization' (Hoerner 1990:150, orig. in french), people traditionally invest their savings in livestock (Casse et al. 2004, Kaufmann 1998). It is in this region and the other dry regions of the

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<sup>17</sup> For more information on Mahafaly and Tanalana ethnic descent and self-conception as a group see Thielsen (2016) and Eggert (1981, 1986).

South West were most of the islands stock of livestock and especially zebu cattle are kept.<sup>18</sup> A “rich man”<sup>19</sup> (*mpanarivo*) is literally a man “who has one thousand [cattle]” (Blanc-Pamard & Fauroux 2004 cited by Von Heland & Folke (2014:7)). While the average zebu cattle herd consists of 16 animals (Neudert et al. 2015), wealth is very unevenly distributed with some households owning more than 200 cattle and 37% not owning any livestock at all (unpublished project data from household survey, 2012). Using recent local categories of wealth (SuLaMa 2011), wealth is locally defined as owning more than 60 cattle and over 100 small ruminants per core family. Being wealthy means independence from the economic help of relatives and the ability to fulfil social obligations, e.g. livestock donations for funerals (cf. Pannoux 1991, Schomerus-Gernböck 1981). Today, more than 85% of the households own less than 20 zebus and 20 small ruminants and thus locally classify as poor, a category labelled as ‘suffering’ and ‘being hungry’ (SuLaMa 2011).

South-West Madagascar is to date a global food insecurity hotspot (WFP 2015, cited by Hänke 2016) and poverty, malnutrition and hunger in the study region have worsened in recent years (Hänke 2016, WFP & FAO 2014). Food insecurity today affects more than half of local households in the study region (Neudert et al. 2015) and the annual lean or “hunger”-season has extended to three to five months per year in South-West Madagascar, depending on the area (Hänke & Barkmann 2017, ILO Programm 2001). Also, according to many interviewees, lean seasons and hunger (both called *kere*) have been aggravated:

“In the past, *kere* happened sometimes - but nowadays there is always *kere*.” [7:119, male, age: over 60]

The common impoverishment in the region is caused by several factors, climatic changes being probably the main one, in addition to locust invasions. The agricultural yields suffer from high rainfall variability within and between rainy seasons and dry spells. Forecasts on climate change predict that the rain-fed farming in South-West Madagascar will become even harder in the future (Harvey et al. 2014, Tadross et al. 2008, Vololona et al. 2013). The dry spells not only affect agriculture, but also livestock keeping (Vololona et al. 2013). In the last decade, extremely

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<sup>18</sup> In 2018, for example, Madagascar’s overall stock consisted of approximately 10,323,000 heads of cattle (FAO, <http://faostat3.fao.org/browse/Q/QA/E>, retrieved: 22.12.2020).

<sup>19</sup> Women are however not involved in livestock-keeping issues and in most cases do also not directly own livestock, but give animals they have received or bought to their husband or father (SULAMA 2011). Redistributive mechanisms as found in strong moral economies (Scott 1976) or ‘leveling societies’ where private wealth is seen as anti-social (Hunter 1969), are very rare. Herd sizes are furthermore highly fluctuating, as people frequently invest in animals or sell parts of the herd in order to get cash, and give away or receive animals at funerals or other cultural events like weddings or circumcision ceremonies (Hänke & Barkmann 2017, Neudert et al. 2015).



dry years have led to part of the livestock dying of weakness and thirst, and many zebus are also said to have died due to diseases. During my field work, the interviewees repeatedly claimed that people had more zebus ‘in the past’. Regionally specific statistics on past or current livestock numbers are rare and if they exist they are not reliable (Hoerner 1990), but the literature also discusses a “livestock crisis” in the South-West since the late 1980s (Fieloux 1987:67, orig. in French, also see Wüstefeld 2004), which can be traced back to the 1960s (e.g. Schomerus-Gernböck 1971).

Generally, all older interviewees described today’s life in the region as ‘having become hard’ due to a rather recent impoverishment in cattle. This was associated with the climate-induced harvest losses which increased the need to ‘spend’ cattle for buying food, as well as with several animal diseases and the described losses caused by extreme droughts:

“Before, more people had cattle. [But] there was a disease that killed many zebus, and then the food crisis [...which] started when I was young, and we sold cattle on every market day<sup>20</sup>. [...] Life is hard in Madagascar! [...] If the World Food Program wouldn’t distribute food, we would starve.” [28:29, male, age: 60]

According to Hänke (2016), households in the study region spend over 50% of their total cash income (which is mostly from the selling of livestock) on food purchases. Less than 5% of their cash income is however generated from crop sales. Analogous to many other (agro-) pastoral societies (e.g., Catley, Lind & Scoones 2013), an increased livelihood diversification with the effect of a lower dependence from agriculture and livestock is seen as key to the development of the region (Neudert et al. 2015). Food purchase is typically done on the local markets with a very high price volatility of up to 250%, affecting predominantly those households most in need (Neudert et al. 2020).

A further problem is that local livelihoods in the region depend to a high degree on natural resources which are frequently overexploited and thus degrading. Examples of resources being overused are the livestock fodder *samata* (*Euphorbia stenoclada*, see chapter 3) or the wild yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) which regularly serves as emergency nutrition for the poorest (Andriamparany et al. 2015). An intense extraction of wood from the remaining forest, for example for the construction of houses and charcoal production as the main strategy for making fast cash money (Neudert et al. 2013, SuLaMa 2011) has led to overexploitation. As an illustration of some of the consequences, efforts to collect firewood have risen and it has become more difficult to find

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<sup>20</sup> Most market days in the region take place once per week.

proper – meaning old and thus thick – trees for the construction of coffins<sup>21</sup> (own interview data).

In the past four decades, 45% of the regional forest cover has been lost (Brinkmann et al. 2014). Besides all negative consequences for the inhabitants of the region, this development is tragic as the region is listed as one of the 200 most important ecological regions in the world (Olson & Dinerstein 2002) and its spiny forest a global biodiversity hotspot with many endemic species (Ganzhorn et al. 2001). This loss in forest is due to the former habit of swidden agriculture, paired with the progress of the agricultural frontier as a result of a constant population growth,<sup>22</sup> leading to a need for more agricultural land. Scarcity of (unused) agricultural land has also become a severe agricultural constraint (Coral 2014), especially on the more densely populated coastal plain<sup>23</sup>. Land rights are mostly still only customary, although the process of official titling is ongoing, especially in areas with a comparatively high demand for land, such as coastal areas of interest for tourism. For example, in 2009 only 10% of the surface of the commune of Betioky was officially titled (Fisher 2009).

Besides the question of land property, land use itself in Madagascar is known to be governed by traditional ‘institutions’ in the form of ancestral norms, taboos and rules (Jones, Andriamarivololona & Hockley 2008). This is especially true for rather remote areas such as the Mahafaly plateau region. In general, many aspects of life in the region, as well as in other regions in the South West, can be seen as comparatively traditional and still heavily influenced by customary rules, traditions, taboos, and moral values. At the same time, these customs are not (and probably never have been) stable and interviewees also stated a change in social norms and behavior, as does the literature on South-West Madagascar (Kaufmann & Tsirahamba 2006, Marcus 2008).

The most important influences that caused a change in traditional values and spiritual beliefs in Madagascar and beyond are observed to be the rise of Christianity and alphabetization (Anoliefo, Isikhuemhen & Ochije 2003, Gardner et al. 2008, Lingard et al. 2003, Stifel, Fafchamps & Minten 2011, Tengö et al. 2007). Furthermore, Kaufmann & Tsirahamba (2006) have noted a deterioration of rule abeyance due to in-migration to the northern part of the study region. Looking at these factors, one can state that, first of all, the degree of Christianization is comparatively low, compared to many other parts of Madagascar: According to unpublished

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<sup>21</sup> Consequently, the number of coffins not locally produced but imported from Toliara has risen.

<sup>22</sup> People in the study region are on average 19 years old (Neudert et al. 2015), suggesting an annual population growth similar to the national one (2.7% in 2018 (World Bank Group 2019)).

<sup>23</sup> Especially on the coastal plain, interviewees claimed that the region is today ‘very crowded’.

data from the project's household base line survey (2012) in 22 Tanalana and Mahafaly villages, on average only 19% of surveyed (mostly male) household heads were Christians, however the data reveal a high variation, depending on the village and region: The share varies between 31% on the coastal plain (between 19% and 44% per sampled village) to 24% in the sampled villages of the western plateau (5% to 43%), and 5% on the eastern plateau (0% to 25%). On the coastal plain, Christianization is much higher in villages having direct contact with the mostly Christian Vezo-people. According to the interviewees, being an (active) Christian is more widespread among women.

Also the rate of formal education and literacy in the region is comparatively low, although currently on the rise: According to unpublished data from the household survey (2012), 52% of all sampled children between 10 and 17 were literate, with literacy rates rising in recent years (10 years old: 51%, 17 years old: 36%). In turn, over 70% of the adult population over 18 were illiterate, and only 8% has studied to high school level and beyond. Also among adults between 18 and 35, only 10% have visited a school beyond primary school and thus a school out of the study region.

While permanent out-migration of the Mahafaly people is documented in the literature – mostly to the regional capital Toliara (Lebigre & Belera 1997) – actual data on out- or in-migration towards the region do not exist. Most migration seems to take place in the character of temporary out-migration for work by mostly (younger) men. However, this may not affect more than around 6% of the region's households (Neudert et al. 2015). In turn, intra-regional migration is substantial in the case of women, especially regarding married ones. This is because marriages are often 'inter-village' (as well as 'inter-regional' and 'inter-ethnic') and the couples normally live in the home villages of the male spouses<sup>24</sup>.

The general socio-economic transition documented for many rural parts of Madagascar (Fauroux 2002, Kaufmann 2011, Lebigre & Belera 1997, Minten & Barrett 2008, Marcus 2008, Rasamoelina 2006) seems less advanced in the study region. Reasons may be the long travel distances to regional towns like Betioky or the regional capital Toliara, limited telecommunication and information access (no electricity, no TV, mobile phone connection only since 2014/2015). It is still mostly true that wealth is mainly recognizable by the size of a person's

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<sup>24</sup> According to the household survey in 2012, approximately 60% of the women among the couples of a village were born in another village, while this was only true for less than 20% of the male spouses. In the case of sampled households with the male head born in the same village, in 97% even the head's father was born there.

cattle herd, but not in other terms like housing, clothes or jewelry (Mattern & Ravelomandeha 2012).

The people in the region are still far from possessing the “world standard package of goods” (Keyfitz, 1992, cited by Ger & Belk (1996:70). However, older interviewees frequently expressed their astonishment about the existence of new goods on the local markets and how these goods rapidly became a ‘must have’ for ‘the younger generations’. A clear gradient of ‘modernity’ was observed by me between the villages without access to a regional village market, or even without road access, and those connected to the outer world via harbors (like Anakao) or via the National Route 10 – the latter having a few houses per village made of wood planks and corrugated iron instead of local material, sometimes even with several rooms, and in extreme cases even with television and video recorder. Further frequently commented changes in local life are the ongoing market integration and transition towards a cash economy where money is needed for sustaining the livelihoods (see chapters 2, 3, and 4).

# **Chapter 2: The cattle raiders leave us no choice: New transhumance in the Mahafaly Plateau region in Madagascar**

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The chapter includes a reprint of the published version,  
with minor corrections in grammar and spelling, adapted  
cross-references to match the format of the thesis, updates  
of currency conversion between Malagasy Ariary and US\$,  
as well as some additional information presented in footnotes.

## **Chapter 2: The cattle raiders leave us no choice: New transhumance in the Mahafaly Plateau region in Madagascar**

### **Abstract**

This article reports findings from a qualitative case study on the recent development of a pastoral transhumance movement in the Mahafaly Plateau region in Madagascar. Interviews with pastoralists from 26 villages are analyzed within a framework of New Institutional Economics to investigate pastoral mobility, as a response to the Madagascar-wide problem of cattle raiders (*dahalo*). The conditions for the new movement are compared to a traditional transhumance movement comprising the same actors but in reverse geographical direction. Contrary to many previous studies from Madagascar, the results reveal that property rights regarding access to ancestral land are not a constraint to pastoral mobility. The new transhumance movement was enabled by pro-social norms of solidarity, guest rights and unconditional hospitality (*fihavanana*) shared by the pastoralists in the region. Additional vital elements are mental models of kinship (*raza, longo*) and the formal indigenous institution of trust creation by sincerity oaths (*titike, kine*).

However, frequent cattle raids have led to social change and an environment of mistrust; placing social constraints on pastoral mobility. Hospitality and guest rights are increasingly bound to kinship relations, and the pastoralists' interpretation of kinship has become narrower. These social constraints are far more relevant to the new movement than to the more institutionalized traditional transhumance. The findings illustrate how Madagascar's cattle raiding problem has influenced the rural society's social norms and mental models. The study highlights how supportive social norms and fitting shared mental models influence people's capacity to adapt, especially in sociocultural settings ruled by informal indigenous institutions.

### **2.1. Introduction**

Pastoralists around the world are known to adopt flexible management approaches to cope with unexpected events and changing livestock-raising conditions (Fernandez-Gimenez & Le Febre 2006). One important strategy for coping with variable water and pasture availability is pastoral mobility, including long-range, predictable seasonal movements called transhumance (Behnke et al. 2011)). In the Mahafaly Plateau region of South-West Madagascar, the Tanalana people living on the coastal plain still practice their ancient tradition of transhumance (Battistini 1964). The Tanalana herders spend approximately four to six months of the year further inland on the plateau, where fodder is comparatively more abundant (SuLaMa 2011). In recent years, a previously unreported transhumance movement in the inverse direction to the traditional one

has emerged: in order to escape cattle raiders, herders from the plateau temporarily move to the coastal plain. This pattern will hereafter be referred to as ‘inverse transhumance’.

Cattle raiding has been known as a feature of pastoral life in Madagascar since the publication of Robert Drury’s *Journal* (Defoe, Oliver & Rochon 1890). Since then, it has appeared in the literature with increasing frequency (Ribar 1926, Faublée 1941, Michel 1957, Rabearison 1965, Randrianjafizanaka 1973, Randrianarison 1976, Hoerner 1982, Fieloux & Lombard 1987, Fauroux et al. 1989, Elli 1993, Kaufmann 1998, Saint-Sauveur 2002, Fauroux 2003, Rasamoelina 2006, McNair 2008, Rakoto 2010, 2011, Scheidecker 2014). In the past, cattle raiding had mainly cultural motives (Fauroux 1989b). Cattle are the main source of capital and social status in the Mahafaly Plateau region (Fauroux 1997), and stealing them has long been a ‘local sport’ of young men (Battistini 1964). Today, however, attacks by organized gangs of cattle raiders, so called *dahalo* (or *malaso*<sup>25</sup>), have reached new dimensions in terms of economic impact and violence in Madagascar. In the most affected southern regions, their attacks have led to the displacement of villagers (OCHA 2012), and to an overall decline in economic activity (Fafchamps & Minten 2006, Rakoto 2010). Cattle raiding has become a topic frequently discussed in the national and even international media (cf. BBC News 2008).

Although a small number of studies on local adaptation to cattle raiding in Madagascar do exist (Saint-Sauveur 2002, Tubau 2011), new pastoral movements have not been reported to date. On a global level, cattle raiding is known to affect many pastoral groups, mostly in Africa (Blench 2001, Schilling, Opiyo & Scheffran 2012) (Beyene 2009b, Bollig 2006). Yet recent trends towards greater pastoral mobility have mainly been described as climate change adaptation strategies (Agrawal 2010, Upton 2012, Freier et al. 2012).

This case study analyzes the factors that enable, shape, and restrict the emergence of the inverse transhumance movement from the Mahafaly Plateau to the coastal region. In Madagascar, access to pastoral land in general also means access to ‘ancestral land’. This *tanin-draza(na)* is understood as “(...) part of Madagascar’s national motto, with the zebu cattle as its emblem” (Von Heland & Folke 2014, 259). Customary property rights and legitimate use of ancestral land are typically limited to the members of the local ‘autochthonous’ clans (Muttenger 2006a, Evers & Seagle 2012). Access and rights to land for newcomers and evolving conflicts with the owning clans are mainly solved by formal agreements of clan councils (Von Heland & Folke 2014). In the

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<sup>25</sup> There are several Malagasy dialects spoken on the island, with the eastern dialect also spoken on the central plateau as the best known one. The dialect spoken in the study region not only differs in phonological features (e.g., *tanin-draza* versus *tanin-drazana* in eastern dialect, term for ancestral land), but often also uses different words, as in the case of raiders (*malaso*, versus *dahalo* in eastern dialect).

study area's coastal region, access to land and especially to scarce fodder stocks is a source of frequent conflict. It is thus expected that the moving herders' need to obtain a share of these fodder stocks will require additional formal agreements with the communities living on the coastal plain.

Pastoral societies in Madagascar and other regions, however, do not principally base pastoral mobility, and the related access to resources on such formal agreements alone. Essentially, in most pastoral societies the boundaries of resource territories are flexible, the conceptions of legitimate user groups are fuzzy (Fernandez-Gimenez & Le Febre 2006, Bromley 2001) and the relationships between interacting groups of herders are dominated by solidarity, reciprocity, and kinship (Bollig 2006, Di Falco & Bulte 2013, Thébaud & Batterbury 2001). In Madagascar, the "social cornerstone" of the society (Fritz-Vietta, Röttger & Stoll-Kleemann 2009b): 93 is the concept of *fihavanana*<sup>26</sup>, embracing meanings of solidarity, social harmony, tolerance, friendship, union, mutual responsibility, reciprocity and kinship (Fritz-Vietta et al. 2011, Schachenmann 2006, Evers 2006, Kneitz 2014)

Alongside the social value of *fihavanana* and formal laws and rules on land and resources, the inverse transhumance movement is expected to be shaped by additional factors. People's adaptation options are known to be influenced by a range of social and personal variables that include knowledge, perceptions of risk and uncertainty, moral values, habits, social status, power relations and traditional group procedures (Adger et al. 2009). To analyze the broad spectrum of factors outlined above, a framework from 'Contemporary Classical Institutional Economics' (Vatn 2005) was chosen: Social interaction, but also all other behaviors of individuals, is explained as being structured and regulated by so-called institutions in the form of rules, values, routines, norms and mental models.

The paper is divided into three parts. The first part describes the conceptual framework and methods, and gives an introduction to the study area. The second part presents the data on inverse transhumance, as well as an overview of traditional transhumance, the local perception of cattle raiding, and ongoing social change. The final part discusses the character, conditions and limitations of inverse transhumance in comparison to traditional transhumance and in relation to the raiding problem and social change.

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<sup>26</sup> In local dialect *filongoa*.



## 2.2. Methodology

### 2.2.1. Conceptual framework

Within the framework of 'Contemporary New Institutional Economics'<sup>27</sup> (Vatn 2005) adopted here, the action of an individual is seen as being embedded in a web of institutions. These institutions on the one hand constrain certain patterns of behavior, but on the other hand enable other patterns. They allow the individuals to predict the likely behavior of others and adapt their own behavior to one that is supposedly socially accepted (Dequech 2006).

Institutions can be classified according to their degree of formality: Formal institutions are understood as socially transmitted and customary normative injunctions evidently known to the individual (Hodgson 2006). Along the same lines, formal institutions are legal rules which are created and enforced through sanctioning by some explicit collective process (Knight & Sened 1995, Schmid 2004), in the Malagasy context, for example, the local rules created by the village communities (*dina*).

Informal institutions are immanent normative dispositions (Hodgson 2006). Deviations to informal institutions cannot be formally sanctioned, but their enforcement relies on expressed disapproval of other individuals, for example, through gossip and ostracism (Schmid 2004, Eggertsson 2013). Informal institutions include codes of conduct, customs, routines, shared mental models and social norms, the latter being defined as "social standards of behavior and/or thought" (Dequech 2006:473).

Mental models represent the people's beliefs, interpretations of the world, and views of causal relationships (Denzau & North 1994, Bromley 2006). Mental models can be seen as "the crucial factor in explaining the choices people make" (Knight & North 1997:216) and as enhancing the "durability, power, and normative authority" of all other types of institutions, while the other way round those institutions standardize mental models by creating "strong mechanisms of conformism and normative agreement" (Hodgson 2006:7). As an example of informal institutions, the Malagasy concept of fihavanana embraces mental models about the definition or character of kinship, friendship and hospitality, and related social norms that define what good behavior in line with fihavanana means.

Processes of institutional change and the emergence of institutions differ between formal and informal institutions: A formal institution is consciously crafted and changed, for example, by

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<sup>27</sup> More precisely, *Contemporary Classical Institutional Economics*, which is often subsumed into *New Institutional Economics*.

copying another institution from a different setting (Ostrom 2005). Alternatively, people implicitly use their underlying mental models to gradually adapt an institution until they feel that it 'fits' again (Brousseau, Garrouste & Raynaud 2011, Mantzavinos, North & Shariq 2004). The change and adaptation of informal institutions is driven by learning, changes in the power of actors, and the institutions' functionality (Schmid 2004). Informal institutions, especially social norms or customs can even "die in an evolutionary process (...) without people being aware of the process" (Schmid 2004: 7, 267).

### **2.2.2. Study area**

The Mahafaly Plateau region is situated in South-West Madagascar, in the dry forest ecoregion south of Toliara. The region can be divided into two zones: the plateau itself and the coastal plain.

According to the official ethnic classification of Madagascar, the region is mainly inhabited by the agro-pastoral group of Mahafaly and its sub-group of Tanalana (Battistini 1964). However, during field research, people clearly expressed a local view of Tanalana as an independent group. According to the villagers' classification, the agro-pastoralists on the coastal plain are Tanalana, while the villages on the plateau are both mixed and pure Tanalana and Mahafaly communities. The semi-nomadic Vezo fishermen are another ethnic group living in the region. Inter-ethnic and inter-regional marriages are common and create vast familial bonds between people of different regions and ethnic groups.

The Tanalana and Mahafaly people are subsistence farmers and also engage in keeping poultry, goats, sheep and zebu-cattle (*Bos indica*) (Battistini 1964, SuLaMa 2011). The Tanalana villages on the plateau were founded around two generations ago, by Tanalana people from the coastal plain who moved in search of better conditions for agriculture and livestock keeping (Esoavelomandroso 1989b). The predominantly red soils and precipitation rates between 400 - 450 mm/year on the plateau allow better yields than on the coastal plain with only 300 - 350mm/year and sandy soils. On the plateau, the wide savannas allow cattle to graze freely the whole year round.

On the coastal plain, grass quantity and quality allow grazing for only around two months of the year. For four to six months, the cattle are fed on sliced branches of planted *raketa* (prickly pear cactus, *Opuntia ssp.*) and wild or planted *samata* trees (*Euphorbia stenoclada* Baill., see Figure 30). In order to stimulate the growth of *samata*, the herders have been removing other shrubs, turning the region into a "samata landscape" (Kaufmann 2004:351)

Livestock is the fundamental form of material wealth in the region (Fauroux 1997, Hänke et al. 2017). In 2012, approximately 60% of the region's households owned livestock, but only 40% of the households were able to raise cattle. Depending on the family's economic situation, the number of cattle per household varies between 1 and more than 200 animals, with an average of 17 heads (Neudert et al. 2015). Raising cattle is a family affair, where the animals are generally herded by the sons while ownership and decision rights are mainly in hands of the father<sup>28</sup>.

The social and political organization of the Tanalana and Mahafaly people is based both on the traditional ethnic structure of common ancestors (*raza*) with clans and subordinated lineages<sup>29</sup>, as well as the territorial structures of the state-run administration. The smallest administrative unit in Madagascar is the fokontany. It usually covers a village and its surrounding hamlets. A fokontany is officially run and represented by a selected head (*chef de fokontany*). Decisions on the village level are however mainly taken by the village community (*fokonolo*) in open meetings or the group of elders. The villagers rely mainly on two groups of social networks: their formal kin group (*raza*) and the longo. In the study region, unlike other parts of Madagascar (Astuti 1995a), longo is not used as a synonym for the formal kin group comprising people from the extended family up to the overall ethnic group (Eggert 1986). Longo describes a personified kin group consisting of relatives, friends and in general all people with whom one has a good relationship (*fihavanana*, in the regional dialect *filongoa*). In Madagascar, the character of kinship is 'cumulative' (Southall 1986, Astuti 1995a), allowing new alliances for example by marriage or the birth of children. Identity and kinship are understood in a broad sense of being created throughout one's life and "settled definitely perhaps only some considerable time after death" (Bloch 2005:65). Identity is "fluid" (Marcus 2008:88), changing with a persons' environment, association, choice and need (Bloch 2005, Marcus 2008).

### **2.2.3. Interviews**

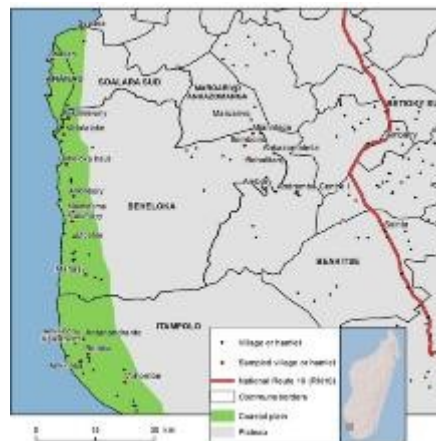
The study was conducted during three periods of field research in 2012 and 2013, preceded by a preparatory field trip in 2011. The analysis is based on 81 open and semi-structured interviews with people from 10 villages on the plateau and 16 villages on the coastal plain (see Figure 3).

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<sup>28</sup> The ownership and decision rights on a zebu herd are mainly in hands of older men, while the animals are herded by their unmarried sons. The fathers often hand over parts or the whole herd to married sons. In other cases, the herd is split among the sons after the father's demise. Goats and sheep are normally owned by individual married and unmarried men.

<sup>29</sup> For a more comprehensive discussion of Tanalana organization and structure see Thielsen (2016).

Moving herders and cattle owners from the plateau and the coastal plain were interviewed about the transhumance movements in general and their personal ways of conducting the move. The conversations covered the choice of destinations, courses of action, related customs, costs, property rights to fodder, and the feeling of living temporarily 'abroad'. Non-moving herders on the plateau were interviewed about their reasons for not migrating. People of the coastal plain were asked their opinion about hosting the new guest herders in their village. The perception of the problem of cattle raiding



**Figure 3: Map of the study region and sampled villages and hamlets for study in Chapter 2 (source: SuLaMa)**

was also discussed. The interviewees were, with five exceptions, males. Ages ranged between 15 and 88, with the majority being between 30 and 60 years old.

All interviews were held by the author with the help of research assistants consecutively interpreting between the local Malagasy dialect and English. Both assistants knew the dialect very well, as one grew up on the plateau, and the other has been working in the study area since 2011 and living in Toliara since 2004. Cattle owners and herders were identified with the help of local guides. Most interviews were held in the presence of the author, an assistant, a guide and one interviewee. The guides were mostly young men under 20 who did not participate in the interviews. In three interviews, however, two older guides (age 37 and 57) added information and views, and in one case took over the interview with a teenager. Two interviews were held with two close relatives (father and son, couple), and four interviews with two, two interviews with three, and six interviews with four or more people who happened to be together at the time of interview.

During the interviews, comprehensive, often word-for-word notes were taken. The notes were then digitally transcribed by the author, and if required replenished by the interpreter with help of audio-records of the interviews. An inductive content analysis (Patton 2002) was done using the QDA software Atlas.ti to code and theme the transcribed data. The analysis is underpinned with some data from a region-wide household survey undertaken in 2012 (Neudert et al. 2015).

### 2.3. Results

#### 2.3.1. Cattle raiding and social change

In the perception of all interviewees, the problem of cattle raiding started recently or has at least increased a lot in the last decades (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Time frames and number of interviewees indicating the start of cattle raiding as a problem and the start of inverse transhumance**

Point of time:	Indicated by the following number of interviewees as:				
	started to receive guests in own village in littoral	start by other single villagers or villagers in general	personal start	start by elder brother, father or grandfather	heavy increase in cattle raiding/started as a problem
Before 1946					1
More than 40 years ago		1		2	
More than 30 years ago	2		1		
1990 - 1992			2		3
1996				1	
Presidency of Didier Ratsiraka (1997-2001)					1
1999/2000	2	1	2		2
2002	2	1	1		5
2003/2004			2		1
2005		1	2		2
2006/2007	5	1	4		3
2008/2009	5	2	4		10
2010			1		6
2011	3	1	2		4
2012	1	1	2		

As most interviewees agreed, cattle raids have always taken place in the region, but today the raiders would even “kill the people” and “steal the chickens”. Of the interviewed plateau villagers, 11 had already been victims of raids, several more than once. All others reported raids having happened to relatives or other villagers. According to the interviewees, raiding is today mainly done by armed gangs from the neighboring Onilahy region northwest of the plateau. Cattle raids are far less frequent on the coastal plain, probably because the Onilahy region is farther away. The raiders attack especially in the dry season when the water level of the Onilahy River is low and it is easy to cross. Some communities on the plateau have recently employed soldiers or gendarmes to protect their people and animals. Nevertheless, most people are still very frightened of the raiders as they are said to wear extremely powerful talismans (*odigasy*) and thus survive all shootings without any wounds.

Asked about the reason for the increase in raids, the people of the coastal plain mainly accused state agencies and the government of not combating the raiders and of being idle or corrupt, however without mentioning the 2009 political crisis. Increased cattle raiding is also perceived as associated with a general process of social change: The plateau villagers more often blamed the ‘bad youth’, reporting that many young men make friends with suspicious strangers and serve them as drivers providing information about the whereabouts of the local cattle herds. Others are said to squander their money and then search for opportunities to make a fast profit by stealing on their own or at the command of a gang leader. Interviewees throughout the study area complained that the youth pay no heed to their parents’ or elder’s reprimands for stealing or other bad behavior<sup>30</sup>:

“It is a problem of generation. The sons of parents are strong now, they decide to steal.”  
(58:45, male, age: 60).

“In the past, the children respected their parents (...) But today, the children even kill their parents when these try to intervene.” (102:1, male, age: around 20).

Throughout the region, the fear of having one’s cattle stolen by order of an envious villager is commonly reported. A general rise in envy and ‘bad spirits’ was noted, coupled with a loss of social cohesion and traditional values like altruism, solidarity and helpfulness:

“Before, the relationship and living together of the people (...) was important and strong, (...) today people don’t care much about life in the community and the relationships are frail, even inside the family.” [76:51, female, age: 17].

Statements like “the people do not love each other anymore” (*fa tsy mifankatea sasy ty ndaty*) were often made and explained as the result of modern times where people “think they are independent” and only “do what they want”.

Although the coastal plain is primarily affected by clandestine theft rather than violent raiding, many stories about attacks on the plateau by infamous raiders circulate even here. Thus, the people are increasingly wary of all strangers and potential local ‘chauffeurs’. In February 2013, a ritual of sincerity oaths (*titike*) was organized in order to prevent an involvement of the Tanalana people in raids. *Titike* are traditionally realized on the level of a village community. This

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<sup>30</sup> This perception of deterioration of life has definitely become more severe, but is, of course, not completely new. Also Battistini who did field research in the study region from 1956-1959 documented similar perceptions: “In ancient times, the zebus had enough to eat! [...] This is the civilization [...] Some youth don’t obey their parents and don’t like to work on the fields and look after the cattle” (Tanalana-woman cited by Battistini (1969: III-2, orig. in French)).

time, however, it embraced all Tanalana clans. On the plateau, such sincerity oaths (here also called *kine*) were also realized frequently, but did not go beyond the village level. Some plateau interviewees lamented that the *titike* would anyway no longer have the expected effects, as many young men do not believe in it, or if so, would avoid taking part.

### ***2.3.2. Traditional transhumance from the coastal plain to the plateau***

#### **2.3.2.1. Reasons for moving and time frames**

Traditionally, the cattle of the coastal plain are moved to the plateau every year in the practice of transhumance (excluding chard oxen). Only rarely, when the plateau's grass was worse or the coastal grass better than usual, did some herders decide not to move. Today, for fear of raids on the plateau, some herders decided not to move anymore or not every year. From a sample of 90 cattle owners from five villages of the Commune of Beheloke (unpubl. survey data from 2012), 73% send their cattle on transhumance every year, 9% less frequently, and 12% never. The average size of herds that never move is much smaller (2.5 heads) than that of herds that do move (17.7 heads). The transhumance season starts at the end of November or beginning of December, when the quality of coastal grass and *samata* fodder is low, but the beginning of rainfall on the plateau promises good-quality grass there. Traditionally, the herders return between May and June. Since around the year 2010, the rising incidence of raider attacks on the plateau has prompted many coastal herders to return home earlier (between January and April).

#### **2.3.2.2. Conditions for staying on the plateau**

The herders' journey from their home villages to the destinations on the plateau takes about one-and-a-half to two days by foot (between 40 and 70 kilometers). All movements back and forth between the home village and those destinations have to be officially permitted and registered by the respective chefs de fokontany in every herder's personal 'passport' (*pasiporon-dia*). This exercise book with officially stamped entries for every adult man or woman was regionally introduced in order to enhance security, and especially to prevent trafficking in stolen cattle. Officially, it should document the authorization and realization of all movements between villages, as well as selling of animals. In practice, registration in the passport is often only considered necessary by the hosts and the guest herders when these are not yet personally known in the village. The 200 MGA<sup>31</sup> paid per registration are the only fees related to transhumance. Only for the destination of Andremba were there reports that in order to ensure a good relationship, some herders arriving for the first time voluntarily offered money or a goat to the local community. Recently, many cattle owners engage a non-local policeman or soldier

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<sup>31</sup> 200 Madagascar Ariary (MGA) are equivalent to 0.5 US\$ (all given rates retrieved from oanda.com at 28.11.2020).

(from Toliara or Betioke) to protect their herd during the stay on the plateau. As this can cost up to 200,000 MGA per month, some cattle owners share the costs by joining their herds.

There are no special guest rules that the herders have to follow when staying on the plateau. Local ancestral or community rules (*lilyn-draza, dina*), customs (*fomba*) and common expectations about good behavior are the same as on the coastal plain. It was reported that sometimes groups of newcomers performed the common ritual of sincerity oaths (*titike*) with the host community. However, this ritual is seldom perceived as necessary because herders are only considered to be real newcomers when neither they nor their close relatives or ancestors have stayed in the village before:

“The *raza* [kin group, clan] is already staying here since long ago, so everybody can come and stay just like this. But the really new people should show their passport and do a *titike*.” [45:29, male, age: 55].

The Tanalana people from the coastal plain are guests both in villages inhabited mainly by Tanalana, as well as by Mahafaly people. Their relationship is closest with the Tanalana villages. Interviewees from both the coastal plain and the plateau considered all Tanalana people as descendants of the same ancestors, and therefore ‘all one kin’. This formal kin group (*raza*) was sometimes expanded to all people from the Mahafaly Plateau region. The interviewed host villagers practically did not perceive any herder as completely unfamiliar or un-kin, as they were said to be at least ‘a *longo* (friend or relative) of somebody’ or ‘known’. However, it was never stated that being kin or ‘known’ was a prerequisite for staying somewhere; on the contrary this was denied:

“Some have [*longo* here], others don’t. They just follow their friends from the coastal plain coming here.” [79:97, male, age: 62].

“[Somebody without *longo* here] must go to the chef de fokontany and say “I want to stay with my cattle here, and as I have no father or mother here, you are my family.” [68:42, male, age: 57].

### **2.3.2.3. Choosing destinations**

During their stay on the plateau, most herders spend the night outside on the grazing grounds. The herders have the right to select their grazing areas freely and use fodder and water free of charge. The few big plateau villages like Itomboina or Andremba are frequented by hundreds of herders from the coastal plain and in some hamlets the number of guests exceeds the number of villagers. Most herders only frequent a small set of neighboring villages with choices being



based mainly on practical considerations, especially travelling distance, the local availability of fodder and water, and, more recently, also the local security situation. Villages with a reputation for being risky became visited less (e.g., Andremba) or not at all (e.g., Ambatry).

Among the more secure villages with good grass and water supply, many herders choose a place where they have *longo*. If the herders fall victim to raids, the *longo* are expected to help them to get the stolen animals back. In general, interviewees did not make a distinction between *longo* in the sense of relatives or in the sense of friends. Only three interviewees stated that they no longer consider their friend-*longo* on the plateau as real *longo*, due to their belief that in the current situation of general insecurity on the plateau, even their friends might be capable of stealing their cattle. Besides the practical considerations for choosing a destination, for some herders the most important factor is that they follow their personal or ancestral tradition or custom (*fomba, fomban-draza*):

“It does not [depend on *longo*], it depends on your *fomba* [where to go].” [84:10, male, age: 49].

### **2.3.3. Inverse transhumance from the plateau to the coastal plain**

#### **2.3.3.1. Reasons for moving and time frames**

The transhumance movement in inverse direction from the plateau to the coastal plain turned out to have started as far back as 30 years ago (see Table 3). However, unlike the situation today, only a small number of Tanalana herders from Miarentsoa and Itomboina were involved at that time. Those herders were said to be motivated by the coastal plain’s good conditions for cattle raising, specifically the coastal fodder plants (*samata*) and a higher and thus healthier salt content in the water holes. In the 1990s, recurring droughts on the plateau prompted more herders to move to the coastal plain. Since 2000, and especially since 2010, this movement has gained pace and escaping the raiders has become the crucial motive.

At the time of the fieldwork, whether herders go on inverse transhumance or not is highly varied between different villages and ethnic groups. In the Tanalana villages of Itomboina and Miarentsoa the majority of herders practice inverse transhumance: of the 31 cattle-raising households sampled during the 2012 household survey, 16 move every year, three occasionally, and only 12 never. Of the 19 households that do move, five declared that they had done so “less than five years ago”, two “less than 10 years ago” and 12 “more than 10 years ago”. Those people who decide not to move have on average smaller herds than those who do move (13 versus 20 heads in Miarentsoa, and four versus 19 heads in Itomboina).

Most of the interviewed herders practicing inverse transhumance reported that today moving is no longer optional, but that “the raiders leave us no choice” [24:37, male, age: around 60]. Nevertheless, in many Mahafaly villages it is only single herders that move (e.g., in Maroarivo), and in the big Mahafaly village, Andreмба Centre I, no herder going on inverse transhumance could be found.

Herders who started to move comparatively early were asked if they had shared their experience and reported to have only talked with close family members. On the other hand, asked how they got the idea or made the decision to start moving, herders only rarely explained that their start was triggered by the experience of other moving herders. One interviewee, the first moving herder from a Mahafaly village, explained that he had formed the idea while observing herders on traditional transhumance. Two interviewees stated that going on transhumance to the coastal plain was their *fomba* (tradition/custom), although with very different time references: While a group of interviewees reported the existence of a *fomba* since the time of their grandfathers, a couple declared moving to their ancestors' place on the coastal plain for four years as their *fomba*. Regarding the general understanding of *fomba*, many interviewees presented the perception that *fomba* are not stable or necessarily long-standing, and that 'new *fomba*' easily emerge, often out of 'old *fomba*' that change following 'the life of the people' and 'the development'.

The moving herders leave the plateau between April and August. The dates for moving back and forth and the overall duration of inverse transhumance (between two and ten months), are decided individually by the herders. Factors taken into account are, first, the security situation on the plateau (rumors about raiding attacks, existence of soldiers in the home village), second, the resource endowments for buying fodder on the coastal plain, and third, perceiving transhumance as a burden, for example due to being away from one's 'own country'.

### **2.3.3.2. Conditions for staying on the coastal plain**

Similar to traditional transhumance procedures, plateau herders moving to the coastal plain need to register with their 'passport' at the chefs de fokontany. Both for transhumance guests on the plateau as well as guests on the coastal plain the registration was predominantly described as some kind of 'annoying duty', but never as a constraint to transhumance or mobility in general. One interviewee from the coastal plain reported the case of plateau herders staying in the bush and avoiding entering the village (and thus having to register), probably because their herds comprised stolen animals.

After arriving in a host village, nearly all herders have to perform the traditional ritual of sincerity oaths (*titike*) to build mutual trust with the villagers. Unlike the situation during traditional transhumance on the plateau, where most herders can build on a *titike* ritual already performed by their relatives or ancestors, the *titike* ritual is frequently performed on the coastal plain. On the plateau, the few *titike* rituals performed today are mainly held by groups of ‘newcomers’ rather than individuals, but this is not feasible in the case of inverse transhumance. On the coastal plain, the rituals are performed by individual herders, firstly, because the herders’ individual first arrival in a village varies highly in year and month and, secondly, because the comparatively small number of moving plateau herders are dispersed among more than 30 coastal villages, so that there are only between one and ten guest herders per village. The villagers do not demand a *titike* from the many fodder guests from other coastal villages. In the view of one chef de fokontany from the coastal plain, the reason for this difference is that people from the plateau are “more often friends of raiders” [84:9, male, age: 49].

Unlike traditional transhumance, moving herders spend the night inside the village with their *longo* or in their own hut. Water is free of charge, but most fodder has to be bought. Fodder consists of private stocks of *raketa*-cactus, and privately as well as commonly owned *samata* trees. *Samata* is mostly preferred over cactus, as the latter is more expensive and besides chaffing also requires burning off the spines. The open-access community-stocks are generally depleted after the first month of the feeding season, so that most plateau herders can use them only in the first days or weeks after their arrival. If economically possible, many also prefer to feed exclusively bought private fodder that is generally of better quality. Prices are determined principally by negotiation between seller and buyer and the overall supply in the village. The reported prices for an amount of *samata* that feeds 15 cattle for 5 months range between 17,250 and 855,000 MGA or, if paid in cattle, between 0.2 and 6.3 animals (mainly two-year old animals). According to interviewees, an increasing scarcity has led to a considerable rise in prices in the last five years. Herders living for many months in the same village reported having received a piece of agricultural field from their *longo*, but had never established their own fodder plantation.

Traditionally, the use of the community stocks is free for all guests, regardless of their ethnic group or *longo*-relations. Many locals claimed that the guests selfishly overuse the *samata* trees, irrespective of whether they came from the plateau or another coastal village.<sup>32</sup> However, most

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<sup>32</sup> Specifically, the ‘*samata*-guests’ from other littoral villages that buy harvest rights to *samata* were blamed for the overuse of stocks. Therefore, in at least two villages it was discussed to take a decision to not anymore sell to non-villagers.

interviewees argued that the community stocks should be kept open to all guests and only one person directly expressed a wish to limit the use of community stocks to residents. While the villagers work on the establishment and enforcement of local community rules (*dina*) for the distribution of *samata* among themselves, the topic of guests' rights had not been discussed up to the time of the fieldwork.

#### **2.3.3.3. Choosing destinations**

In contrast to traditional transhumance, there is no pattern of every plateau village being linked to a typical transhumance destination on the coastal plain. Many herders also shift between several villages in search of good, cheap cattle fodder. Besides personal fodder purchasing capacity, the destinations are individually chosen on the basis of the walking distance from home and the existence of some kind of *longo*.

#### **2.3.3.4. Impediments to moving and kinship relations as a precondition**

Although all the interviewed moving herders do in fact stay at the place of some *longo* (principally family in law), their personal views on the importance of having *longo* or not having *longo* being an impediment to going somewhere are highly contrasting. The same variation in arguments and opinions was found among interviewed inhabitants of the coastal plain. The interviews did not reveal any differences between the views of people from the coastal plain versus the plateau, or any other pattern (e.g., younger versus older people). The following section presents the stated opinions in detail, first from the perspective of being a guest on the coastal plain, and then from the perspective of hosting herders from the plateau.

##### **2.3.3.4.1. The perspective of plateau people as potential guests**

Similar to traditional transhumance, staying with *longo* is the *fomba* and makes organizing one's stay much easier. But even more importantly, many moving herders claimed that only their *longo* would help them if a problem arose, or that they did not trust other people:

“You can't go where you don't have *longo* [...Only] the *longo* don't kill you.” [87:26, male, age: over 50].

The importance of *longo* was however also directly rejected:

“[Where to go] is not a question of *longo*, but of fodder.” [23:32, male, age: 50].

Given the importance of *longo* as discussed by moving herders, one would expect this aspect to arise in the discussion with non-moving herders. However, only one interviewee directly argued that he had no trustworthy *longo* on the coastal plain and thus no destination to go to. All other interviewees, including those from Andremba Centre I; where up to the time of the fieldwork

nobody had moved, did not cite lacking security given by their *longo* as part of their personal reasoning. This type of impediment was only mentioned by those not personally affected:

“Some people here don’t go anywhere (...) It is not good when you go where you don’t have *longo*, because then you are scared.” [88:5, male, age: 55].

Other interviewees stated that it would indeed be strange to stay somewhere without knowing anybody, both for themselves and for the host community. However, this would not be an impediment, as all plateau herders had at least one friend somewhere on the coastal plain or could make one for that purpose. Only one person who did not move claimed that it was not enough to have friends to stay with, and that one needed relatives:

“Your friend might inform the raider to steal your cattle. So now, we don’t trust the friends anymore, because this happened to four people from here.” [86:9, male, age: 33].

Besides enjoying greater comfort and security when staying in a village with *longo*, several interviewees from the coastal plain also argued that having *longo* is a prerequisite for the right to stay. In turn, on the plateau, this type of impediment was only brought up on enquiry, and only acknowledged for people from other villages:

“Here, there is no problem, because people from the coastal plain come here [Andremba], and people from here [neighboring Ankilimasy] go there. But there are no people from the coastal plain going to Maroarivo, so for people from there it’s different.” [95:7, male, age: 46].

“The people from north of Andremba are not originally from the coastal plain and so they don’t have family there, and so the villagers don’t know them and might think they arrived in order to steal their cattle. (...) When the first person from Maroarivo arrived there, the community (...) told him not to come back again.” [73:67, male, age 57].

Other people however argued that a general guest right to stay somewhere does indeed theoretically exist, but has no practical relevance due to the high level of familiarity among all people of the region:

“[A:] People without *longo* can also go there, they just stop at the chef de fokontany and he shows them a family to stay with, and then (...) he makes a *titike*-ritual (...) But this is a rare case, because all people have *longo* there. [B:] Maybe for people from very far

away it is different, like for people from [the Commune of] Masiaboay.” [50:39, males, age A: around 60, age B: 57].

When asked to give their personal reasons for not moving, the non-moving herders mostly explained that their animals were unable to cope with the *samata* fodder and the salty water at the coast:

“The coastal plain is my ancestor’s land, but my cattle can’t adapt to it.” [80:38, male, age: 39].

This impediment for moving was also cited by villagers of Itomboina and Miarentsoa, both villages where the first herders had in fact started moving to benefit from the specific conditions at the coast. A number of people stated particular reasons for not moving: their own village on the plateau was safe enough, the coastal plain was just as risky as the plateau, being a victim of raids was destiny or a decision of God, cattle raiders would only attack ‘bad people’, and one declared he was not able to even temporarily migrate from the land of his ancestors.

#### **2.3.3.4.2. The perspective of people from the coastal plain as potential hosts**

In the coastal plain region, all interviewees stated that the plateau herders staying in their village were *longo* of another villager. The question of whether, theoretically, herders without *longo* would also be allowed to stay was answered with inconsistent arguments, similar to those given by the plateau people. Some declared that, in general, every unsuspecting herder arriving from the plateau would be received regardless of being a *longo* or not:

“Everybody from there with a clean passport [i.e., without inconsistencies] is welcomed here.” [85:15, male, age: 54].

This was sometimes specified with the argument that the same plateau villagers also host people from the coast on transhumance:

“Today, the people from there replicate what we did: We went there and were welcomed, now it is the other way round.” [21:22, male, age: around 40].

When asked why there are only Tanalana but no Mahafaly guest herders staying in their village, the interviewees from the coastal plain mainly argued that the Mahafaly people ‘don’t have the custom’ of going to the coastal plain, or – echoing the non-moving plateau herders – that the plateau cattle are not able to digest *samata*. Others stated that only Tanalana people or the villagers’ *longo* should be guests, or argued in the sense that all Tanalana are *longo* or known everywhere:

“All people from Miarentsoa [Tanalana-village] know all people on the coastal plain, so they can go everywhere. If you know one or more persons here, you can tell them that you come here for the *samata*, that’s okay.” [42:63, male, age: 50-60].

Limitations of a general guest right to stay somewhere were mainly related to the fear of cattle raiders from the plateau. One chef de fokontany reported that his village community had denied permission to stay to two herders without *longo* who had come from a commune further away than usual (Beahitse). He argued that the villagers would receive *longo* according to the ancestors’ custom (*fomba*), but would not welcome unknown people as they “don’t like raiders”. Residents of another village repeatedly claimed that they would not accept any guests from the plateau, accusing the guests of not following the local rules of good behavior. However, according to other interviewees there are indeed guest herders from the plateau staying in that village.

#### **2.4. Discussion**

The case study compared two current transhumance movements within the same region in South-West Madagascar: The traditional one from the coastal plain to the plateau, and the comparatively new one in the inverse direction from the plateau to the coastal plain. The results reveal that the two patterns differ only slightly in terms of their practical realization, but are highly variable between individuals. These variabilities are mainly rooted in the cattle herders’ personal decisions about where, when and for how long they will move. For traditional transhumance, these decisions are mainly taken on the basis of technical factors like water and fodder availability, security, and logistics.

In turn, inverse transhumance movements are to a far greater extent determined and constrained by informal institutions, especially mental models regarding concepts of hospitality, guest rights and kinship. As a consequence of differing personal interpretations of these concepts, the transhumance to the coastal plain is not undertaken by all potential participants who would gain from it in terms of security against cattle raiders. The following section discusses the institutional constraints on participation in inverse transhumance on the one hand, as well as the aspects that enabled the establishment of the movement on the other hand.

##### **2.4.1. Procedural liberty, mobility, and risk perception**

The inverse transhumance movement did not emerge through some process of collective decision-making on the village or clan level, but through the decisions of individual herders to start moving. The movement’s development was facilitated by the herders’ procedural liberty to start moving without the need for coordination with others outside the core family, and

without having to wait for the establishment of some kind of formal agreement. There are also no social norms or taboos (*fady, faly*) that restrain the move. The plateau herders arriving on the coastal plain were able to make use of region-wide institutions already used in the context of traditional transhumance, especially the sincerity oaths (*titike, kine*). Therefore, no formal agreements between plateau and coastal plain communities had to be established to allow the plateau herders to stay on the coastal plain. Also, for the annual moves, no local, regional or national formal institutions have to be considered, apart from the duty to register the stay in every herder's 'passport' at the *chefs de fokontany*.

The literature about the study area mentions frequent migration patterns not addressed in the interviews: Many women marry into another village, men temporarily move inside or outside regions to carry out slash-and-burn agriculture (SuLaMa 2011) or to take up temporary employment (Neudert et al. 2015). Regional droughts and famines trigger the final out-migration of whole families (Kaufmann & Tsirahamba 2006). This overall high mobility supports taking a temporary move into account when searching for strategies for coping with raids. Not surprisingly, being bound to one's ancestral land was stated only once.

The main reason stated for not moving was the cattle's adaptation problems to the conditions on the coastal plain. Given that many plateau animals have survived a stay on the coastal plain over decades, it may initially seem surprising that herders rate the risk of mal-adaptation high enough to impede a move. But this reasoning can be explained firstly by a lack of information, since discussions on the conditions for staying on the coastal plain seldom seem to take place outside the circle of the core family. Secondly, especially in Andremba, this argument might be offered in place of real hidden motives, such as the lack of a guest right on the coastal plain.

### **2.4.2. Guest rights and the weakening of unconditional hospitality**

While herders on traditional transhumance move into a situation of fodder abundance on the plateau, on inverse transhumance to the coastal plain the cattle are fed mainly on the relatively scarce *samata* that often has to be bought. Thus, unlike other cases of seasonal migration (Fernandez-Gimenez & Le Febre 2006), inverse transhumance does not predominantly ease fodder scarcity, but leads to significantly higher fodder costs.

Besides buying most part of the fodder needed, guest herders on the coastal plain are allowed to take community *samata* free of charge. At the same time, inner-village conflicts on the distribution of *samata* are ongoing and guest herders in general have a bad reputation for selfishly overusing the *samata* trees. So, why do the villagers continue to provide guest herders with free access? First, the traditional Tanalana-Mahafaly society shares a social value and



mental model of unconditional hospitality towards all guests, irrespective of whether they are kinsmen or not. This resembles the broader concept of *fihavanana* or nationwide solidarity (Kneitz 2014). However, the differing statements about not welcoming unknown herders from the plateau show that unconditional hospitality is today no longer part of all people's mental models. Second, the villagers often complained in interviews about the guest herders' use of community *samata*, but did not normally bring this topic to the community meetings. This may be because complaining in public disrupts the social value of harmony, as also observed in other regions of Madagascar (Fritz-Vietta, Röttger & Stoll-Kleemann 2009b, Hauge 2010). Third, if the guest herders come from the traditional transhumance areas on the plateau, many inhabitants of the coastal plain perceive a duty to reciprocate by receiving and providing the herders with free fodder.

Denying plateau herders without *longo* (relatives, friends) a stay on the coastal plain best illustrates the weakening of unconditional hospitality. The reason cited for the denial – fear of being robbed by unfamiliar guests – can also be attributed to the described perceived social change with deteriorating levels of trust and social cohesion. This change in the social environment has led to a modification of the traditionally shared mental models of 'the people love each other' and 'we are all one kin'. As described for other parts of Madagascar (Fauroux 1997, Ferraro 2002, Marcus 2008), the local unconditional hospitality shifts towards a narrower concept of kin including only people of the same descendancy (Bloch 1968, Keller 2009a). From other pastoral societies around the world, social constraints on pastoral mobility and emerging conflicts are also known to be caused by narrowing or lacking solidarity and reciprocity (Finke 2000, Thébaud & Batterbury 2001, Beyene 2009b).

#### **2.4.3. Variabilities in mental models**

As shown by the statements from the different interviewees, mental models of mobility, security, guest rights and kinship vary strongly and are often contradictory. On the one hand, many interviewees from both the plateau and the coastal plain viewed the stay on the coastal plain as restricted to the existence of *longo*. On the other hand, interviewees from both regions also negated this restriction. These contradicting mental models lead to a high variation in the herders' individual decisions: those with a mental model of formal kinship dominated by clans and lineages (*raza*) would never consider moving to a place where they have no *raza* people to stay with. Others move on the assumption of 'we are all one kin' regardless of different *raza*, or claim an informal guest right of all people, or at least the 'known' ones. This variety is due to a highly informal institutional setting. For herders with consistent entries in their 'passport', there are no formal institutions that directly frame the move, for example, local community rules

(*dina*) or clear ancestors' rules (*lilyn-draza*). Explicit social norms or ancestors' customs (*fomban-draza*) that can help to form the individual's mental model of mobility are also very limited. It is only the knowledge about traditional transhumance that serves as a kind of template.

However, regardless of the different interpretations of the conditions for guest rights, most plateau herders base their decision about whether and where to move to on the existence of *longo*. This shows that they have a good knowledge of the fact that the villagers from the coastal plain are increasingly suspicious towards all unknown guests. But many plateau herders also expressed a great fear of being a victim themselves. Yet their risk assessment does not reflect the reality of the comparatively secure coastal plain where raids are rare. Instead, their mental model of the coastal plain seems to be a reflection of the insecure situation at home on the plateau.

#### **2.4.4. Different degrees of institutionalization**

According to the literature on traditional transhumance, the guest rights for staying on the plateau are founded on royal agreements between the three former Mahafaly kingdoms (Battistini 1964), bonds of blood brotherhood (*ziva*) by Tanalana clan founders and Mahafaly people (Esoavelomandroso 1989b), or, in the case of Andreмба, familiar bonds (Armandine 1991). These agreements and bonds seem to have lost their practical relevance, as interviewees did not refer to them in the context of transhumance, and many guest herders staying in Andreмба have de facto no relatives there. However, an unconditional, general guest right allowing all coastal herders to stay on the plateau was not questioned by either coastal or plateau interviewees. Most interviewees did not even think that being allowed to stay on the plateau needed justification. The only related argumentation is that transhumance to the plateau is the people's *fomban-draza* (ancestral tradition/custom). Traditional transhumance can thus be seen as a highly institutionalized practice. Whereas in the beginning it needed formal institutionalization by royal agreements or social bonds, today it is informally institutionalized through a shared mental model about the legitimate actions and roles of the involved actors (Berger & Luckmann 1966): Both the people from the coastal plain as well as the plateau consider traditional transhumance as a *fomban-draza*, and thus it is, together with *fomba gasy* (Malagasy custom), per definition the right thing to do (Evers 2006).

In contrast, inverse transhumance is still much less formally or informally institutionalized. There are several reasons for this: First, although the interviews reveal the simplicity of creating a 'new *fomba*', inverse transhumance has apparently not reached this institutionalized status. In other words, it still lacks the necessary period of continued existence for being perceived as morally just (Hodgson 1998). Second, as the social norm of unconditional hospitality and the mental

model of broad kinship are no longer shared by all people, the potential for informal institutionalization is also limited. Third, inverse transhumance is realized and perceived as a kind of private affair. Unlike traditional transhumance, no collective action for formal institutionalization has taken place, for example by sincerity oath rituals (*titike*) between guest groups and the host communities. Thus, every guest herder has to institutionalize his personal stay in each host village by performing his own ritual.

### **2.5. Conclusion**

This case study investigated the development of a new transhumance movement in the Mahafaly Plateau region in relation to the local socio-institutional context of formal and informal institutions, especially traditions and mental models about guest rights and kinship. The new movement in the inverse direction to the traditional transhumance movement turns out to be the main strategy for mitigating against worsening cattle raids. It is enabled and facilitated by herding families' decision-making freedom, traditional mechanisms of trust creation, and a shared concept of hospitality. Access to ancestral land (*tanin-draza*), and thus fodder and water, is found to be not a major constraint on pastoral mobility in this region.

Limits to the movement arise from a change in the social environment mainly attributed to the cattle raids: The mental models of unconditional hospitality, good relations and broad kinship (*filongoa, fihavanana*) are increasingly replaced by much narrower conceptions of kinship and a kind of hospitality based on reciprocity. Therefore, many herders feel restricted in their decisions about where to move on transhumance, or if to move at all. Unlike the traditional transhumance movement, trust between moving herders and the communities at their destinations is a crucial precondition for deciding to move. Guest rights for moving herders are increasingly bound to the existence of *longo*-kin (relatives or friends) at the destination.

The present study demonstrates that individuals' adaptive capacity may differ considerably within the same social community. Adaptation options may depend on the individuals' mental models in the sense of the interpretation of the problem, the environment, and especially the society in which they live. In the case of the new transhumance movement, personal mental models enable adaptive action by some herders, while internally constraining others to undertake the same action. The range of diverse and sometimes contradictory mental models may be especially broad in the context of ongoing social change as presented here. Further research on adaptation should consider not only the framework of formal social institutions, but should also acknowledge the importance of underlying mental models.

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# **Chapter 3: New rules are not rules: Privatization of pastoral commons and local attempts at curtailment in South-West Madagascar**

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cross-references to match the format of the thesis, updates  
of currency conversion between Malagasy Ariary and US\$,  
as well as some additional information presented in footnotes

## **Chapter 3: New rules are not rules: Privatization of pastoral commons and local attempts at curtailment in South-West Madagascar**

### **Abstract**

This paper examines the case of indigenous privatization of the important fodder tree *samata* (*Euphorbia stenoclada*) and concurrent legal curtailment of this privatization among the Tanalana people of South-West Madagascar from a long-term perspective. Applying a framework for institutional change to empirical data derived from interviews conducted in 20 villages in the Mahafaly Plateau region, the study explores the process and mechanisms involved in creating and asserting private property rights to this common pool resource on the one hand, and the process of curtailment on the other. Implementation of the curtailment institutions is hampered by (1) the low bargaining power of village communities versus privatizers, which stems from the users' preference for avoiding open conflicts and laissez faire ideology, (2) the low social acceptance and internalization of new curtailment rules, which are perceived as contradictory to customary resource privatization rights and the ideology of personal freedom restricted only by ancestral rules-in-use, and (3) ineffective self-governance and enforcement mechanisms based on pro-active monitoring of local users. Stressing the interplay between ideology and bargaining power in the context-specific constellation of actors, this paper contributes to the understanding of the transformation of property rights and institutional change in self-organized, traditional societies.

### **3.1. Introduction**

Privatization of pastoral common pool resources is a widespread phenomenon in Africa and is often initiated by the local user communities (Behnke 1985, Ensminger 1997, Lesorogol 2003). Much effort has gone into identifying the drivers of such property rights transformations: population growth, immigration, resource use conflicts, commercialization, infrastructural development, technological change and intensified agriculture (Ensminger 1996, 1997, Woodhouse, Bernstein & Hulme 2000, Cleaver 2002, Lesorogol 2003, 2008b, Desta & Coppock 2004, Kamara, Swallow & Kirk 2004, Behnke 2008, Haller 2010, Beyene 2011). However, to date, little empirical work has been done to establish the processes and mechanisms that translate the motivation of individual users or groups into a stable transformation of property rights (Mwangi 2007). The present paper adds to our understanding of local property rights transformation by discussing the processes, mechanisms, and forces that led to the establishment of private property rights to a pastoral common pool resource among the Tanalana people in South-West Madagascar.

The Tanalana people have traditionally held all pastoral resources in open access. In recent decades, however, several factors have led to a decrease in the quality and quantity of the stocks of the important fodder tree *samata* (*Euphorbia stenoclada*). This situation led to a spontaneous step-by-step privatization of trees by livestock owners followed by attempts by village communities to curtail privatization and the unequal distribution that resulted from it by establishing new local rules. However, implementation and enforcement of these rules has been so weak that privatization continues unabated and is meanwhile widely accepted. The paper analyses this transformation of property rights, and especially the successful assertion of private property rights and the failed implementation of a legal curtailment of privatization, by addressing three research questions:

- (1) What are the mechanisms underlying the assertion of new private property rights via spontaneous enclosures?
- (2) How did the process of legal curtailment of private property rights by local communities develop?
- (3) Why did the local communities fail to implement and enforce the curtailment?

The paper is structured as follows: Section 1 presents the theoretical framework for our study. Section 2 gives an overview on the local livelihoods, especially the use of *Euphorbia stenoclada*, the types of institutions governing natural resource use, and the Tanalana people's social organization. This is followed by a section on methods. Section 4 presents the empirical results, portraying the current and former property rights regimes, the processes of privatization and the emergence of curtailment, as well as its implementation and the difficulties associated with it. The penultimate section discusses the present case in relation to findings from the literature, followed by a conclusion.

### **3.2. Theoretical framework**

This study uses the institutional change framework provided by Ensminger (1992). This framework (see Figure 4) is particularly suitable for our analysis as it focuses on the factors scholars have found to be crucial for property rights transformations on the local level: the behavior of competing individual actors striving to achieve the institutional outcome with the best distributive effects or other individual benefits (Anderson & Hill 1990, Lesorogol 2003, Mwangi 2007), shaped by their ideology, preferences and bargaining power (Ensminger & Knight 1997, Di Gregorio et al. 2008, Haller 2010).

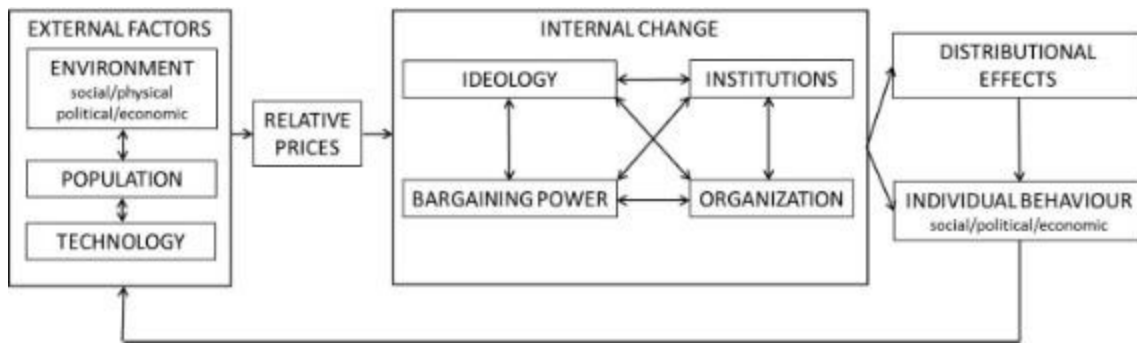


Figure 4: Framework for modeling institutional change (Ensminger 1992, with an extension by Haller (2010))

Bargaining power as the ability “to get something one wants from others” (Ensminger 1992:7) may arise from social position, economic wealth, or the ability to influence the ideology of others (see also Knight 1992). As a consequence, institutional change mostly serves those who best defended their position during the bargaining process, but is not necessarily more efficient nor does it necessarily serve the majority of actors or the community (Ensminger & Knight 1997). The benefits actors strive for are material as well as non-material, including “power, status, and even the ability to assert one’s own ideological preferences over those of others” (Ensminger & Knight 1997:5). Benefits are determined by relative prices or “the value of something in relation to what one must give up for it” (Ensminger 1992:4).

Changes in relative prices (also see Demsetz 1967a, North & Thomas 1973, Libecap 1989) as a driver for bargaining for institutional change are in turn induced by alterations in ‘external factors’ (see Figure 4). These are changes in the social and physical (ecological) environment, the population and technology (Ensminger 1992), but may also originate in the political and economic environment (Haller 2010).

Ensminger emphasizes that the analysis of institutional change furthermore needs to consider the internal interplay (see Figure 4) between bargaining power and the actors’ ideology, organization and existing institutions. Ideology refers to the people’s values, mental models, and ideals. Organization is defined by Ensminger as the body in which the actors organize themselves in order to achieve certain common purposes or objectives and act collectively. More specifically, we understand this as the constellation of actors, e.g. roles and authorities for rule creation and enforcement in the village society. Institutions are understood as formal rules (given by the state or a community), informal constraints such as social norms, and their corresponding enforcement mechanisms including self-imposed standards of behavior. For our analysis, we also distinguish between appropriation rules “restricting time, place, type of technology and/or [resource] quantity”, and provision rules determining whether “labor,



material or money” are required to use the resource (Ostrom 1990:92). The related property rights specify the right of access, withdrawal, management, exclusion, and alienation of a resource (Schlager & Ostrom 1992). The property rights regimes resulting from these specific rights can take the shape of private property regimes conferring ‘exclusive rights’ upon individuals, common property regimes with a set of rules defining the conditions regarding collectively used natural resources, and open access regimes where use by individuals is not regulated at all (Swallow & Bromley 1995).

### 3.3. Study area

The Mahafaly Plateau region is situated in South-West Madagascar in the dry forest ecoregion south of Toliara. The region is divided into the plateau zone itself and the coastal plain next to the sea. The study area covers the coastal plain between the villages of Soalara in the north and Vohombe in the south (see Figure 5). The area is administratively divided into municipalities (*fokontany*) usually covering a village and its surroundings with between 200 and 1,230 inhabitants (SuLaMa, unpublished data), and larger communes. Figure 5 depicts the borders of the three communes Soalara, Beheloka, and Itampolo in 2010, the peak year for curtailment attempts.

The coastal plain is inhabited by the agro-pastoral Tanalana people and Vezo fishermen. While nearly all Tanalana households carry out subsistence farming, their economic situation allows only approximately 40% of them to raise zebu cattle. The number of zebu owned by those households varies widely (up to 200 cows or more, on average 18.5 heads, unpublished project data). Zebu cattle, the Tanalanas’ “walking savings accounts” (Kaufmann 1998:133), are frequently bought and sold, or received and given away at cultural events. Women do not directly possess animals and are not involved in livestock-keeping issues. The herding of cattle is normally done by unmarried teenagers taking care of their father’s or somebody else’s herd.

Cattle raising on the coastal plain is influenced by strong seasonal variations and low fodder supply due to sandy soils and low precipitation rates of 300 - 350mm/year (UPDR 2003). From

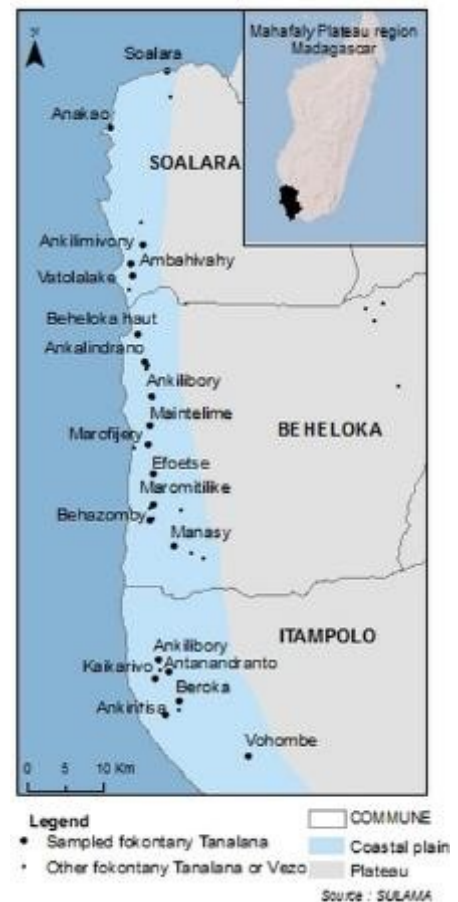


Figure 5: Map of the study region and sampled villages and hamlets for study in Chapter 3 (Commune delimitations from 2010) (source: SuLaMa)

the end of November on, the cattle herds leave the coastal zone and spend the next four to six months on transhumance in the neighboring plateau zone. Access to fodder and water on the plateau is generally free, and transhumance destinations are chosen independently by herd owners (see Chapter 2). After their return, the coastal plain's grazing grounds provide enough grass for open grazing for approximately two months. From May/June until the end of November, the grasses are depleted and the animals are fed on the succulent *samata* tree (*Euphorbia stenoclada* Baill, see Figure 30). This tree has become the main dry season fodder since the natural stands of *raketa* cactus (*Opuntia* spp.) were killed off by cochineal infestation in the 1930s (Battistini 1964, Middleton 1999d).

During the day, the herd roves in the grazing ground and spends the night and often also feeding and resting hours in its permanent corral located on the grazing ground. There, the *samata* is prepared by clipping its branches directly at the stem and then cutting them into slices. As dry *samata* cannot be digested by the animals, it cannot be stored. Clipped trees can be used again in one to three years. Regrowth rates vary according to the erratic pattern of precipitation and the proportion of branches clipped. Around 22% of clipped trees in the region have died due to overuse (Goetter et al. 2015). The removal of other shrubs for stimulating the trees' growth has turned the area into a "samata landscape" (Kaufmann, 2004:351)<sup>33</sup>. However, at the time of our fieldwork, methods of propagation using cuttings or seeds were unknown to the pastoralists<sup>34</sup>.

Agriculture is done mainly on (semi-)permanent fields. Although there are still no formal land titles, fields are traditionally the private belongings of households or extended families. People acquire new fields by automatically owning the patch they cleaned (Blanc-Pamard 2009, Middleton 2013a). However, the agricultural area of some Tanalana villages is subdivided among the different local clans (*raza*) and clearing rights are then limited to the corresponding clan

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<sup>33</sup> However, the stock of *samata* shows a high variety from village to village. Ahlers (2014) found mean numbers of trees varying between approximately 30 trees/ha (*fokontany* of Efoetse) and nearly 180 trees/ha (Beroka), depending on the use pressure. Furthermore, the stocks are in general less dense in the northern region (Ahlers 2014), especially between Anakao and Soalara (own observation). This relatively low density does not (only) seem to be a result of degradation, as an aerial photo of Soalara depicted in Battistini (1964) shows a stock not much more dense than today. The stocks with highest biomass can be found around graves, where its use is traditionally taboo. According to Rabesandratana (1999), unused stocks can reach a density of 33 trees/ha, corresponding to 1.4 t usable dry weight. Ahlers (2014) assessed that a sustainable use means a maximum of harvesting only 1 / 6 of the available *samata* biomass of a stand. In terms of requirement, she calculated a need of 750 g of digestible *samata* (DM) per day to feed 1 Tropical Livestock Unit (TLU), which adds up to 22.5 kg DM per month and 135 kg per TLU for a feeding period of six month (assuming that *samata* makes up of 30% of 5 kg of DM with 50 % digestibility per day, among other fodder the livestock finds in the bush).

<sup>34</sup> This is why researchers of the SuLaMa project have investigated in possible modes of propagation (Rabemirindra 2015) and developed a method to propagate *samata* by using cuttings (for description in French see Antsonantenainarivony (2016), in English see Goetter (2015)). This method was explained to interested villagers in several workshops.

area. As is common in Madagascar (Middleton 2009, Andrés-Domenech et al. 2014), the bushland used for grazing has traditionally been an open access resource often considered as “no man’s land” (Rakotomalala 1990:47).

Besides customary land rights, the South-West of Madagascar is known for being mostly governed by indigenous institutions. Since the time of French colonial rulers, who struggled to impose their rules on the South-western people “of wild and bellicose temperament, rebels against all social discipline, fiercely defensive of their independence” (Lyautey 1935 quoted in Middleton 1999d:232), institutions created by national or regional state actors (e.g. the commune) have had very little impact on local life.

Locally relevant institutions are mainly community rules (*dina*) and ancestral rules (*lilin-draza*), customs (*fomba*) and taboos (*fady, faly*) handed down through the centuries (see Thielsen 2016). At the same time, the South-Western canon of traditional institutions has been less extensive and its rules less explicit than in other regions of Madagascar (Hoerner 1990). While these ancestral institutions target all Tanalana people or members of a certain clan, the community rules target the inhabitants of a municipality. Community rules are crafted by a consensus-oriented decision taken jointly by all (male) municipality members (*fokonolo*) at an open meeting. The communication of new community rules and other community decisions to the next higher administrative level of the commune is up to the elected municipality heads, which are also responsible for supervising the implementation of and compliance to these rules. Additionally, religious and social issues may be treated by the advisory and consultative traditional authorities of the clans and the subordinated lineages (*mpitan-kazomanga*<sup>35</sup>).

### 3.4. Methods

Given the scarcity of written documentation on the region, this qualitative case study is based principally on primary data gathered from fieldwork. Between 2011 and 2013, in total 111 in-depth open, semi-structured and structured interviews were conducted in 20 Tanalana villages of the study region (see Figure 5). Most interviews were held in villages of the Beheloke commune (N=78) where privatization and regulation is most advanced; a smaller number were held in the communes of Itampolo (N=23) and Soalara (N=10).

Interviewees included users and non-users of *samata*, traditional clan authorities, and municipality (vice) heads. Because frequently the aim was to collect data from living memory

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<sup>35</sup> The *mpitan-kazomanga lava* (clan-level) and *mpitan-kazomanga fohe* (lineage level) can be described as “a moral, symbolic, honorific or divine authority enforced through their direct relationship to the traditional creator (*Zanahary*) and the ancestors (*raza*).” (Thielsen 2016):69

about the former traditional *samata* property rights regime and the processes of privatization, we sampled mainly male villagers between the ages of 30 and 69 years (75%). However, to capture a wide range of perceptions and views, younger men were also interviewed (age range: 15-75/80 years, ages partially based on estimation). The interviewees were also asked about patterns of pastoral mobility, modes and strategies for using *samata* stocks, and current versus former degrees of scarcity and influencing factors. To get a better understanding of the situation, we visited the *samata* stocks of 13 villages together with local guides, discussing the local distribution of private *samata* stocks and signposts of private property rights.

All open and semi-structured interviews (N=81) were conducted by the first author with simultaneous interpretation from English into the local dialect by Malagasy research assistants. The structured interviews (N=30) were conducted in pure Malagasy by one of the assistants, using a questionnaire designed by the authors. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and digitized. An inductive and deductive content analysis (Patton 2002) was done using the QDA software Atlas.ti for descriptive, pattern, in vivo, attribute, and causation coding (Saldaña 2013).

### **3.5. Results**

The results first describe the current property rights regime for *samata* at the time of our fieldwork (2013) compared to the earliest situation interviewees could remember (around 1960, when Madagascar gained independence). The next section examines the development and assertion of the private property rights, followed by sections on subsequent attempts to curtail privatization by creating local rules, and reasons for the failed implementation of the curtailment.

#### ***3.5.1. Property rights to samata in the past and today***

According to interviewees, all *samata* stocks on the grazing grounds were formerly used in a manner equivalent to an open access regime. There were no private property rights nor appropriation or provision rules for this common pool resource, except that all use of trees in the vicinity of graves was – and still is – forbidden by an ancestral taboo. The non-existence of any ancestral or colonial rules is supported by the complete lack of records on *samata* in the otherwise broad body of literature on colonial policy relating to rural life and livestock raising (see for example Middleton 1999d, Eggert 2001).

Today, private property rights to *samata* for individuals exist alongside the traditional open access rights to community areas. There are three different types of private property rights to *samata*:

(1) Corral *samata*: The most widespread private rights to *samata* are rights to the trees surrounding the private livestock corrals (*valan-abomby, kialo*) situated on the common grazing grounds. Because people perceive the trees within a certain radius around the corral per se as private property of the corral owner, this property right is very rarely indicated by fencing or otherwise signposting the area.

(2) *Samata* enclosures: In most villages, private rights to *samata* stocks in the agricultural area also exist. These rights are created by fencing plots with hedges, in a similar way to agricultural fields<sup>36</sup>. Additionally, some villages have clan land in the grazing area. That land is currently either under open access for all clan members or it has been privatized by individual members by enclosing parcels.

(3) Marked *samata*<sup>37</sup>: In some villages, people claim private property, especially exclusion rights to *samata* stocks in the community grazing area by marking these as private with lines of cactus plants, a traditional way of demarcating private property.

Whereas the private rights to corral and marked *samata* relate only to the trees themselves, private property rights to *samata* enclosures also include the land itself. Corral *samata* and enclosures are equipped with the whole bundle of private property rights, including the right to sell *samata*. However, the right to *samata* around the corrals is tied to the usage of the corral by the owners, and thus to the possession of livestock.

### **3.5.2. The privatization process**

The first emerging private property rights were those for corral *samata*. Long ago, according to some interviewees in 'ancestors' times', only the trees within a very small radius around the corral were perceived as private belongings. This radius began to increase steadily around 50-60 years ago. *Samata* enclosures and marked *samata* only emerged 20-30 years ago. All private property rights developed as an effect of the cumulative behavior of villagers. As unanimously claimed, 'some started' to claim exclusion rights by fencing, marking, or orally in the case of corral *samata*, and the others 'just followed' or 'just copied', or were even directly encouraged by the privatizers.

Interviewees clearly indicated that the external factor leading to marking and enclosing *samata* was a growing overall scarcity (see Figure 7). Fifty to sixty years ago, the *samata* was said to be much more abundant than today, both in terms of the number of trees within a certain area and

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<sup>36</sup> As these enclosures derived from enclosures formerly existing to protect grass (*boka*), they are all called *valan-boka*. This type of private *samata* overlaps with enclosures officially classified as agricultural fields (*valan-baiboho*) which may also get 'filled up' with *samata* trees.

<sup>37</sup> Labeled by the locals with the term "pike", derived from the French "piquet" (stake, etc.).

the biomass per tree. Scarcity of *samata* was perceived both in the sense of being insufficient to feed all the cattle in a village, as well as of insufficient access of a person to feed his own cattle.

Interviewees specified the following factors leading to *samata* scarcity: The supply has been diminishing due to (1) reduced growth and reproduction rates caused by less precipitation, (2) the turning of *samata*-stocked land into new hamlets and agricultural fields due to population growth, and (3) incomplete recovery or death of trees after inappropriate clipping of branches or even chopping down the whole stem. Demand has been increasing due to (1) a diminished growth of other fodder plants caused by the changed precipitation pattern, (2) higher total cattle numbers in the region due to population growth, and (3) a shorter transhumance period, prompted by herders' fear of the now frequent cattle raids on the neighboring plateau. In addition, the majority of Tanalana people living on the plateau have started to send their cattle to the relatively secure coastal plain (see chapter 2).

Especially after the year 2000, privatization accelerated. Where spatially possible, people increased their private stocks by creating new *samata* enclosures or enlarging existing ones (parcels of up to 7 ha were reported). Furthermore, it is also common and socially acceptable to transplant young trees from the common grazing grounds to the enclosures.<sup>38</sup> Factors fostering the acceleration of privatization were the depletion of community *samata* stocks, an unequal distribution of already existing private *samata* leading to shortages in individual access, and the emergence of the market for *samata* use rights turning private *samata* into a cash income source (see below). Privatization has today become a common action even among non-cattle-owners who want to sell or 'secure their share' for the time they or their children would be able to raise cattle.

The unequal distribution of private *samata* stocks implies that some people hold large private plots which are more than sufficient to cover the demand of their herd, while others own only few private plots or none at all, as there are no attractive plots for privatization left. The latter group is highly dependent on the remaining open access community stocks. However, these are often severely depleted, much more than the private stocks (see Figure 6).

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<sup>38</sup> These *samata*-plantations are (less frequently) established on per se fenced agricultural fields, in unfenced areas in the bush, or in the village itself. *Samata* plantations are not an own form of privatization, and there are also no special rules for these *samata*-stocks. The trees planted in these plantations are normally dug out in the community areas.



Figure 6: Private (left) and open access stocks (right) of *Euphorbia stenoclada* in the study region (Photo: J. Goetter)

This is mainly due to a common strategy: first the animals feed from the open access stocks until these are depleted for the rest of the feeding season, and only then are private *samata* resources used. On a regional scale, common and private stocks are of better quality and quantity in the south, especially south of Behazomby. In the northern villages, the total amount of local stocks was often perceived as insufficient to feed all the cattle in a village.

A regional market for annual harvesting rights to *samata* stocks has emerged since the mid-1990s, with a heavy price increase after 2010. Harvesting rights are sold for trees of a determined area, e.g. one hectare. Prices per area differ according to the quantity of available fodder per area, which depends on tree density and crown diameter. Converted to the amount of *samata* needed to feed 15 cattle for five months, prices ranged in 2012/2013 between 17,250 and 855,000 MGA<sup>39</sup>, or if paid in cattle between 0.2 and 6.3 heads of cattle (mainly two-year olds). The price depends heavily on a buyer's bargaining and his relationship with the seller. In addition, prices are slightly lower in the southern region.

The social acceptance of privatization was initially very high and only restricted by social norms of 'do not take more than you need'. The social legitimation of corral *samata* builds on ideological as well as practical arguments: Because it is assumed to have existed since ancestral times, many people see it as part of the ancestral custom and therefore a right thing to do. Besides, it is seen as practical when the owner can be sure of being the only one using the trees around his livestock corral providing vital shade for his animals.

*Samata* enclosures are also largely accepted since they are established in the agricultural area which is perceived as the property of a clan and its members. Also, for many villagers, the work involved in fencing the enclosures with hedges, often combined with an effort to enhance the *samata* trees' growth by removing other bushes, is enough to legitimate private property

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<sup>39</sup> Between 4.4 and 220 US\$

rights<sup>40</sup>. Marked *samata*, on the other hand, is often perceived in an ambivalent way. As it only exists in the grazing grounds which are open to everybody's livestock, marking is mostly perceived as a selfish 'taking over' of *samata*. However, any type of privatization was also often expressed in a positive notion of 'protecting *samata* for the future' or 'managing' it, in positive contrast to the much more degraded open access stocks. Furthermore, many villagers explained that in the beginning they had a laissez-faire attitude towards the privatizers claiming new private property rights, as they did not perceive *samata* as a scarce good.

Despite this initial broad acceptance and laissez-faire attitude, over time many villagers began to disapprove of the accelerating privatization. The argument most often used was that privatization diminishes the overall stock and thus leads to overall scarcity. The privatizers were blamed for intergenerational unfairness, that means, for not leaving 'anything for future generations'. Furthermore, privatization is said to create social tensions in the village communities, specifically 'fights' for specific *samata* stocks between individual persons. Thus, the socially ideal system was mostly said to be one of open access stocks with only some private rights to corral *samata*, or without any private property rights at all.

The discontent was also motivated by attitudes towards ownership of the land. The area around the village was perceived as belonging to the state, the village community, the Christian God, or the traditional creator-God (*Zanahary*), which implies that ideally all people of the region or the community should have free access to the *samata*. Thus, it was perceived as unfair and selfish that the privatizers had taken so many stocks for their exclusive personal use. Furthermore, the new development broke with the formerly existing unspoken common sense that the *samata* belonged to those using it, thus only the livestock owners.

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<sup>40</sup> People holding private *samata* are seen as *tompo* of the stock, a term meaning 'owner', but also 'master', and includes an understanding of seniority and responsibility for the good.



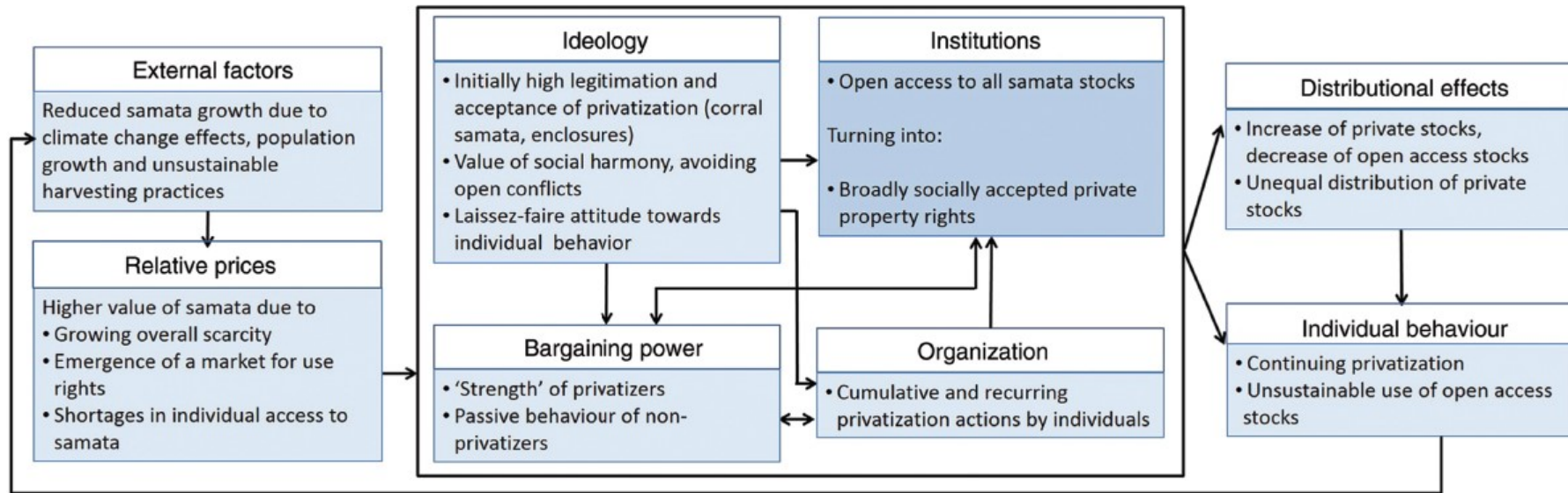


Figure 7: The framework for institutional change (Ensminger 1992) applied to the privatization process

However, this discontent did not prevent many privatizers from marking and enclosing *samata* as the privatizers are said to be mainly ‘strong’ people. ‘Being strong’ means that somebody can ‘do what he wants’ because he does not care about causing social gossip and direct conflicts:

“[...] the strong people fence a lot [...], and the others have to buy the *samata*, the ones who don’t like to have conflicts with the other villagers.” [36:48, male, age: around 60]

In addition, a person may be ‘strong’ due to his economic wealth. He may win a conflict by bribing the police to arrest the adversary, or by paying bandits to steal his cattle. Although none of the interviewees could recount a concrete incident, all insisted that fear of such a conflict is the main reason for the passive behavior of non-privatizers towards the ‘strong’. Thus, active intervention and direct confrontation was said to be very rare<sup>41</sup>; out of fear most people merely complained to the local authorities.

### ***3.5.3. Attempts to legally curtail privatization***

Complaints by villagers to the municipality heads and the traditional clan authorities triggered attempts to curtail privatization (see Figure 7). Once a critical mass was reached, these complaints led to village discussions aimed at reconciliation. Throughout the region, the creation of new community rules curtailing privatization was seen as the solution. However, in many villages initiating the curtailment was a slow process, which was not successful everywhere. After the complaints began, often months and years passed before the first meeting was held.<sup>42</sup> Also, the necessary consensus was not reached everywhere. Curtailment attempts were hampered as many villagers feared open conflicts in general, and especially with the ‘strong people’:

“Those who fenced too much still have good relationships with the other villagers, but if somebody dares to dispute [the fencing], this may lead to bad relationships, and so far this did not happen.” [359:16, male, age 53]

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<sup>41</sup> For example, personally removing the private-marks of somebody was only related from one village, specifying to have always chosen the night’s darkness for not being seen by the potentially belligerent ‘strong’ owners.

<sup>42</sup> While in many *fokontany* it was a general discontent that triggered the first meeting, in other villages there have been specific critical incidents, e.g., conflicts between individual users claiming rights on the same stock. It often took quite a while to transform public discontent into a meeting. For example, in one *fokontany*, it took around seven years from lamenting about the first enclosure perceived as too big (several hectare) to the first meeting.

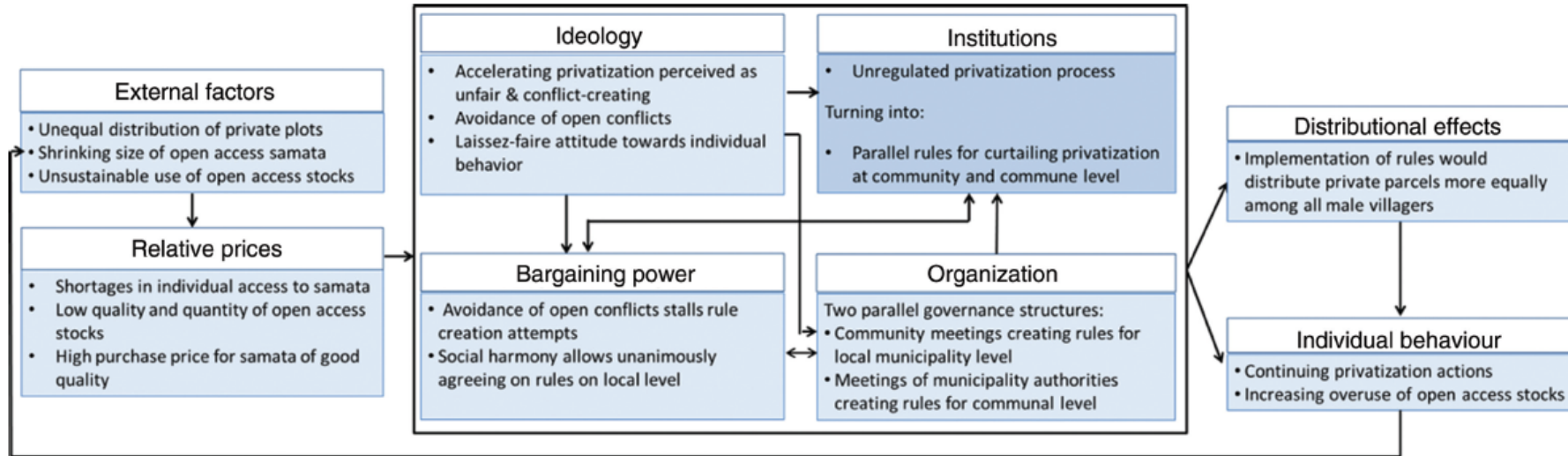


Figure 8: The framework for institutional change (Ensminger 1992) applied to the curtailment process

The earliest community meeting and rule creation took place in the municipality of Marofijery in the mid-1990s. In most other villages, meetings aimed at legally curtailing privatization did not take place before 2010. In addition to curtailment attempts at the municipality level, local and regional actors initiated attempts at the commune level as well. For the Beheloka commune, rules for curtailing privatization were created in 2010 by the commune head, prescribing that everybody is allowed to have a maximum of one hectare of private *samata*. Following this, even communities that had still not decided on a curtailment were forced to directly apply the regional rule (at least de jure). The process was initiated by the municipality heads and the regional traditional authority of the large *Tevondrona* clan who convoked a meeting with representatives from all corresponding lineages and municipalities. At the end of our fieldwork (2013), in the two communes Soalara and Itampolo, a curtailment has not been crafted regionally, and in many villages the creation of local rules is still ongoing<sup>43</sup>.

Given these different attempts to curtail privatization, officially valid rules for *samata* use vary between villages. The new rules mainly regulate the right of privatization, but appropriation and provision rules for the community stocks were not created. However, some few communities agreed on using the trees in a more sustainable manner, specifically by leaving a certain amount of branches intact and not cutting the stem.<sup>44</sup> The agreements on privatization on the one hand declare marking *samata* on the grazing grounds invalid (all communities dealing with this phenomenon).

On the other hand, private property rights to *samata* for a specific zone around the corrals got accepted in all communities. Most communities also took a decision as to whether these rights apply to all livestock corrals, or only to those of zebus (both outcomes), and often limited the number of corrals to one per herd. Also *samata* enclosures in the agricultural area were accepted nearly everywhere. Furthermore, most rules set a certain maximum size for an individual's total holdings, or his enclosed *samata* respectively. Holdings exceeding the permitted size have to be reduced or given up. Rules on how to respond to cases of non-compliance (e.g. oversized parcels not being reduced) were only created in very few

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<sup>43</sup> The bargaining power of single actors often had a huge positive or negative influence on convocation and outcome of the community meetings. For example, in one *fokontany* the interviewees reported that the newly created community rule to reduce private claims was set aside for more than a year on request of the local *mpitan-kazomanga fohe* whose son would have been highly affected by the rule.

<sup>44</sup> Sometimes, village communities had already agreed to not cut the stem long before privatization and severe degradation started, for example in Vohombe around 1996.

municipalities and then indicate sanctioning fees, but no fixed deadlines for actions by privatizers or authorities.

The interviewees' knowledge of the rules valid in their community was often rather limited, leading to diverging statements about the sizes of individual parcels or total holdings of private *samata* permitted in a particular commune or community. In the Beheloka *commune*, for example, statements about the permitted parcels around the corral ranged from a radius of 5 m up to 100 m and from 0.5 to 1 hectare space. Furthermore, the oral legislation process of new community rules by public creation led to diverging local perceptions. The same village meeting was described by some participants as having culminated in agreeing to curtail the privatization in this or that way, while others insisted that they did not come to an agreement.

Also the interviewees' perception about the origin of the rules for their community varied widely, especially in the Beheloka commune. There, it was mostly stated that the rules were created by the village community, or by the *Tevondrona's* traditional authority. However, few interviewees knew that their local rules had actually originated from a meeting of authorities at *commune level*, or that this meeting had invalidated older local agreements. It was often mistakenly assumed that the *Tevondrona's* authority had bindingly limited private claims to a certain size. The authority himself remembers having unsuccessfully campaigned for the abolishment of all private rights to *samata*.

#### **3.5.4. Implementation of privatization rules**

In most communities the curtailment of *samata* privatization is far from being successfully implemented and enforced and most interviewees did not believe that the curtailment could ever 'work out'. The interviewees saw the failure of curtailment as being strongly related to a lack of power or even a lack of willingness to enforce and sanction on the part of all actors involved (see Figure 9).

Many municipality heads were said to be too passive in their dealings with the privatizers out of the same fear of vengeance by 'strong' people that caused villagers to not report illegal private holdings. One interviewed municipality head openly admitted his own passivity:

"I could send a gendarme, but doing this in front of the people who elected me is not good, so I prefer to stay like this." [359:17, male, age: 53]

It was also stated that the municipality heads in general lack the power to enforce the curtailment:

“The municipality head told the owners [to remove their property marks], but these didn’t agree. So the result is fighting. [...But] when the commune head [...] would arrive here with his soldiers [...], then everybody would agree.” [51:21, male, age: 63]

One of the commune heads was blamed for not reacting to the municipalities’ request for assistance in enforcing the curtailment. The traditional authority of the *Tevondrona* clan was perceived as no longer having the right power to help enforce the curtailment. His authority derives from the traditional respect afforded to elders in contact with the ancestral world, and the spiritual power which is said to be sometimes even mortal. Today, however many people have lost their fear of this power:

“He [...] is not *vazaha* [non-local state authority] and does not imprison people [...]. Today, people are headstrong, they don’t care what he says about the *samata* situation.” [1:34, male, age: 60-70]

The majority of interviewees also did not believe that the local community itself has enough power or even willingness to enforce the rules. Enforcement relies on the active monitoring and reporting of deviant behavior by all individual villagers, meaning that no one has been given a specific mandate and thus legitimization or incentive for this. For various ideological reasons, the villagers’ individual motivation for engaging in monitoring and reporting deviant behavior is generally low.

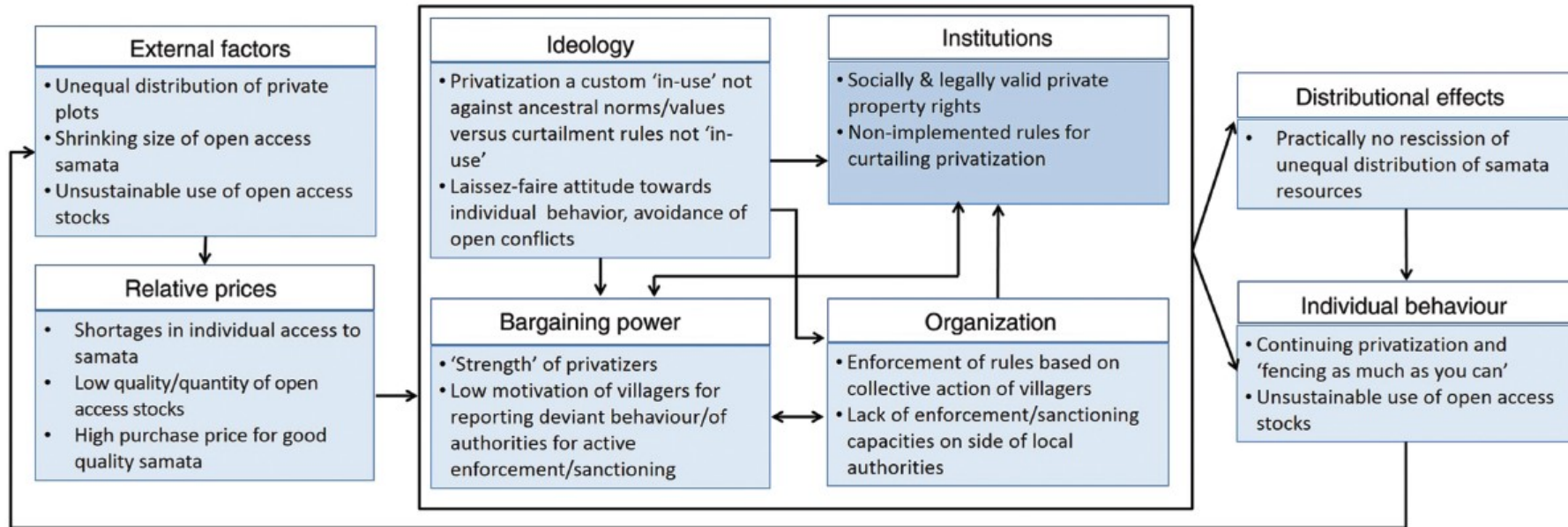


Figure 9: The framework for institutional change (Ensminger 1992) applied to the implementation of curtailment

Although the great majority of Tanalana interviewees perceived the current situation of privatization as 'bad' because it creates social tensions, there is no ancestral rule or taboo that forbids privatization. As a consequence, it is not morally bad per se and at best perceived as a peccadillo. Thus, most Tanalana do not condemn others for 'fencing as much as they can'. It was even often stated that today, only 'lazy' people would not try to get private parcels. In villages with no areas left to appropriate, not owning much *samata* is perceived as a personal lack of far-sightedness or the 'bad luck' of 'having come too late'. As selling *samata* has become an important means of livelihood, owning *samata* has become widely accepted, even for non-cattle owners.

Furthermore, Tanalana people dislike open conflict. On the one hand, this smoothed the unanimous creation of the curtailment by public community discussions where "people always say yes, but later behave in a different way" [26:96, male, age: 55]. On the other hand, it results in an unwillingness to tell others how to behave, specifically to tell villagers to remove their *samata* enclosures and marks or to openly insult people for fencing more *samata* than allowed. This leads to comparatively higher bargaining power of those 'strong' people' that do not care about creating conflict:

"[In the meeting], the ones who already have samata enclosures agreed [on outlawing all enclosures], at least they said so, but when the others then tried to use this samata, they got angry." [51:87, male, age: 63]

In addition, most Tanalana people understand only 'rules-in-use' as binding rules. Due to the lack of enforcement and sanctioning, however, many villagers perceived the curtailment rules as invalid or even non-existent:

"This rule doesn't exist because nobody cares." [23:63, male, age: 40]

"No, [there is no rule,] because everybody is doing the same: fencing a lot." [36:38, male, age: around 66]

In sum, the curtailment of *samata* privatization seems to have reached a status of having failed, as the new regulative rules have not reached the status of rules-in-use and are thus seen as non-binding. The private property rights to *samata*, however, have been met with high social acceptance. Thus, the privatizers de facto won the bargaining over property rights, while those actors bargaining for their restriction lost.



### 3.6. Discussion

The present case study depicted the privatization mechanisms of an important fodder resource among agro-pastoralists in South-Western Madagascar as well as the process underlying local attempts to curtail privatization, and the reasons for its failed implementation. In the next sections we address the research questions posed in the introduction.

#### 3.6.1. *Mechanisms of assertion of new private property rights*

The *samata* privatization mechanisms described in the case study follow a very typical pattern where growing scarcity of a resource triggers step-by-step privatization by the resource users. The factors causing scarcity of the *samata* stocks are also widely known from other cases of dismantling of common pool resources: population growth (Haller 2010, Niamir-Fuller & Turner 1999), lower regeneration rates caused by climatic changes (Beyene 2011, Desta & Coppock 2004), higher pressure and overuse of the open access stock caused by the emergence of private stocks (Williams 1996). However, unlike many other cases, the privatization was not driven by changes in the regional and household economy (Desta & Coppock 2004, Ensminger 1997, Namgail et al. 2007) or the overall political and economic system and its policies (Ensminger 1996, Getachew 2001, Kamara, Swallow & Kirk 2004).

The unequal distribution of private stocks among the users resulted in a perception of acute scarcity among those who did not secure their share early and then increased the pace of privatization in the logic of “enclosure beget enclosure” (Behnke 2008:334). Finally, as the value of *samata* rose due to scarcity and new opportunities to market it, a race for property rights developed wherein land users “rushed to compete for the rents” (Anderson & Hill 1990:195). In this way, private parcels could spread, as many pastoralists initially did not care if other villagers privatized parcels. This is due to the specific circumstances: First, unlike most other cases of indigenous resource privatization, the former property regime governing *samata* was not a common property rights system, but a situation of unregulated open access typical for the economic frontier (Anderson & Hill 1990). Thus, as often reported (cf. Agrawal 2000, Taylor & Singleton 1993), only aggravating resource scarcity led resource users to care about how others use the resource and caused conflict over privatization. Second, the Tanalana’s ideology made claiming private property rights to corral *samata* and enclosures highly reasonable.

During the whole privatization process, the privatizers have been ‘change agents’ able to create new individual property rights by continuing and recurring privatization actions. Unlike the typical pattern of distribution of common pool resources, in this case it is not the local elites who are the most active and successful in capturing the resource (Behnke 2008, Beyene 2010, Di Gregorio et al. 2008, Mwangi 2007, Woodhouse, Bernstein & Hulme 2000), but ‘strong

people'. Their specific 'menace power' (Theesfeld 2011) to enforce their claimed rights derives from their indifference towards social gossip and the creation of conflict.

### ***3.6.2. Process of creating rules for curtailing privatization***

Although over time many villagers felt discontent with the ongoing privatization, efforts to curtail it were hampered by the villagers' fear of the privatizers' reactions, and of conflict in general. The governance structures of the Tanalana society rely heavily on community self-organization, whereas state administrative structures have only limited power. Indeed, the rule creation process in the communities brought about by collective action was often slow and not in all villages successful. Nevertheless, in many villages and also on the Beheloka commune level, it led to community rules for curtailing privatization of *samata*.

Most local curtailment efforts started at a time when many people including non-livestock owners had already 'secured their share'. This situation explains why most communities decided to legitimate private property rights to *samata* while at the same time a property rights regime similar to the former open access situation was said to be best for the communities. The very unequal resource distribution among the users led to a situation where reaching consensus on curtailing privatization is very difficult or even impossible, as all actors fight for their position (Becker & Ostrom 1995, Libecap 1989). However, the results show that villagers frequently only agreed to the proposed curtailment rules in order to avoid open conflict, but did not plan to drop their claims to private parcels.

### ***3.6.3. Reasons for the failure to implement the curtailment***

Several attempts to curtail the privatization were made by traditional and administrative authorities; however, the enforcement of the new community rules turned out to be very difficult for a number of reasons: First, the villagers' individual motivation to obey the new rules is very low, although these were mostly created by the villagers themselves, or at least that was how the situation was perceived. This confirms the observation that "achieving consensus does not mean internalizing motivations" (Ensminger & Henrich 2014:31). Second, the specific governance structure implies that enforcement of the rules depends to a large extent on the pro-active collective action of the villagers, especially when it comes to reporting illegal privatization to the municipality heads and demanding sanctioning. The Tanalana have a long-standing tradition of self-governance, and community rules in rural Madagascar are generally said to be more effective in inducing compliance compared to state regulation (Horning 2008a). Also most other pastoral systems in Africa rely on popular enforcement (Niamir-Fuller & Turner 1999). In this case, however, the high bargaining power of 'strong people' ready to defend their

personal benefits against public discontent coincides with a very low motivation of individual villagers to directly oppose against those people.

The described low motivation, as well as the generally low acceptance and internalization of the curtailment rules are mainly grounded in the fact that restricting someone's behavior runs contrary to the Tanalana's historical cultural context of laissez-faire practices and the high value generally placed on personal freedom in Madagascar (Kaufmann 2014). This laissez-faire attitude is reinforced by an ongoing cultural change process towards greater individualization (see Chapter 2). Moreover, restricting privatization of *samata* parcels does not fit with the traditional ideology that clearing, marking or fencing land legitimates its ownership. Thereby, cleaning for subsistence activities has the same legitimacy as cleaning for privatizing *samata* or cultivating other cash crops (Réau 2002).

Many interviewees claimed that the implementation of rules would have been successful if enforcement and sanctioning had been actively driven by local and communal authorities working together. Experiences from many other Malagasy regions, however, indicate that collective action of the state authorities on a higher level than local communities is generally very difficult to realize (Ferguson et al. 2014). As indicated by the respondents' statements, the traditional clan authorities and socio-cultural enforcement mechanisms also seem to have lost their power in the course of an ongoing cultural change process. This power vacuum, together with a low (ideological) internalization of the new rules, results in a general lack of compliance. However, traditional rules, such as the taboo on the use of *samata* near graves, are still internalized rules-in-use and are thus mainly obeyed without any external sanctioning threat.

### **3.7. Conclusion**

In this paper, we analyzed the privatization mechanisms and failed local attempts to curtail this privatization for the important *samata*-fodder tree among the Tanalana people in South-West Madagascar. New private property rights were created over time through the cumulative behavior of individual users. Although legalized de jure only decades after their creation, the private property rights to the common pool resource were highly socially accepted from the outset for ideological reasons. A high bargaining power deriving from not caring about open conflict further helped the privatizers to assert their rights and to prevent the enforcement of the new community-based rules curtailing privatization. The curtailment fails, as it relies on an enforcement system inappropriate for this case. It mainly builds on individual user's motivations for monitoring and demanding sanctioning. This motivation is however mostly very low, as the curtailment rules contradict the users' personal economic benefits and ideology about resource use.

The case study contributes to the understanding of the processes and mechanisms underlying local property rights transformations, and gives an example of self-governance systems for natural resources that “never quite got going” (Ostrom 1998:17). The problem of low internalization of rules leading to weak enforcement may be exemplary for other self-governance systems in Madagascar and other developing countries.

### **Acknowledgements**

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**Chapter 4: It's a kind of suicide:  
Dynamics of funerary gift-giving  
and institutional change in South-  
West Madagascar**

## **Chapter 4: It's a kind of suicide: Dynamics of funerary gift-giving and institutional change in South-West Madagascar**

### **Abstract**

This paper examines the recent dynamics of funerary gift-giving in rural South-West Madagascar against changes in local livelihoods and the society. A conceptual framework combining gift-giving theory with a model on institutional change from Institutional Economic Anthropology is designed to analyze empirical data derived from interviews conducted in 26 villages in the Mahafaly Plateau region. The study finds that social pressure, mostly created by gift-giving directly translating into societal 'fame or shame', paired with the accumulated gossip of people not directly involved, levers out explicit traditional rules on gift-giving and their pro-social economic-exit options to gift-giving duties. Reverse to the originally underlying rationale of economic solidarity with the bereaved, gift-giving today presents a societal and economic threat to gift-givers and -receivers.

The present research contributes to our understanding of changes and dynamics in traditional gift-giving systems, especially in agonistic ones. Although the high social and economic impact of gift-giving in the developing world is recognized, very little research has focused on the question of how these gift-giving systems transform and adapt. The study depicts the importance of innovative individual behavior and personal aspirations, as well as the interplay of actors beyond the scope of the classical donor-receiver and kinship relations and reciprocity considerations gift-giving theory classically focuses on. The study also shows that personal norms and social norms of a general societal level must be considered in the analysis of changes in gift-giving systems.

### **4.1. Introduction**

Gift-giving has drawn the attention of scholars since the work of Mauss (1923). Today, in many societies of developing countries, gift-giving still complements and even competes with market processes. People here still rely heavily on such forms of social exchange which often help to buffer economic risk by solidarizing expenses (Baird & Gray 2014, Dobuzinskis 2003, Platteau 2006). Here, gift-giving is said to mostly take place in the context of ceremonies and rituals such as funerals and is thus heavily formalized and shaped by specific rules (Berking 1999). Thus, the mechanisms and rules of gift-giving and its specific dynamics are central to our understanding of livelihoods and societies in the developing world (Eisenstein 2011, Godelier 2004). However, two knowledge gaps remain: First of all, studies on gift-giving in contemporary non-western societies are very rare. Second, very little is known about how gift-giving systems transform

under the influence of social change and societal evolution. Such research has mostly dealt with the impacts of colonization (e.g. Drucker & Heizer 1967, Gregory 1980). In turn, change in gift-giving systems in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is only rarely empirically explored, both for non-western as well as western societies (see for example Heal 2014, Minowa, Khomenko & Belk 2010). The many experiment- and game-based studies on change do not contribute to our understanding of gift-giving systems as they focus exclusively on individual behavior in rather unspecific settings.

The present article aims to fill parts of these knowledge gaps by analyzing the development of the contemporary system of funerary gift-giving among people in South-West Madagascar. Funerals in Madagascar traditionally play a significant socio-cultural and economic role in local livelihoods and often involve hundreds of participants and a continuous flow of gifts and counter-gifts (Bloch 1989, 2010, Fee 2000, Heurtebize 1997, Huntington 1973, Jaovelo-Dzao 1996, Middleton 2009, Wüstefeld 2004). After Independence in 1960, mortuary traditions have become even more important for many ethnic groups (Feeley-Harnik 1984). In the last decades, then, in many regions funerary spending has decreased due to ongoing impoverishment (Delcroix & Fauroux 1994, Middleton 2009, Wüstefeld 2004). In the study area, however, people still spend a relevant share of their annual expenditure on participation in funerals (Hänke & Barkmann 2017) and the costs of funerary gifts and other disbursements are also said to increase constantly (Kaufmann 2011), even though the region is one of the poorest in Madagascar. Malagasy funerary practices have been studied mostly from the perspectives of social integration and identity, kinship, connection to ancestors and rites of passage (e.g. Bloch 1989, Fee 2000, Huntington 1973, Jaovelo-Dzao 1996), while funerary gift-giving has seldom been considered in detail (e.g., Fee 2000, Middleton 1988).

The present study is guided by a conceptual framework combining gift-giving theory with a model on institutional change from Institutional Economic Anthropology (Ensminger 1992). In line with the framework, I will analyze the current dynamics of funerary gift-giving in the study region as well as its traditional and recent cultural logics and institutions, examine the role of ideology, bargaining power and individual decision-making and behavior on these dynamics, and align the interplay of these with the changing societal and economic environment. Doing this, the study aims to merge economic and anthropological perspectives, and to respond to the call to “reinvigorate and re-energize anthropological discussions of exchange, which tend to either rely heavily on – or to take a critical stance towards – arguments put forth by Mauss nearly a century ago” (Wood 2016:xvi-xvii).

#### 4.2. Conceptual framework and definition of terms

The analytical framework chosen here combines gift-giving theory (for an overview see Befu (1977) and Sherry (1983)) with a framework on institutional change from Institutional Economic Anthropology (Ensminger 1992). This specific combination (see Figure 10) makes it possible to arrange the specific insights and concepts developed in gift-giving theory in a way that allows for assumptions about logical relationships and dynamics between the different elements, and provides a focus on change - two aspects only poorly covered by gift-giving theory alone.

Gift-giving theory deals mainly with people's reasons and stimuli to give a certain gift. A main question is if decision-making is mainly shaped by the giver's personal motivations, or a structural (also called institutional) pattern. Such structures are mostly norms of reciprocity and other institutionalized obligations attached to gifts. In the framework, this is mirrored by 'institutions'. Per definition of Ensminger (1992), 'institutions' here can comprise formal rules such as legal regulations given by the state or a community, informal constraints such as social norms, or their corresponding enforcement mechanisms. I opt to also include institutionalized personal norms and strategies (Schlüter & Theesfeld 2010), as this reflects the importance of combining structural and motivational approaches when studying gift-giving (cf. Befu 1977, Sherry 1983).

Rules are understood here as institutions the contravention of which entails tangible, material sanctioning (e.g. a fine), while breaking social norms is sanctioned by way of a negative emotional reaction of other people (e.g. gossip, ostracism) and breaking one's own personal norm may result in feeling bad (e.g. guilty or ashamed). On the other hand, personal strategies do not lead to any sanctions as they are merely bound to practical considerations (e.g. how to best save time or money) but have no ideological or moral basis (Schlüter & Theesfeld 2010).

The 'sociocultural context' in which the gift-giving takes place not only defines these institutions, but also the relevant resource types and so-called 'spheres of exchange' pointing to the cosmological, symbolic or social meaning and message of a gift (see 'Ideology'). 'Ideology' as used in the framework also includes the people's common values, mental models, and ideals that "determine people's goals and shape their choices" (Ensminger 1992:5), as well as ideological narratives as ideologically shaped explanations for certain phenomena and discourses as a "specific way of linking issues and rationalizing topics in a logical way" (Haller 2010:57). For example, the actors may understand gift-giving as a means of maintaining long-term cosmic order or for role modeling and maintaining a certain social hierarchy (cf. Bourdieu 1990).



Also central to gift-giving theory is the classification of gift-exchange in relation to its 'distributional effects' and the 'constellation of actors' (in the original framework originally called 'organization'): Looking at whether exchange partners give away and receive the same value or whether someone in the long run economically or socially gains by the exchange, a gift pattern can be classified as 'pure gift' or 'total prestation', or as 'balanced' or as 'negative' exchange. Which cases prevail is said to be mainly determined by the relationship of the actors, especially in terms of kinship distance. The exchange partners may be equal in terms of status (horizontal exchange), or having some kind of unequal, e.g. patron-client relationship (vertical exchange).

Furthermore, personal parameters such as sociability and generosity, plus the function the gift-givers attribute to the giving, e.g. saving, role modeling or social integration, play a role ('Individual Behavior'). Another relevant factor in gift-giving theory is the power of actors, which in institutionalism is called 'bargaining power'. It describes the ability "to get something one wants from others" (Ensminger 1992:7). A prominent example is the power to socially humiliate the receiver during the traditional potlatch ceremonies of the North American Pacific North-West coast (Rosman & Rubel 1971). Bargaining power often arises from a certain societal position and may even include the ability to influence the ideology of others.

All these factors can be clustered and put into a logical relationship within the framework (see Figure 1). But the framework also adds further aspects which are not directly addressed in gift-giving theory. At the heart of the framework lies the box of 'internal change' with the interplay of ideology, institutions, constellation of actors and bargaining power. These changes however do not happen 'out of the blue', but are induced by a shift in so-called 'relative prices', that is, "the value of something in relation to what one must give up for it" (Ensminger 1992:4). Such a shift is seen as a consequence of changes in the 'external factors' consisting of the social, ecological, political, economic or technological environment and the population (size). The 'internal changes' are assumed to have 'distributive consequences' for individuals and their 'behavior', which then may feed back into changes in the 'external factors'.

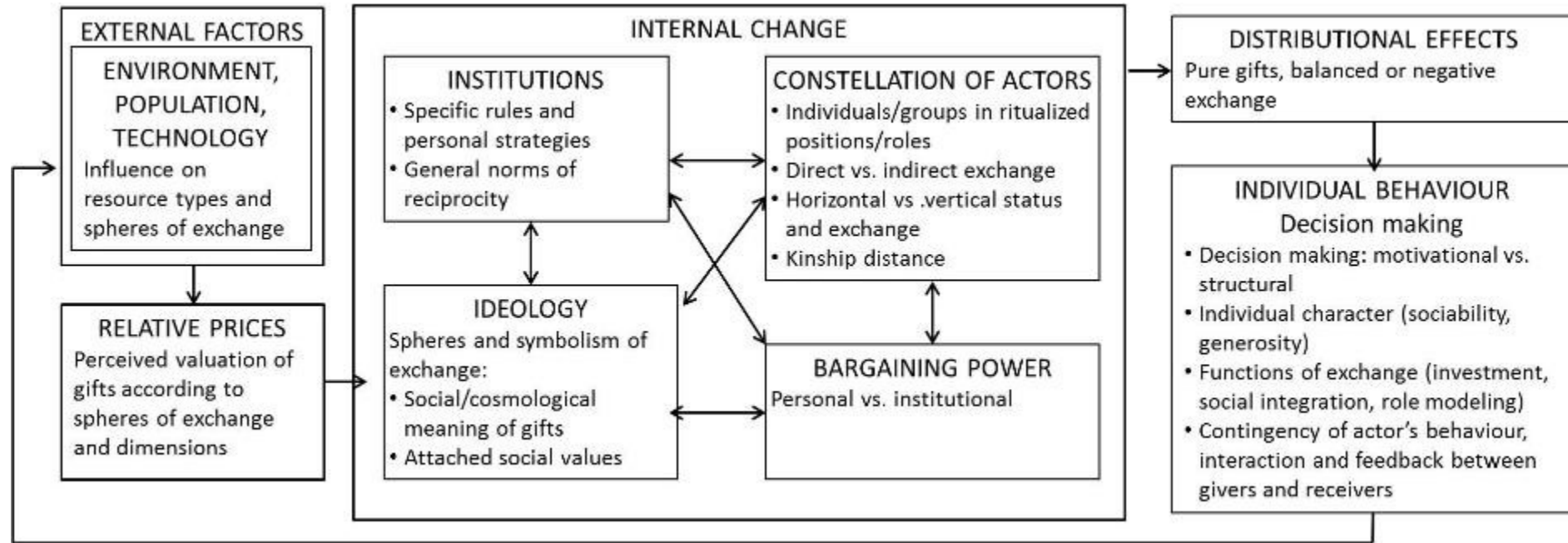


Figure 10: Main elements of gift-giving theory (Befu 1977, Sherry 1983) combined with the framework for analyzing institutional change (Ensminger 1992)

### 4.3. Data collection and analysis

The case study principally draws on qualitative data from fieldwork conducted between June 2012 and April 2014 in 26 villages of the Mahafaly Plateau and the Mahafaly Coastal Plain in South-West Madagascar, inhabited by Mahafaly and Mahafaly-Tanalana people. The study area extends from Soalara in the North to Vohombe in the South, and from Ambatry in the East to the ocean in the West.

The author conducted exploratory interviews with the help of Malagasy research assistants consecutively interpreting between the local Malagasy dialect and English. The exploratory interviews were complemented by structured interviews designed by the author and conducted by one of the research assistants. The exploratory interviews (N=77) addressed the interviewees' knowledge and perceptions of funerals in general, as well as partly also their personal experiences and behavior in specific funeral events (N=66), and/or information and perceptions regarding poverty and wealth, consumption, and lifestyle (N=21). The structured interviews (N=47) dealt with the interviewees' individual experiences as funeral organizers' (N=11) or guests (N=20) and their general perceptions of changes, or with young people's funerary knowledge and perceptions (N=16, age 15-25). The author also took part in three funerary ceremonies in September 2013. Fourteen of the interviews were held with respective organizers and guests before and/or after the corresponding events. Additionally, people were asked to list all funeral parties taking place in the region between 2013 and 2014, the corresponding amounts of gifts, as well as to explain what makes a party famous and to give an example of a very famous party (N=43).

Most interviews were held with one interviewee (N=124), a smaller number with two persons (N=31) or three to four persons (N=15). The interviewees' age ranged between 15 and 90, with over 70% being between 20 and 59 years old. As only men organize funerals and also as guests play a more active role, most interviews were held with men (N=112), however 40 interviews were done exclusively with women, and 18 with men and women together. Ten persons were interviewed more often than once.

Audio-records were taken during the interviews. In the case of interviews held by the author, the time needed for consecutive translation was used to take very comprehensive handwritten notes of the translation. These field notes were then transcribed into digital versions and replenished by the assistants with the help of the audio-records. All structured and some of the exploratory interviews were completely transcribed from the audio-records by the assistants.

An inductive content analysis was done, using the QDA software Atlas.ti to code and theme the interviews.

For sustaining and complementing the collected data on former funerary customs, the author draws on the existing literature on funerary customs among similar agro-pastoral societies in the South of Madagascar.

#### **4.4. Results**

##### ***4.4.1. Changes in local livelihoods***

The study area is mainly inhabited by agro-pastoral people. Their animals – goats, sheep, and especially zebu-cattle – have a high cultural value and function as a kind of living savings account. Livestock is, in general, a ‘male business’. Women do not possess or manage cattle, and, in most of the study region, they do not own goats or sheep either. However, there are multiple traditional forms and specific familiar arrangements of de facto female possession of small ruminants.

The number of a man’s livestock is synonymous with his economic wellbeing (cf. Wüstefeld 2004). While the average zebu cattle herd consists of 16 animals (Neudert et al. 2015), wealth is very unevenly distributed with some households owning more than 200 cattle and 37% not owning any livestock at all (unpublished project data from 634 households, 2012). Using recent local categories of wealth (SuLaMa 2011), wealth is locally defined as owning more than 60 cattle and over 100 small ruminants per core family. Being wealthy means independence from the economic help of relatives and the ability to fulfil the social obligations, e.g. livestock donations for funerals (cf. Pannoux 1991, Schomerus-Gernböck 1981). Today, more than 85% of the households own less than 20 zebus and 20 small ruminants and thus locally classify as poor, a category labelled as ‘suffering’ and ‘being hungry’ (SuLaMa 2011).

This widespread ‘cattle-poorness’ can be traced back to the 1960s (e.g. Schomerus-Gernböck 1971) and the literature documents a persistent ‘livestock crisis’ for the whole of South-West Madagascar since the late 1980s (cf. Fieloux 1987). However, all older interviewees described today’s life in the region as ‘having become hard’ due to a rather recent impoverishment in cattle (see Figure 2 - Environment). This was associated with climate-induced harvest losses in this semi-arid region which increased the need to ‘spend’ cattle for buying food, as well as with several animal diseases and extreme droughts with a lack of fodder and water. Food insecurity today affects more than half of local households (Neudert et al. 2015) and the annual lean season has extended to three months per year (Hänke & Barkmann 2017).

At the same time, a socio-economic transition is ongoing (see Figure 2 - Environment): Although wealth is in general still mostly depicted in the form of animals, preferences for the allocation of capital and status symbols are changing. Some people do already live in houses made of wooden planks with roofs of corrugated iron instead of the traditional huts made of twigs and roofs of local material. Though there is still no electricity, a small number of households today even possess video recorders (see Figure 2 - Technology). Livestock is still a form of local currency with fixed values for purchase, fines and standardized gifts. However, older interviewees worried about an increasing need for cash currency in everyday life. At the same time, cash is perceived to be comparatively easy to get today<sup>45</sup> and 'on the rise', while cattle are a good declared as 'having become difficult to find' (see Figure 2 - Relative Prices):

"Today, the children are fed by money, not by cattle." [12:134, male, age: 42]

The concomitant monetarization has reached formerly freely available goods such as cattle fodder (see Chapter 3). Many interviewees – including the younger ones – complained about 'new', 'modern' or '*vazaha*' times (*vazaha* = strangers, white people) which are said to also have led to a deterioration of social life in the villages, especially an increase in anti-social or non-rule-conforming behavior (see Chapter 2).

These perceptions of interviewees on impoverishment, deterioration of social life, and market integration can be traced back to the 1950s, especially regarding an increased need to spend capital on consumer goods or on increasing social duties such as marriage gifts (cf. Battistini 1964a, Kaufmann & Tsirahamba 2006)<sup>46</sup>. Thus, besides real shifts in relative prices, they also illustrate the character of the local ideological discourse on livelihoods in general and funerary gift-giving in particular (see Figure 2 - Ideology).

#### **4.4.2. Changes in mortuary practices**

The ample traditional Mahafaly mortuary rituals are amongst the most famous in Madagascar, specifically the very costly traditional graves. These several square meters large stone tombs indicating the wealth of the buried (cf. Decary 1951) are still part of local culture. However, many interviewees questioned the traditional emphasis on using a large share of the monetary

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<sup>45</sup> While people often wondered that 'money is very easy to find today' and 'today even a child can have 10.000 Ariary', most people were not aware of the mechanism of inflation and did not have knowledge of the comparatively high inflation rate in Madagascar (e.g., inflation rate for consumer prices in 2014: 6,1%, CIA The World Factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ma.html>, retrieved: 18.4.2015). At the same time, the constant rise of prices for products on the local market was often used as a proof that life has become expensive and difficult.

<sup>46</sup> See interview citation from Battistini (1969) in footnote number 30.

resources for preparing for life after death with “tombs, whose elaborate and solid constructions far exceed the care given to the houses of the living” (Huntington 1973:65):

“Instead of eating bad food and having a bad and small house while I am alive, [...] I prefer to not get a big tomb, because dead is dead and the bones put there are the same.” [217:2, male, age: 35]

Mahafaly funerals are aligned with a well-known saga about a “meat orgy” and “blood bath” wherein the whole cattle herd (or at least a high share) of a deceased man is sacrificed (Decary 1951:253, also see Mack 1986). Today, funerals still demand the slaughter of animals. Nevertheless, these are not sacrificed in the sense of some ritual directed towards the supernatural or ancestral world. Some animals from the deceased or his/her sons’ herds are slaughtered as a kind of luxury food and custom-defined acknowledgement for those men who contributed with hard physical work to the funeral, e.g., by making the coffin or the tomb by hand and digging the stones for it (cf. Schomerus-Gernböck 1971). Furthermore, all interviewees insisted that there has never been a moral duty or custom to sacrifice or spend a man’s whole cattle herd for his burial or his tomb. Doing this was widely perceived as absurd as his herd serves as basis of future generations’ prosperity.

Additionally, general impoverishment causes many families to decide to follow an economic ‘minimum standard’ of funerals which still counts as having ‘fulfilled’ the custom and is said to be socially accepted by the living as well as the ancestors (see Figure 2 - Environment). Thus, the reported number of zebus slaughtered in the last years in the context of the preparation of the grave did not exceed 12, while the older literature reports numbers of up to 100 zebus (Frère 1958, Mack 1986, Pannoux 1991). Also, the workers who constructed the coffin are traditionally served the meat of one zebu, but slaughtering an economically and culturally less valuable goat has become common.

The most relevant change is the existence of tremendous funeral parties (see Figure 2 - Environment). These parties called *fisa* (game, amusement) or *havoria* (gathering) are a rather recent phenomenon and have fast become popular, namely in the early 2000s. Consequently, no explicit mentioning of funeral parties can be found in the literature, despite the comparatively recent work by Evers (2002). When interviewees were asked to name the local customs, funerals and especially funeral parties were most often stated and also stated first. In comparison, the older literature describes the finishing of the grave with the slaughter of a zebu

and the distribution of its meat (*hena ratsy*) to the guests as the most important part of the funeral (cf. Burgess 1932, Jaovelo-Dzao 1991, Schomerus-Gernböck 1981).

The 3 to 7 day-long funeral parties with fairground character attract masses of spectators in a radius of around 30km, involving considerable travel times by foot or ox cart. Funeral parties are the only regional public events besides market days and have become the region's main events in terms of participants, social importance, and economic burden for organizers and guests. On account of the described economic weight, 'funeral party' was largely paraphrased by interviewees by the term '*problem*', a term locally defined as a negative situation which is solved by spending livestock. Most parties take place within the 'party season' between August and October, which is a relaxed period because of previous annual agricultural harvests. Up to five parties per village and season were reported.

The party ceremonies include the ritual of accomplishment of the tomb construction, and are among the last acts related to the death. The construction itself requires a considerable amount of money and also the funeral parties are very costly to organize although no slaughtering of cattle takes place at the party. Therefore, it is common and socially accepted to delay the party till the family has raised the money for both party and tomb. A delay of one year after the death is the most common time frame but it may extend to several years (cf. Cole & Middleton 2001, Kaufmann 2011). According to the interviewees and also the literature, this period has been extended, e.g., Heurtebize (1997) found completing the tomb some months after the death as the norm and Frère (1958) observed a timespan of up to a year. Raising money for the party and the tomb often implies that younger male family members are sent elsewhere to look for wage labor and may remain outside the region for up to two years.<sup>47</sup> Often also the guests need to make major efforts to produce savings for their funerary gift, thus invitations are done about one year in advance.

The music constitutes the largest share of the party costs. The cost of engaging a band<sup>48</sup> ranges between 300,000 MGA and 3,000,000 MGA<sup>49</sup>, depending on its popularity and the number of days it plays. Hiring a DJ is much more economic but less popular. Additionally, large amounts of food and alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks are distributed. Common party food consists of

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<sup>47</sup> Migration for wage labour often means looking for a job in Toliara or working at the sapphire companies. A typical local activity to make money for funerals is slash-and-burn-agriculture (*teteke*).

<sup>48</sup> While daily life in the villages still takes place without any form of electricity (besides small portable radios with batteries, since 2013), during these parties, large electricity generators for the music amplifiers pop up.

<sup>49</sup> 76.32 - 763 US\$.

rice and goat meat, a dish limited to festivities or small portions once a week in case of richer families (Neudert et al. 2015). The costs for the music are normally shared equally among all organizing family members, while Dutch treat prevails for the food and drinks each organizer independently prepares for his personal guests. A further change is related to the use of animals received from corporate groups during the funeral. While traditionally, gift animals received from corporate groups during the funeral were slaughtered and consumed as a sign of social cohesion (cf. Decary 1962, Evers 2002, Faublée 1954), today they are mostly sold directly after the funeral in order to pay off the described liabilities, and a possible 'surplus' is added to the recipients' herd.

Analogous to rules on gift-giving, the food given to every guest or guest group has to correlate with the value of the gifts received from him or them. As a general rule, every [big] zebu received as a gift entrains counter-food (*famaha*) in the form of a [big] castrated goat and 10-20 cups of uncooked rice. Having received a goat, sheep or lower amount of money (below 100,000 MGA<sup>50</sup>) requires giving back 1.0 to 1.5 kg of goat meat and 4-5 cups of rice, while bigger amounts of money entrain giving a small goat and 10-20 cups of rice. The goats are bought in the village or neighboring villages, while the drinks are bought far away in a city. Goats and drinks are normally bought on credit and paid after the party – in case of the drinks, in cash money obtained from selling the gifts, in case of the goats, mostly directly in-kind with gift animals, with fixed conversion rates between zebus and goats.

Completing the funeral ceremonies with a public party has become a standard for all deceased whose death is said to be 'not too sad', that is, having died at an age above 40 years. Such a funeral party is however not part of the family's moral duty to 'bury the relative well'. Consequently, still valid traditional reasons for investing in rituals (e.g., in circumcisions) such as ancestral blessing, or otherwise fear of moral blame (*hakeo*<sup>51</sup>), sin and punishment by the angry spirit of the dead or other ancestors, do not play a major role for funeral parties. But, organizing a party today represents a social norm and obligation towards the living. Not fulfilling the public expectation may entrain sanctioning in the form of social gossip. Interviewees repeatedly claimed a rise in hard-heartedness of invited guests and pure spectators: These would not show compassion and ignore many families' tough economic situation, instead gossiping if these had not made the utmost effort to organize a good party, for example by loaning money.

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<sup>50</sup> Below 25.5 US\$

<sup>51</sup> For more information about the concept of *hakeo* in the South of Madagascar, see Thielsen (2016) and Fee (2000).



On the other side of the coin of social chatting, a party considered to be extremely good gives the organizers a chance to gain fame and social esteem. Thus, the specific arrangements and costs of the parties are heavily influenced by the self-increasing dynamics of social competition for fame. Most important factors reported as contributing to a good party with the chance to become famous are, ordered by frequency of citation: A prominent music band, an ambience of 'crowdedness' with many guests and spectators, much food and drink, an expensive grave, many zebus spent for the related mortuary ceremonies (at least 30-40 in total), and many gifts, especially zebus. The comparatively low importance of gifts is sustained by the numbers of zebu gifts given at parties in general, compared to the parties that interviewees remember as 'famous': At parties reported as being especially famous (N=27, cited years: 1997-2011) on average 135 zebus were given, however also funerals with relatively few gifts became famous (values: 25-500, median  $\bar{X}$ : 80). Quoted numbers of zebus given at other parties (N=161) are lower with 62 on average, but again with high dispersion (values: 2-440, median  $\bar{X}$ : 40).

Among the Mahafaly clans of the higher plateau, total spending in terms of money and zebus sold or slaughtered for the funeral and the party is today manifested by writing it on the side of the tomb and putting the corresponding number of zebu bucrania on it. Formerly, these numbers only indicated the costs of the funeral itself, that is, mostly for the grave (cf. Decary 1962, Pannoux 1991, Schomerus-Gernböck 1981). On the coastal plain, writing the numbers on the tomb is not common, but some Mahafaly-Tanalana-clans have started to place the corresponding bucrania on the tombs.

The prospect of gaining public recognition has led the bereaved to behave in new ways, without the intention of changing the custom:

“In this village, my family started with this [...]: We made a big party and sent for a famous music band. [...] We aimed to boast and looked for fame.” [185:38, male, age: around 80]

### **4.4.3. Funerary gift-giving**

Formerly, funerary gifts were given during condolence by close relatives in a more or less familiar setting. Today, the gift-giving takes place in public on a designated day (*rorombola*) of the party (see Figure 2 - Environment). Gift-giving is today the highlight of the funeral: Every guest group dances one by one around the public dance place with the band or DJ in the center. Plastic bags full of money and other gifts are raised into the air and animals are driven around the place. This performance is watched by the bereaved, the other guests and a big group of spectators. The

group is welcomed via microphone by a moderator, and the sums of money and number and types of gift zebus announced. Afterwards, even people who did not attend the party know about the amount of cattle gifts – at least in the form of rumor.

The funerary gift-giving is shaped, and its dynamics driven by social competition and bargaining for social esteem or warding off public humiliation and losing face:

“Funeral is competition.” [46:46, male, age: 42]

As a consequence, many gifts are of much higher value than the traditional social obligations demand. Regardless of age and gender, the vast majority of interviewees assessed the development of increasing funeral expenditures as bad:

“[It is] bad, I would prefer following the old custom. Today, it’s a kind of suicide.” [203:15, male, age: around 30]

At the same time, most of them felt helpless and trapped in the mechanisms of social obligation and public pressure:

“The people just follow this blindly, they can’t avoid it, but the truth is that they hate it.” [155:44, male, age: 67]

#### 4.4.3.1. Constellation of actors

The main actors involved in gift-giving at a funeral party are the male organizers, the male ‘guests’, the male guests’ wives and daughters, as well as the spectators (see Figure 2 - Constellation of Actors). The group of organizers in charge of the party and the other funerary ceremonies typically consists of the dead person’s biological sons and brothers, or if these are already dead their sons taking over the position. In reported cases this group consisted of up to 14 people. The role of a ‘guest’ is defined by being personally invited to the party and consequently bringing a gift. Guests bringing a gift zebu have a specific role and outstanding importance – interviewees asked how many guests they estimated to attend often only counted the ones expected to bring a zebu. Every guest may bring relatives (e.g. a wife) or friends to spend the time with. In reported cases, this group consisted of up to 30 people. These companions have no gift duties themselves, however today often contribute to the guest’s gift or bring their own gift, especially if they are very close male relatives of the guest (e.g. brothers). Invited guests are mostly affines and good friends.

The most important guests and also most important actors in the dynamics of gift-giving are the organizers' (ex-)sons-in-law, followed by the organizers' (ex-)fathers-in-law. Also the organizers' daughters and wives are relevant actors, as well as the group of affines of the same role, e.g. the group of all sons-in-law (cf. Fee 2000). This group, called *mpirahamba* or *mpiravetro*, is the reference for one's gift performance and consequently the actor one may compete with. According to older interviewees, the number of a person's (ex-)affines has risen over the last decades (see Figure 2 - Environment) due to changing partners more often, a rise of polygyny with up to four wives, marrying younger, and having more children (reported up to 15 per woman). The other guests are attached to the organizers by friendship, or a different kind of affinity and kinship than those described. Clan- and lineage-kinship plays a role in many aspects of social life, but is of comparatively minor importance in funerary gift-giving.

As all funeral parties take place publicly, a lot of people are present at the event without being organizers, guests or guests' companions. They are not in any formal relationship with the organizers and guests, and do not give gifts or receive food from the organizers, but stroll around, purchase drinks and food, dance and watch the presentation of gifts. This group comprising up to several hundred people from the neighboring villages has a crucial role in the constellation of actors through chatting about the quality of the party and gifts. It is the group of spectators that creates public opinion, social pressure and social humiliation (see Figure 2 - Constellation of Actors).

### 4.4.3.2. Bargaining power

Grounded in his power to create 'fame or shame' by positive or negative gossip, the actor 'mass of spectators' has high bargaining power (see Figure 2 - Bargaining Power). The spectators' main interest is to be entertained and watching the groups of affines competing for the best gift is part of this entertainment and thus encouraged by gossip. By fulfilling the spectators' expectations, the gift-givers bargain for positive feedback from the mass, or at least for not getting negative feedback. The power of the 'mass' has increased over time with funeral parties having become socially more important with more and more spectators being present.

Bargaining for social esteem is done by trying to bring the most valuable or most interesting gift at the entire party or at least trying to top the gifts of the other men of the same group of affines – what the others will bring is often communicated directly beforehand or heard by rumor. Bargaining for respect and acceptance from the side of the gift-receiving kin, and especially one's parents-in-law, however, is a comparatively minor issue and interviewees were very clear about the point that most positive or negative feedback about a gift does not come from the gift-

receivers themselves but from the spectators. Many people seemed to be rather relaxed when it comes to claiming the fulfilment of gift duties, which is also mirrored in many people's interpretation of these duties, as described below. Furthermore, aiming for ancestral blessing through valuable gifts or another link between gift-giving and the world of the ancestors was rarely stated.

The competition for virtuous gifts and famous parties was described by interviewees with the term *rengerenge* which implies ostentation or boasting (cf. Fee 2000, Middleton 1988) and a competition for 'being heavy', the local term for having high social status in the society. This phenomenon is said to be rather new. Consequently, as "today, the daughters want to be heavy<sup>52</sup>" [93:12, male, age: 24], the younger women are said to no longer let their invited fathers decide on gifts for their inviting husbands, but force their fathers to bring specific ones of high social and symbolic value.

#### 4.4.3.3. Ideology: Spheres of exchange, perceptions of gift-giving and wealth

The people in the study region in general keep the traditional spheres of exchange in funerary gift-giving (see Figure 2 - Ideology): Although for decades now the traditional livestock-gift has been complemented by money (*basimena*) and more recently also by consumer stuff, zebu gifts are still the only gifts of high symbolic value and there is no convertibility or equivalency between money and livestock. Most people still prefer to receive and to give only – or mainly – zebus. Money-gifts are normally comparatively small sums starting at 5,000 MGA<sup>53</sup>, although they can amount to more than 2 million MGA<sup>54</sup> per party.

In general, the socio-cultural and economic value of zebus differ greatly depending on parameters such as sex and age classes, body conditions, and especially beauty in terms of color and the shape of horns:

“When a father-in-law brings only a small zebu or a zebu with ugly horns, people may gossip that he is a very bad father-in-law.” [191:49, male, age: 60]

The value of consumer stuff-gifts is defined by their practicability, novelty and range among the list-dependent status symbols which consist of complete living room sets at the top, followed by hard wood furniture (especially bed-frames), foam mattresses, sewing machines, suitcases and plastic chairs. Also kitchen utilities, clothes and blankets are typical of today's gifts. While

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<sup>52</sup> *Ty anake ampela mba te-havesatse.*

<sup>53</sup> Starting at 1.3 US\$

<sup>54</sup> More than 515 US\$

some of the exchanged items are themselves quite a novelty in the region (see Figure 2 - Technology), others only newly appear within the set of gifts, for example ox carts (see Figure 2 - Ideology). 'Introducing' an item as a funeral gift can bring the gift-giver regional prominence and fame. New types of gifts were a heavily discussed development by interviewees and perceived as a major change in the traditional funerary customs.

Within the set of local ideologies, it is crucial to clarify if the recent current gift-giving is seen as part of the local custom. The understanding of 'custom' (*fomba*) not only embraces specific traditions such as ceremonies, but also a common pattern of behavior or activities, e.g. 'doing agriculture'. *Fomba* are mostly seen as something one should or must follow (cf. Middleton 1999b). Consequently, during interviews people often declared *fomba* as (more or less) equivalent with a *lily* (rule, command). The current funeral ceremonies in general were perceived by most interviewees as still being the ancestral custom (*fomban-draza*), while bringing many presents or giving a party with a music band was mostly declared as being a 'new custom' or even 'new rule'.

Interviewees described customs and rules as things that easily transform over time, become 'forgotten' or 'out of fashion'. In the same way, it was often argued that the custom of organizing funeral parties and bringing many gifts was 'copied' from a neighboring ethnic group or 'just invented by us'. The question if, among the Tanalana, such a 'new custom' or custom's adaptation had to be somehow morally permitted by the Tanalana clan's or lineage's moral authority<sup>55</sup> (*mpitan-kazomanga*), was denied.

The transformed ancestor-related or new custom then becomes the 'right thing to do'. Accordingly, only very few older interviewees displayed another mental model arguing that the today's gift-giving and funeral parties are not the traditional custom and thus not the correct way<sup>56</sup> (see Figure 2 - Ideology). Younger people were often not even aware that the funeral parties and the importance of gift-giving are a quite recent phenomenon. On interviewing 19 persons of an age between 15 and 25, it turned out that most of them had nearly no knowledge of funeral customs in the past and eventual changes.

Besides having to follow a custom or rule, attending the funeral of a relative is a moral duty and not doing it entrains moral blame (*hakeo*). Bringing a gift is also considered a must as it shows respect towards the death, but more importantly today presents a social obligation which

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<sup>55</sup> Among the mere Mahafaly-people, such an authority does not exist.

<sup>56</sup> However, many elders stated to feel some kind of amazement about the changes: "[...] the today's customs are amazing for us." [30:37, female, age: around 70].

derives from the duty and aim to maintain the so-called *filongoa* (or *fiHAVANANA*). This crucial value in Malagasy social life (see Figure 2 - Ideology) embraces meanings of kinship, reciprocity, solidarity, and social harmony and has to be especially carefully kept towards one's group of *longo*, that is, all relatives and friends. The different degrees and characteristics of *filongoa* translate into customs with specific rules defining which kind of gift is considered appropriate (cf. Cole & Middleton 2001, Fee 2000). Gift-giving is also a sign of economic solidarity with the bereaved who face the burden of organizing a party. However, once the rule is fulfilled, additional gift-giving was said to not further positively influence the relationship between gift-giver and receiver and not perceived as a sign of generosity and solidarity. Giving more than the expected value was mainly declared as being only driven by the aim to get fame (*laza*), pride (*rehareha*), and honor (*voninahitse*). In the contemporary local understanding, these concepts are directly and necessarily related to economic means (see Figure 2 - Ideology):

“Here, honor is the same as pride and this is related to wealth. [...No,] having an important job or being educated cannot mean pride if you are not rich, that's nonsense.” [4:141, female, age: 50]

On the other side of displaying wealth by one's high ability to give, revealing poverty, as in the case of not being economically able to bring the expected gift, is per se shameful. Shame (*henatse*) related to poverty is an important aspect of social life and often intertwined with gossip and public humiliation. Without presenting a contradiction, personal poorness was interpreted as being a consequence of laziness or another kind of personal behavior, but also 'bad luck', 'destiny', or 'God's will' (cf. Delcroix & Fauroux 1994, Middleton 2009). During interviews, laziness or 'unwillingness to at least try' was the most often commented negatively connoted personal character (cf. Feeley-Harnik 1984).

#### 4.4.3.4. Institutions and their interpretation

Gift-giving obligations are most sharply defined by rules for men and their fathers-in-law as the 'wife-givers' who command the highest respect. In the context of funerary condolence visits, the fathers-in-law should traditionally receive one zebu. While some interviewees insisted that it should be a big castrated (*zebu vositse*) and thus very valuable one, others declared the value of the zebu as being irrelevant. The duty of bringing a zebu to fathers-in-law is supported by the narrative that in the past and also today, the parents-in-law have the right to take their daughter back and marry her to another man if the son-in-law does not bring a zebu<sup>57</sup> (see Figure 2 -

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<sup>57</sup> Called *sitoane*, *sintonene* i *anany* or *sinintone*.

Ideology). Today, the common gift pattern is to give the father-in-law two zebus or a zebu plus quite an amount of money (see Figure 2 - Institutions).

Besides a certain personal kinship relationship, gift obligations may also exist due to an institutionalized specific invitation and rules on counter-gift-giving (see Figure 2 - Institutions). The oral invitation to the party may include a standardized expression making clear that one expects the guests to bring a zebu (*manam'bvara* [*aomby*]). Most interviewees felt that this zebu-requesting invitation is a severe social duty one is forced to fulfil even if it is economically hard. Alternatively, the expression *mitalily* is used to indicate that the guest has a free choice of gift or, according to other interviewees' perceptions, that he should bring some money. Counter-gift-giving applies to all the inviter-guest constellations wherein the current guest has in the past received a gift from the current organizer during a funeral party organized by him. In this case, the traditional social norm of reciprocal gift-giving (*kivaleo*) demands that the counter-gift should be of the same type (money, goat, sheep, or zebu) and of same or higher monetary value, or respective age class of animal.

Despite the existence of numerous customs or rules on gift-giving, many interviewees perceived gift-giving as a voluntary act or at least the choice of the gift as a free decision. Particularly, opinions on the zebu-gift from son-in-law to father-in-law differed substantially: Half of the interviewees saw giving a (castrated) zebu to the father-in-law as an obligation. Within this group, views were divided as to whether every gift beyond the first zebu is 'just on top' or if 'at least one (castrated) zebu plus extras' in form of livestock, money, or items represents the new obligation. Other interviewees insisted that a (castrated) zebu is the common gift, albeit a voluntary one and also not a requisite for being accepted as a good son-in-law. Some people even resisted the idea of tying rules to an obligation:

*"Lily (rules) and fomba (customs) are the same [...and] you are not obliged to do the fomba."* [190:38, male, age: 38]

The indispensability of rules was also called into question and many interviewees insisted on an economic exit-option and abrogated duty conditional to poor economic conditions of the gift-giver (see Figure 2 - Institutions). This was not only explained by empathic comprehension of the gift-giver's situation, but as being an elementary part of the rule:

*"The castrated zebu is the rule, but it's also the rule that people don't bring it if they can't afford it."* [203:13, female, age: around 30]

Similarly, also the rule of reciprocal gift-giving was perceived by some interviewees as applying only if the economic situation of the guest allows for it. The economically induced exit-option of many customs however comes with a duty to 'rectify' or make up for the custom's fulfilment once the economic situation allows for it. Thus, a man in economic trouble may opt to not bestow a zebu on his father-in-law on the date of the funeral party (or., e.g., a wedding), but hand it in later.

### 4.4.3.5. Changes in distributional effects and relative prices

The perceived 'livestock crisis' and ongoing market integration have caused a shift in relative prices of livestock versus money and consumer stuff, with relative prices for bringing a livestock-gift having increased (see Figure 2 - Relative Prices). Loaning money or gift animals from somebody in the village is very common but becoming increasingly difficult due to a lack of willing loaners. Typical activities to afford the needed gift-animals are paid cowboy work, paid field work and the production of charcoal for sale. As an illustration of these relative prices, a 2-3 year old zebu (200,000-350,000 MGA<sup>58</sup>) corresponds to the salary of one year of cowboy work, while the cost of a goat of 20,000 MGA<sup>59</sup> may be earned in 20 days of salaried field work (SuLaMa 2011) or around 48 days of charcoal making (Neudert et al. 2013).

Regarding the distribution of the gifts on an individual level, livestock is without saying directed towards the male organizers and commodities are exclusively for their wives, while money is meant to be shared between the couple.

Although Middleton states that people in South-West Madagascar could generate wealth by "careful management of their mortuary exchanges" (Middleton 1999c:233), the recent funerary gift-giving in the study region has high and most importantly unforeseeable distributional effects for both gift-donors as well as gift-receivers (see Figure 2 - Distributional Effects). A party organizer may be directly impoverished if the gifts do not suffice to cover his expenses. However, purposefully matching the expenditures or even calculating the generation of a surplus by higher gift-incomes than funeral expenses versus gift-incomes on the side of party organizers in order to generate a surplus is tricky as gift-incomes can only be roughly estimated. Most interviewees anyway struggled with the idea of such purposeful acting instead of 'just doing what has to be done'.

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<sup>58</sup> 51 - 90 US\$

<sup>59</sup> 5.1 US\$



Furthermore, even if a funeral organizer may in the short run gain wealth by organizing the party, the corresponding counter-gift-giving still present an economic risk: Most people are not wealthy enough to foresee that they will be able to 'pay' the received gifts 'back'. Depending on when deaths occur in the families of the current gift-givers, it may take many years till all duties arising from the present party are fulfilled. At the same time, people's livestock capital varies greatly over the years as animals are frequently sold to obtain cash, die or give birth. This risk on the side of the organizers has increased over time as the value of gifts received has risen, both in terms of value per guest group as well as per party.

On the side of the guests, in general, fulfilling the rising gift duties can become a big economic challenge, especially for couples with a broad web of kin and thus the risk of getting many party invitations per year. The accumulated duty and overall frequency of counter-gift-giving has increased over time as today one is more often invited to parties by people with whom one has no close relationship. For example, one interviewee had to attend seven parties in the 2012 season, each implying one zebu as a counter-gift. In a nutshell, gift-giving in terms of negative reciprocity (Sahlins 1965) is merely impossible and maximizing one's own economic interest is a very risky game.

On the broader societal level, although the custom of counter gift-giving entrains a certain never-ending circulation of goods in the form of livestock, a big share of the capital is in several ways 'lost' through consumption or shifting out of the region: Part of the money and livestock-gifts are transformed into goats served as food during the party. This is however not a new situation, as formerly all given livestock including zebras were directly slaughtered. Another big share of these gifts is used to pay off the drinks bought in town and the services of the regional, but also non-regional music bands.

### 4.4.3.6. Individual behavior

The gift-giving system, and especially its rules on counter gift-giving, entrains that at the party, the attention of most guests is often very much focused on the gift-giving, while the person to be mourned moves into the background:

"The grandchildren [descendants of the death] regard the dead person. But all other guests look at those who invited them, as they will get the gift back in future when there is a problem [funeral] with them." [188:37, female, age: 40]

As a further illustration, interviewed party spectators and guests did sometimes not know the name or who the bereaved was, but only who had organized the party. The importance of

economic considerations and specifically those of counter-gift-giving on individual behavior is also mirrored on the side of potential party organizers: In the few reported cases where the bereaved opted for not organizing a party, the main reason was fear of economic difficulties due to long-run counter-gift-giving.

The previous example, though, also shows that besides all common patterns and the underlying customs and rules, the gift-giving behavior is to a differing degree also individualized and then highly shaped by personal strategies and preferences, or personal pro-social norms. This is demonstrated by the fact that although a zebu and in the best case a relatively old castrated one (up to 1,200,000 MGA<sup>60</sup> on local markets) is the most appropriate and therefore theoretically most typical gift, at the observed funerals also very young zebras of low market value (15,000 - 50,000 MGA<sup>61</sup>) as well as goats and sheep of different sizes (5,000 - 130,000 MGA<sup>62</sup>) and other items were given away. Accordingly, while some interviewed people said to try everything possible to get the required zebu by loaning or selling their belongings, others declared to 'just bring what I can find at the moment' – may it be an animal, some fabric or money. Sometimes people even opted to avoid the expenditure by not attending the funeral at all (see Figure 2 - Individual Behavior).

These 'objectors' who do not follow a strategy of taking part in the competition nor of fulfilling the new gift-duties cannot be classified by parameters such as economic prosperity, age, or religion (traditional versus Christian belief). Here, the personal degree of sensibility towards public rumors and thus level of social conformity matters – against the background of diverging interpretations on the indispensability to fulfil the social obligations. Further personal strategies center on the parents' wish to use the funeral party for providing their daughters with some economic security, as these are by tradition excluded from all livestock inheritance and thus most capital. Therefore, men give their sons-in-law not only animals, but also much money and commodities meant to be for their daughters.

The gift-giving system also leaves room for individual decision-making on the side of the organizers. For example, some organizers use the liberty that it is up to them to decide which gift-entraining invitation they give to whom to deliberately give free-choice-invitations to poor guests. By contrast, other organizers invite even poor friends in the common zebu-demanding way. Organizers sometimes also opt to invite their poor son-in-law in the zebu-demanding way.

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<sup>60</sup> 310 US\$

<sup>61</sup> 3.85 - 13 US\$

<sup>62</sup> 1.3 - 33.5 US\$

#### Chapter 4: Funerary gift-giving

as tradition demands, but before the party they hand over a zebu to him in private so that he can publicly give this away during the party and so save his face.

Disregard the motivations of an individual to spend a lot on gifts or party organization, on the societal level, the accumulated behavior entrains a positive feed back loop on the relative price of getting fame or avoiding shame: The more 'giving a lot' becomes normal, the more is needed to invest to avoid shame or even gain fame. It also feeds back in a negative form on the social value attached on the traditional gift of a zebu, making it just the gift 'basis' which has to be complemented by additional gifts.

## Chapter 4: Funerary gift-giving

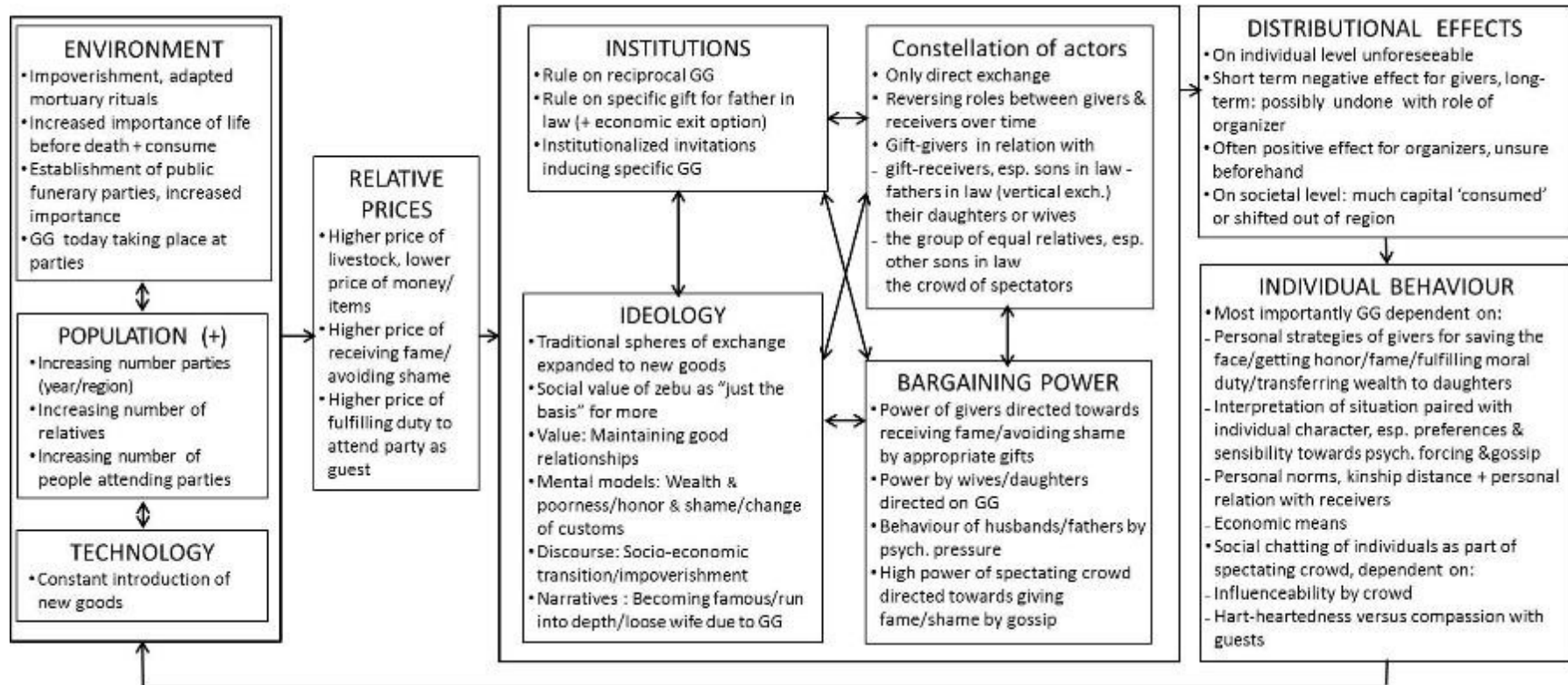


Figure 11: Changes in funerary gift-giving (GG) and their interplay among people in the study region

#### 4.5. Discussion

In the previous chapter, I described the contemporary system of funerary gift-giving in the study region, its dynamics of the last 15 years, and its socio-economic, cultural and ideological context. In the following section, I will discuss some analogies and many differences to gift-giving findings from theory and from other developing regions, especially in Madagascar.

In Madagascar, first of all, the main determinant of ritual-related behavior such as funerary gift-giving is mostly said to be a fear of ancestral wrath, misfortune and moral blame from the ancestors, entraining shame and losing face (Bloch 2010, Burgess 1932, Cole & Middleton 2001, Fee 2000, Graeber 2007). This fear and the underlying logic are however not of relevance in the present case. Contrastingly, the current gift-giving in the study region is mainly driven by the fear of public gossip and social humiliation ruining one's societal standing. The contemporary funerals and gift-giving do not classify into "exchange of services between the community of the living and that of the dead" (Hertz 1960:61), but present a transformation of wealth into the maintenance or increase of social status similar to Mauss' 'struggle of wealth' (Mauss 1923), whereas other Malagasy rituals can be described as the "transformation of wealth into sanctity" (Lambek 2008:148).

Concerning the status and flexibility of customs and the attached ritualized behavior, Malagasy people are mostly said to present a quite uniform behavior. They would be nearly blindly driven by the aim of avoiding moral blame and receiving ancestral blessing by 'fulfilling the custom', but having no "idea why they act in the way they do" (Astuti & Bloch 2013:109). In the present case, in turn, 'fulfilling the customs' is indeed important, but at the same time people's understanding of the nature of customs allow that non-custom-conform, 'new' behavior easily 'becomes the new custom' when massively observed. Strong references to social continuity or an old custom as reasons to socially sanction the new one (cf. Hobsbawm 1983) are only of minor relevance here.

Consistent with the described flexibility of customs, the case study shows that while new behaviors of gift-giving have become institutionalized, there is still room for personal decision-making and reflection. Even in this highly ceremonial environment of a funeral, people's behavior is individual and largely shaped by varying personal aspirations, preferences, choices, and calculations – a fact also stated in gift-giving theory (Befu 1977). This individual behavior is sustained by the nature of the relevant traditional rules which per se include several options of behavior according to a person's economic situation.

Studies for Madagascar in general or from other regions define Malagasy societies as leveling and collectivist, with people always intending to not perform better than the rest for fear of causing envy, “the archetypical Malagasy vice” (Graeber 2007:212, also see Fee 2000, Hoerner 1990, Rasamoelina 2006). In contrast, the very few other studies from the South-West of Madagascar describe a similar public competition for societal standing and ostentation (Astuti 1994, Middleton 1988, 2009). However, the case also shows some interesting differences to the descriptions of gift-giving among the Karimbola-Mahafaly-people in the 1980s (Middleton 1988). There, the gift-givers tried to gain social esteem at the expense of the gift-receivers or other gift-givers from the same group of affines. While in today’s regional language, *mpirahamba* and *mpiravetro* are synonyms for the groups of affines, Middleton (1988) describes *mpirahamba* and *mpiravetro* as two groups differing in the character of competitive gift-giving: While *mpiravetro*-relationships were characterized by unrestrained hostility, the people of *mpirahamba* were fighting “rank within a bounded system” wherein “questions of honor [were] conducted in predetermined codes” (Middleton 1988:134,135).

Furthermore, today humiliation does not mostly take place within these rivaling groups, but it is the spectators as a rather undefined group humiliating individual gift-bringers. Also, while Cole & Middleton (2001:27) found funerals among the Mahafaly-Karembola to be “times when people ‘command’ (*mandily*) one another, when people must submit, times when bonds between people are broken or restored”, results show that today, these commanded gift-duties and the relationship between gift-giver and -receiver mostly play a minor role in people’s decision which gift to bring, compared to the factor of public pressure. Analogously, the organizers’ daughters and their reaction to the public pressure have started to play a crucial role in gift-giving, whereas in the 1980s they did not have a stake at all (Middleton 1988).

In a nutshell, the contemporary gift-giving in the study region is agonistic on a very personal level, but people do not behave in a ritualized aggressive way or within very fixed roles and ritual relationships. This personalization in agonism may correspond to the described socio-cultural shift towards more individualism and a higher value of present social and economic life in comparison to life after death.

For developing countries in general, gift-giving is shaped by discussions on its socio-economic rationale. Gift-giving systems are often claimed to provide household security and disaster relief for those most in need (Baird & Gray 2014, Platteau 2006). Individuals dealing with economic difficulties can claim assistance from their kinship network in a way of “sharing without reckoning” (Fortes (1969) cited in Di Falco & Bulte (2011:1129). Since Evans-Pritchard’s

descriptions of circulation of livestock among the Nuer (Evans-Pritchard 1940), this pro-social argumentation is particularly dominant for pastoral societies (e.g., Niamir-Fuller & Turner 1999). However, rather recent studies have also found that the underlying socio-economic and ideological idea of such transfer systems is often not – or not anymore – reflected in the actual behavior of the participants (e.g., Bollig 1998, Moritz 2013). Correspondingly, also in the study area the gift-giving – though it has a traditional ideological meaning of solidarity with the ones in need – de facto entails an economic burden and heavy risk for the bereaved.

Furthermore, all gift-transfers are typically reckoned in several ways by all involved individuals and groups, thus ‘sharing without reckoning’ is an exception. Most importantly, the gift-giving is heavily shaped by the widespread rule of counter-gift-giving (cf. Bourdieu 1990, Mauss 1923) which not only translates into a relationship of debt between gift donor and receiver, but on the level of the accumulated gift-giving duty of a person can mean a heavy economic burden and risk. The gift-giving system is thus the opposite of the often-described traditional ‘social security economies’. Also, the gift-capital mostly not only ‘circulates’ between different regional actors but is in diverse ways consumed or shifted out of the region.

Concerning the robustness of such originally pro-social traditional institutions, many gift-giving systems around the world have been found to erode in line with development and market integration (Platteau 2006). This is especially true for gift-giving with a rationale of social justice, leveling, and solidarity. Here, it is often the younger generations which are less generous and in this way change the tradition step-by-step (e.g. Ensminger 1992). The presented case portrays a different development (cf. Middleton 1999) as the younger people, namely the younger women, are a main driver of the dynamics of giving more and more precious gifts away, however with a rationale of boasting instead of solidarity.

Scholars looking explicitly at Africa have found that such originally pro-social institutions only persist if they can be adapted and instrumentalized by those with power so as to gain their own economic advantage (cf. Ensminger 1992, Haller 2002a). In the presented case, however, it is impossible to explain the general development of more and more competition and growing gifts just by the bargaining behavior of specific actors, for example the younger women or the rich ones who are able to boast without economic difficulty. Without the approval and stimulation by the judging masses, the innovative behavior could not have become the ‘new custom’. At the same time, these masses are – if directly asked about it – very aware that this development has brought additional economic and social risk to them. The case study again demonstrates how

the aggregated changes in individual people's behavior work as 'clusters of self-fulfilling expectations' (Schelling 1966) which institutionalize themselves.

The dynamics of increasing societal competition and boasting resembles observations made by Nicolas (1968) for the 1950s and 1960s in several parts of Africa. He found that gift-giving had been becoming "increasingly subject to agonistic and ostentatious considerations, less and less governed by the principle of reciprocity, and where the purely quantitative monetary value of the offered wealth is increasingly replacing its symbolic value" (Nicolas 1968:241, own translation). Similarly, for Melanesia, Gregory (1989:117) described an "efflorescence of gift-exchange" induced by colonialization, with the character of "a transition of fighting with weapons to fighting with gifts" which are "the results of obligations imposed on people struggling to achieve status and wealth."

The description of such an agonistic gift-giving behavior with bargaining for fame, pride and status demonstrates that agonistic gift-giving systems are today not only as rare as often assumed (cf. Godelier 2004) but also show opposite, or at least different, dynamics than non-agonistic ones. Though, the presented case also demonstrates some dissimilarities to many well-known agonistic systems of the past. Regarding its relatively low degree of hostility and aggressiveness, for example, the case shows crucial differences with the very agonistic famous former gift-giving rituals of potlatch on the North American North-West coast and the Kula-ring in Papua New Guinea (Rosman & Rubel 1971, Sahlins 1965). Furthermore, the case study demonstrates that gift-giving does not, as often stated, only or mostly prevail or even flourish in societies or groups with very strong patron-client relationships and systems of vertical exchange, e.g. the well-known big men-societies described by Sahlins (1963).

Regarding gift-giving theory, the case study reveals that some main elements of classical theory as well as modern approaches may be of less relevance in practice, while others may get too little attention. For illustration, theory centers on the personal relationship between donor and recipient – the classical theory mostly with a focus on reciprocity and gift-giving as a 'debt economy' (Mauss 1923, Bourdieu 1990). In the case study, reciprocity is indeed one of the ideological foundations and the analysis has revealed the importance of deeply analyzing the relationship between donor and recipient. However, the described dynamics in the gift-giving system as a whole mostly take place outside of this relationship. The spectating crowd as representative of the local society is an important actor outside the typical two-sided-relationship. This suggests, paired with the described high individualization in gift-giving behavior, that the importance of kinship classically defining 'who gives what to whom' may be



overemphasized – at least when it comes to modern agonistic systems. Consequently, focusing the analysis of institutions on those related to reciprocity and kinship relations may be misleading.

Also personal norms and social norms of a more general societal level must be considered. For case study analysis, it is therefore helpful to combine gift-giving theory with further approaches. In the present case, the chosen economic-anthropological framework on institutional change (Ensminger 1992) made it possible to open up the focus of gift-giving theory on donor-recipient relations towards structures both on the higher societal, but also on the more individual level. It also facilitated embedding the gift-giving act itself into the comprehensive cultural and socio-economic picture of the actual system, its traditional foundation, and the in-between parameters of change which are not represented in classical gift-giving theory.

### **4.6. Conclusion**

The case study of contemporary funerary gift-giving and attached ceremonies in a rural region in South-West Madagascar demonstrates how a long-standing gift-giving system in a rather traditional society of the developing world changes continuously and is influenced by individualization, consumerism, market integration, and changes of ideological values attached to life and death. Social pressure, mostly created by gift-giving directly translating into societal ‘fame or shame’, paired with the accumulated gossip of people not directly involved, levers out the explicit traditional rules on gift-giving with their pro-social economic-exit options. Reverse to the originally underlying rationale of economic solidarity with the bereaved, gift-giving today presents a societal and economic threat to all involved actors. The case allows new insights to our common understanding of gift-giving systems and customs and opposed some former writings. It presents a 21<sup>st</sup> century example of an individualized and agonistic gift-giving system which is not declining but rather is on the rise in terms of societal and socio-economic importance.

**Chapter 5: Development, informal institutions and agency analyzed through the lens of New Institutional Anthropology: A modification of Ensminger's framework on institutional change**

This chapter has previously been published as:

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"Development, Informal Institutions and Agency Analyzed through the Lens of New Institutional Anthropology: A Modification of Ensminger's Framework on Institutional Change"  
*Journal of Contextual Economics* no. 137:69-92.

The chapter includes a reprint of the published version, with minor corrections in grammar and spelling, adapted cross-references to match the format of the thesis, as well as some additional information presented in footnotes.

### **Abstract**

In development research, much effort has gone into analyzing the impact of economic and political institutions and their adequate design. However, unforeseen factors such as the impact of the cumulative behavior of individuals as shaped by informal institutions – especially social norms and moral values – may also determine the pace and path of development. Thus, positive economic, social or political triggers may only then translate into development if the relevant actors adapt their strategies and actions appropriately. Similarly, while negative triggers may induce a deterioration of the socio-economic situation if no adaptation or a mal-adaptation takes place, in another real-world setting with a different set of institutions and actors it may in turn be possible to preserve the status quo. Sound analytical frameworks are needed to gain a deeper understanding of the complex and dynamic interaction of factors leading to a case-specific outcome and history of change. These frameworks have to be specific enough to allow the interpretation of complex changes and dynamics and at the same time general enough to fully cover a broad range of diverse settings and all important but possibly unforeseen aspects. In this paper, I present a modified version of the Framework for Modeling Institutional Change developed by Jean Ensminger (1992).

Accounting for the relationships and dynamics of incentives, formal and informal institutions, bargaining power and the constellation of actors, Ensminger's framework, which is rooted in the theoretical approach of New Institutional Anthropology, merges important aspects from New Institutional Economics and anthropology. However, it fails to leave room for agency which, as the paper illustrates, has been shown to play an often important role in development. The modified version of Ensminger's framework incorporates agency as a main factor. For the purpose of demonstration, it is applied to a case study on informal constraints to cope with cattle rustling in Madagascar. The paper illustrates the modified framework's analytical strength for a meticulous investigation of a wide range of empirical cases and discusses to which development-related cases and research interests it fits best.

### **5.1. Introduction**

It has long been acknowledged that processes of development are dependent not only on economic and political institutions, but also on informal institutions (e.g., Weber 1904). Most institutionalists understand informal institutions as shared ideas and mental models, social norms, moral values, and habits and routines. Often subsumed under the label of 'culture' (North 1994, Sjöstrand 1993), informal institutions are even said to make "almost all the difference" in economic development (Landes 2000:2).

The current research on informal institutions and development faces two big methodological and theoretical challenges: First, the numerous complementary approaches are perceived as being all too simplistic, formulaic, linear and static (Chang 2011, Sen 2004). They thus fail to deal with the multiple, complex and non-causal connections between informal and formal institutions as well as additional factors such as incentive structures on individual behavior, shaped by the structural and historical setting (Yousfi 2011, De Soysa & Jütting 2007a). Development outcomes thus depend on this mixture and are difficult to foresee or transfer to other settings. Second, the development discourse has recently moved towards a “greater acknowledgement of relational interdependence between social context and the contributions of individuals to social and cultural transformation” (Yousfi 2011:28). Thus, the challenge is how to consider the impact of individual agency on institutional change and cultural continuity (Yousfi 2011), while at the same time taking into account the heterogeneity in each culture (Yousfi 2011, Sen 2004). These challenges illustrate the need for a sound theoretical framework which allows for a thorough analysis of qualitative data and cases guided by theory.

Today, a broad range of frameworks for institutional analysis with different foci and from diverse disciplines exists. Among those best known are the ‘Institutional Analysis and Development’ and ‘Social-Ecological Systems’ frameworks elaborated by Ostrom and colleagues (e.g. Ostrom 1990, 2009), the ‘Institutions of Sustainability’ framework by Hagedorn, Arzt & Peters (2002), the ‘Framework for Institutions and Development’ by De Soysa & Jütting (2007a), or the actor-centered framework by Mayntz & Scharpf (1995). Given the right setting and focus (e.g., natural resource use, collective action), these are very useful for analyzing a given situation. However, these frameworks are not suitable for most issues beyond static settings which deal with institutions and processes of change, e.g., development and contra-development or fallbacks (e.g., due to war, social insecurity, market clashes, and maladaptation). Although there are a number of ‘dynamic frameworks’, most of them are designed for rather specific sceneries (e.g. De Moor (2008) for corporate collective action, Sterns & Reardon (2002) for agrifood systems, Thiel (2014) for eco-institutional settings).

An exception which addresses the role of informal institutions in a broad range of dynamics and pattern of changes is the relatively unknown Framework for Modeling Institutional Change by Jean Ensminger (1992). This framework and her corresponding theoretical *New Institutional Anthropology* approach merge the perspectives and strengths of two disciplines, *New Institutional Economics*<sup>63</sup> and anthropology. One of the strengths of the framework is its

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<sup>63</sup> More precisely, I would classify it as being rooted in *Contemporary Classical Institutional Economics*, which is often labeled as being part of *New Institutional Economics*.

‘unpacking of the box’ of the internal dynamics of institutional change, that is, the linkages between institutions, individual action, bargaining power and ideology (Haller 2010). Nevertheless, also this framework fails to explicitly consider agency as a crucial factor.

Thus, the main goal of the present paper is to introduce a modified version of the framework that takes into account collective or individual agency as a factor of change. Some additional aspects based on incoherencies noted by myself and other scholars are also discussed. To illustrate the framework’s general functioning and how the adjustments feed in, I apply the modified version to a case study on cattle rustling in Madagascar. Cattle rustling is a serious security problem affecting pastoral development in many African regions (e.g., Bollig 2006, Schilling, Opiyo & Scheffran 2012). I analyze how the pastoralists’ coping capacities are positively and negatively determined by the interplay of informal institutions, agency and other factors.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 gives a short summary of the views on development taken by the academic disciplines, especially by New Institutional Economics (NIE) and anthropology as the theoretical background to the approach of New Institutional Anthropology (NIA) and the presented framework on institutional change by Ensminger (1992). NIA, the original framework and the suggestions for modification are presented in Section 3. This is followed by the application of the framework to the case study on cattle rustling (Section 4). The last section discusses the suitability of the modified framework as a tool for analyzing different kinds of change related to development and social institutions.

## **5.2. Institutional perspectives on development from different disciplines**

Informal institutions have become more important in development studies since development is seen beyond the classical terms of economic growth and poverty alleviation. Development is today perceived as a process leading to enhanced well-being of people (Platteau & Peccoud 2011), determined by factors such as the individual’s adaptation capacity (Cannon & Müller-Mahn 2010, Sherman et al. 2016), or economic actors’ capability to participate in economic life (Feldman et al. 2016, Sen 2003). Here, development thinking focuses on the aim to “help the ‘poor’ produce a cultural consensus that best advances their own collective long-term interests in matters of wealth, equality and dignity” (Yousfi 2011:29) – in other words, informal institutions that enhance people’s capabilities for individual agency and adaptation.

Additionally, informal institutions gain importance when studying the many rural regions of the developing world that are “at the margins” where development happens per se “under-the-radar, and outside the influence and control of aid interventions or state policies” (Catley, Lind & Scoones 2013:8). This may not only be due to a weak presence of the state. In some rural

regions, small-scale societies have developed the 'art of not being governed' (Scott 2009) and social life is managed solely through local institutions. Development can then be understood as processes driven by local people reacting to chances such as new technologies or market opportunities, but also to threats, e.g., climate change or security problems. Thus, assessing whether a particular institutional environment is complementary to development or works against it and how that environment changes requires an understanding of how individual behavior is guided by social and moral norms, obligations and conventions, as well as actor networks (De Soysa & Jütting 2007b).

However, development policy has long focused on the field of designed change of formal institutions (Yousfi 2011), as has the research. As De Soysa & Jütting (2007a:30) note, informal institutions "often relate to dimensions of a society's culture that economists and other social scientists prefer to avoid." As a consequence, all disciplines have consistently failed to take informal institutions appropriately into account or at least for some decades lost sight of them. In contrast to many other disciplines, anthropology has a long history of dealing extensively with informal institutions, also in the context of developing countries. Although 'informal institutions' is not a common concept in theoretical or empirical anthropological work, the discipline has had an enduring interest in informal institutions, labeling them with terms such as 'culture', 'customs', 'traditions', 'rituals', 'beliefs', 'values' or 'narratives'. The three latter ones can be subsumed under the term 'ideology'.

This field is of course not solely treated in anthropology. Also the institutional economics gives much attention to ideology in terms of shared ideas, concepts, or 'mental models' about the world (e.g. Denzau & North 1994, North 1981). Due to these conceptual overlaps, the rich anthropological writings on ideology provide important insights from which other disciplines such as institutional economics benefit. However, anthropology has largely abandoned the informal institutions issue when addressing contemporary societies and their development. Referring to Africa, Meagher (2007:407) argues that the "ethnographic and historical strengths of the informal institutional literature of the 1960s and 1970s seems to have been lost in the 'shadows'" and is only slowly on the rise again.

For New Institutional Economics (NIE), prominent scholar Douglas North (1990) already underlined the importance of the interplay between formal and informal institutions back in the 1990s. However, institutional economics has been blamed for not giving enough weight to understanding the role of informal institutions in shaping people's choices (Acheson 1994, Douglas 1986, Eggertsson 2013, Granovetter 1985). Williamson (2000:596) acknowledged that the underlying set of informal institutions shaping economic activities ('embeddedness') is

“taken as given by most institutional economists” but not further analyzed. This ‘blind spot’ for informal institutions has diminished somewhat over time (e.g. North 2005), but most studies still deal exclusively with the role of formal institutions such as formal law and especially property rights (for prominent examples see Acemoglu, Johnson & Robinson 2005, De Soto 2000).

NIE’s great merit is that it integrates perspectives from economic, historical and cultural analysis, being “aware of the importance of history, culture, tradition and other so-called ‘path dependent’ factors in shaping economic behavior” (Yousfi 2011:33). Among the core interests of NIE are the generation of institutions through the behavior of individuals, and how these institutions influence economic productivity and exchange. Especially with regard to the seminal work of Douglas North (1990), anthropological scholars such as Mary Douglas (2004:98-99) acknowledge that it “reconcile[s] anthropological observations about culture with economics” in the frame of rational choice theory and “starting from problems of coordination that beset poor economies.” Anthropologists Ensminger & Rutten (1991:684) see the strength of NIE in having abandoned “many of the assumptions that have bothered anthropologists: costless transacting, perfect rationality and information, and narrow economic self-interest [... and] emphasizing the significance of institutions and ideology.”

Regarding the contribution to development research by NIE’s specific perspective, there are some notable changes. For some decades after its emergence, the topics discussed mainly resembled the typical themes of Old Institutional Economics, i.e. political and economic institutions in industrialized societies (Acheson 1994). Issues of the developing world were handled from an institutionalist’s perspective starting with the work of Robert Bates (1976, 1981, 1989) on the role of political institutions in development in Africa. Institutional economists then put a lot of emphasis on the analysis of institutions and development from the viewpoint of transaction costs. It was argued that efficient institutions are those that reduce transaction costs and by doing so have a positive impact on market activity and thus economic development. It also puts a strong focus on property rights, thus sharing common ground with development research. Property rights is also the first concept from institutional economics incorporated into anthropological work (Acheson 1994). However, some development researchers argue that the strong focus on property rights is misleading (Yousfi 2011).

Furthermore, NIE has focused mainly on market exchanges and ignored forms of non-market exchange such as gift-giving (Acheson 1994) which in developing countries plays an important role in economic and social security (Dercon 2002, Dobuzinskis 2003). Many institutional economists also still focus heavily on development through the formalization of rules, and take

as given the superiority of modern, entrepreneurial societies of 'open social order', formal law and impersonal relations towards 'traditional' societies marked by 'limited-access social order' based on personal relationships (North, Wallis & Weingast 2006). This view is very similar to the former modernization theory whose shortcomings are well-known (Douglas 2004, Yousfi 2011). NIE has also often been criticized for lacking a coherent understanding of the role of changes in relative prices in institutional change. As Bardhan (1989:1391) points out, these changes "may at most change the costs and benefits of collective action for different classes [...] but cannot predetermine the balance of class forces or the outcome of social conflicts."

Some of the main points of criticism raised against institutional perspectives on development apply not only to NIE, but also to other disciplines such as anthropology, especially those relating to the 'appropriateness' of institutions, the assumed static character of culture, and the 'blind spot' concerning agency: Development research often put a lot of weight on defining the 'appropriateness' or 'inappropriateness' of institutions for development (e.g. Lund 2006, Platteau & Peccoud 2011, Ruttan & Hayami 1984). This is often perceived as an excessive "searching for the Holy Grail of *good* institutions" (De Soysa & Jütting 2007a:41, italics in original). Some anthropologists complain that their discipline is stuck in the "dilemma" (Acre & Long 2000:1) of observing non-western cultures through a lens of western rationality and a one-sided commitment to progress and modernity (Comaroff & Comaroff 1993). Other ethnographic approaches, on the other hand, often completely neglect this issue. As Edgerton (2000:130) argues, even the most bizarre, inefficient or harmful traditional belief or practice is treated by most anthropologists as still having an important value and being positively adaptive "once it is understood."

Culture has in most disciplines wrongly been handled as a stable system that changes only in reaction to external triggers, e.g., in institutional economics due to changing costs and prices (North 1994). Institutional economists largely see culture or informal institutions as "communities of common ideologies and a common set of rules that all believe in" (North 1987:421). Similarly, anthropologists are criticized for having worked with a concept of society "as a thing" instead of "as a context of actions and results of actions" of individuals (Barth 1992:31). Society and culture are today widely acknowledged to be "dynamic and interactive" (Sen 2004:55) and "reproduced and transformed not through social determinism but in a constant interaction between the individual's actions and the social world, as meanings are negotiated and as these meanings change through individuals" (Yousfi 2011:28, Giddens 1984). On the contrary, ethnographic perspectives often ignore the heterogeneity and interdependency of institutions and interests within a society and thus the naturalness of dissent



and power plays among its members (Acre & Long 2000, Appadurai 2004). Also, New Institutional Economists often treat “social processes as aggregates of individual behavior, [...] imply[ing] that groups in civil society act collectively, whether or not they are formally organized, in single-minded pursuit of shared goals” (Berry 1997:1228). This leaves no space for differences in individual perceptions and enactments of informal institutions in the same society or individual agency.

Agency and agents who think about and aspire to things in the future and their “wants, preferences, choices, and calculations” [...] have been largely invisible in the study of culture,” although culture should be seen as “a dialogue between aspirations and sedimented traditions” (Appadurai 2004:67, 84). Peoples’ aspirations and ways of thinking are framed by their perception of the situation, their ideas, mental models, interests, personal relations, and networks and the distribution of resources and power. As a consequence, institutional change not only involves a change in institutions, but necessarily goes hand in hand with modifications in norms, interests, and power plays (Campbell 2004, Nee & Swedberg 2008). Theoretical approaches should thus “allow for the elucidation of actors’ interpretations and strategies, and of how these interlock through processes of negotiation and accommodation” (Long & Long 1992:5-6). Furthermore, the concepts should give room to the fields of interest and nature and structure of networks and personal relations. To analyze development, these factors, their interplay, and the outcome of this change need to be understood, taking into account the case-specific settings.

### **5.3. New Institutional Anthropology and the framework for modeling institutional change**

New Institutional Economic Anthropology – often called simply New Institutional Anthropology – and the Framework for Modeling Institutional Change are based on anthropologist Jean Ensminger’s seminal work *Making a Market* (1992) on institutional change among the pastoral Orma people in Kenya. Her work is on the one hand rooted in the anthropological work of Fredrik Barth (1981) who investigated the relationship between individual behavior and the generation of institutions. On the other hand, Ensminger draws strongly on insights from New Institutional Economics, particularly from North (1990). Her approach departs from the point that institutions on the one hand determine economic performance and distribution, and are on the other hand changed by the action of individuals. These actions are shaped by choices and calculations in the context of changing prices, but also social incentives, goals, strategies and constraints.

In the following sections, I will give an introduction to the framework (Ensminger 1992:10) and its theoretical assumptions (also see Haller 2010) and present a suggestion as to how agency as

an additional factor of change and other improvements may feed in. Afterwards, I demonstrate the modified framework's functioning by applying it to a case study. Although Ensminger's approach and especially her view of processes such as cultural change as being caused by economic alterations was perceived as a "fresh outlook" and was expected to "have a major impact on anthropological studies of economic change" (Bollig 1994:141,144), her framework has only been used to guide a small number of case studies in developing countries all dealing with changes in property rights (see chapter 3, see Haller 2010, 2013, Landolt & Haller 2015). For the structure of its inner 'black box' (see Figure 1 and 2), however, I assume the framework to be a very valuable tool for analyzing a wide range of different settings and topics in the developing world, especially those with informal institutions such as mental models and ideology and individual actors as agents playing a major role. Thus, I apply it to the case of cattle rustling in South-West Madagascar and social constraints to a new pattern of pastoral mobility as an adaptation option.

### ***5.3.1. The original framework***

Ensminger's framework distinguishes three main elements and steps: Changes in 'external factors' trigger 'internal change' which then has 'distributive consequences' (e.g., regarding natural resources) for individuals and their 'behavior'. In the form of a feedback loop, the variation in individual behavior triggers a change in the 'external factors'. At the heart of the framework lies the unpacking of the box of 'internal change' into the elements institutions, ideology, bargaining power and organizations, and their interplay (see Figure 4, page 54).

The 'external factors' are changes in the social and physical (ecological) environment, the population and technology inducing a change in so-called relative prices. Relative prices are understood as "the value of something in relation to what one must give up for it" (Ensminger 1992:4). The concept of relative prices is the economic perspective taken in this approach (also see Demsetz 1967b, Libecap 1989, North & Thomas 1973). Ensminger emphasizes that these changes in external prices do not lead directly to a shift in the institutional setting, but only via changes in the interplay of the internal factors as triggered by the alteration of the behavior of individual actors. The behavior of all involved actors is however not based solely on strategic economic considerations, but also on (informal) institutions and what Ensminger has subsumed under the term ideology. The importance of taking ideology and bargaining power into account in historical depth has especially been pointed out for cases dealing with the distribution of natural resources (Acheson 2003, Agrawal 2001).

Following North (1990), Ensminger rather broadly defines institutions as formal rules (such as legal regulations put in place by the state or a community), informal constraints (such as social

norms), and their corresponding enforcement mechanisms (including self-imposed standards of behavior). The framework is rather meticulous in distinguishing between informal institutions and ideology. In Ensminger's view, ideology "provides the model we invoke to determine both what we 'ought' to do and 'how' we might best do it". It comprises people's values, mental models, and beliefs that "determine people's goals and shape their choices" (Ensminger 1992:5). Unlike many neo-classical economists and anthropologists, Ensminger considers not only institutions as changing. Ideology is also seen as an unstable factor that responds to triggers from 'outside' (e.g., changes in relative prices) and is in constant interplay with the other factors in the box of 'internal change'.

Ensminger defines organizations as political, economic or social bodies or "groups of individuals bound by some common purpose to achieve objectives" (cited in North 1990:5). Together with institutions, organizations "determine what power people have and what price they must pay to pursue their goals" (Ensminger 1992:4). Bargaining power is understood as "one's ability to get what one wants from others" (Ensminger 1992:7). This power may arise from social position, economic wealth, or the ability to influence the ideology of others. The bargaining behavior of individual actors is seen as being driven by their striving for material and non-material benefits, such as "power, status, and even the ability to assert one's own ideological preferences over those of others" (Ensminger & Knight 1997:5). In line with North (1990) and Knight (1992), Ensminger argues that it is not necessarily the institutions which are best for the society that survive or are created, but the ones that serve those actors who bargained for them most successfully. With this strong focus on individual bargaining, power and conflicts, the link to post-structuralist approaches (e.g. Bayart 1999, Comaroff & Comaroff 1993) becomes apparent.

### **5.3.2. Modification of the Framework**

Most suggestions for modifying the framework deal with extension or a relabeling of concepts or terms (see Figure 12): For ideology, Haller (2010) suggests including 'discourses' and 'narratives'. A discourse is here defined as an ideologically shaped "specific way of linking issues and rationalizing topics in a logical way" (Haller 2010:57), while a narrative is an explanation for a specific phenomenon. As Merten (2008) notes, Ensminger's writing on the Orma people also deals with the phenomenon of a 'modernization discourse'. Haller (2010) also observes that external changes may not only be found in the social and physical, but also in the political and economic environment.

When describing 'organizations', Ensminger claims that "we must constantly look at how an individual's current standing in the existing structure affects his or her motivations and relative bargaining power" (Ensminger 1992:12). Thus, Goetter & Neudert (2016) suggest that

‘organizations’ should be relabeled as ‘constellation of actors’, as this better takes into account the importance of the roles of individuals in the ‘organization’ (e.g., a small-scale society), for example in terms of authority for rule creation and enforcement. Furthermore, depending on the case the framework is applied to, it may be worthwhile to use a more detailed and sharper differentiation between different types of institutions instead of the one based on North (1990). For example, Goetter & Neudert (2016, see chapter 3) have opted to further distinguish between appropriation rules and provision rules (e.g. Ostrom 1990). One may also use the ‘Grammar of Institutions’ by Crawford & Ostrom (1995) which differentiates between rules, different kinds of norms, and institutionalized personal strategies.

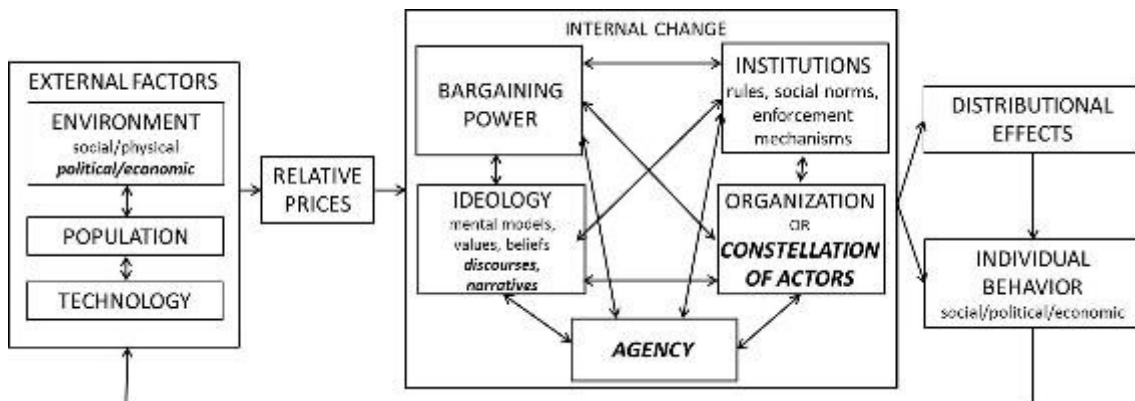


Figure 12: Modified framework by Ensminger (1992) (modifications in *italics and bold*, own ones and after Haller (2010))

On a more conceptual level, the original framework may be criticized for its handling of ‘individual behavior’ or agency: The behavior of individuals is depicted as being changed as an outcome of the internal change, directly as well as indirectly via a change in the distributional effects. Vice versa, individual behavior may induce internal changes via changes in the external factors and relative prices. However, behavior is relevant not only after the situation has undergone a change with distributive effects, but also beforehand. Although not depicted by the framework, all three factors shaping institutions (bargaining power, constellation of actors, ideology) do not have any means to influence institutions other than through the behavior of individuals. Putting an emphasis on the behavior of individuals and how this shapes change may thus contribute to a more thorough and deep analysis. This also reflects the high importance individual action is given in the NIA approach and in Ensminger and Knight’s (1997) work on bargaining for change. Thus, I suggest including ‘agency’ as a fifth factor in the box of internal change (see Figure 12).

### 5.3.3. Illustration: Coping with Cattle Rustling in South-West Madagascar

The Mahafaly Plateau region in South-West Madagascar with its subsistence agro-pastoralists is a good example of a pastoral region ‘at the margins’. Development efforts from outside have

mainly failed and the region is claimed to be a development ‘project cemetery’ (UNICEF 2011). In recent decades, several factors including climate change have led to even more severe poverty and food shortages (Hänke 2016, FAO & WFP 2014). The region consisting of the plateau itself and the neighboring coastal plain is also rather underprivileged in terms of general infrastructure, health and governmental extension services, market access, and education (Neudert et al. 2015). Informal institutions play a major role in all aspects of social life. For example, land use is mostly governed by ideologies and ancestral norms which override not only state regulations but also local community rules (see chapter 3).

In recent years, cattle rustling has become a serious problem in the Mahafaly Plateau region and in the south of Madagascar in general – so much so that it has regularly made it into international news (e.g. New York Times 2012). The attacks of often organized and heavily armed raiders have led to a decline in economic activity (Fafchamps & Minten 2006, Rakoto 2010), the death of people, and the displacement of villagers (OCHA 2012). In the Mahafaly Plateau region, a new transhumance movement of pastoralists and their herds has developed over the last 15 years in an attempt to escape the organized gangs entering the region for the purpose of raiding and leaving immediately. Fear of these gangs is high, as they are not only said to be often armed with machine guns, they are also believed to have been rendered invincible by sorcery. Stealing of animals by people from the Plateau region itself also occurs, but is less frequent and above all less violent and frightful.

In the new pattern of transhumance – a long-range, predictable seasonal movement (Behnke et al. 2011) – the herders now stay part of the year in the villages of the more secure neighboring coastal plain (Feldt & Schlecht 2015). The movement mirrors the traditional transhumance from the plain to the plateau, with shifted seasons and directions and a reversal of the roles of plateau and coastal herders acting as guests or hosts. In the traditional transhumance movement, the coastal herders and their cattle spend four to six months on the grasslands of the neighboring plateau due to a seasonal lack of fodder on the dry coastal plain.

In the following paragraphs, the case of the new transhumance movement based on interviews I conducted with herders and other villagers (Goetter 2016, see chapter 2) will be analyzed through the lens of the modified framework (see Figure 13), addressing the following questions: Which factors play a negative or positive role in the development of the new transhumance movement and what is the role of agency? How do the different factors influence each other? A crucial question is why there are herders that do not take part in the new movement although staying at home implies the risk of being robbed. Are there institutional constraints on the herders’ and their animals’ mobility, such as not being allowed to cross territories or to use the

local fodder resources? Here, as a characteristic pattern in pastoral societies around the world, informal institutions and ideology are assumed to be more important than formal institutions. Pastoral mobility is typically grounded in social norms shaped by mental models and ideologies of solidarity, reciprocity and kinship, rather than on formal agreements and rigorous property rights (Bollig 2006, Bromley 2001, Fernandez-Gimenez & Le Febre 2006, Thébaud & Batterbury 2001).

The establishment of the new transhumance movement was possible because of favorable setting in what Ensminger's framework calls the 'internal factors', especially the interplay between 'institutions', 'ideology' and the 'constellation of actors' (see Figure 13): Formal rules that could constrain the transhumance movement do not exist. The only formal rule a moving herder has to follow is that he has to register his stay in the host village with the village chief. Besides this, there are only social norms to be considered and – due to similar livelihoods and 'culture' – these are identical for coastal and plateau villages and thus implicitly known to all herders. Also common to coastal and plateau societies is a traditional ritual for trust creation. Today, this ritual is frequently used as a tool of 'agency' by moving plateau herders who aim to increase their social acceptance in the host villages.

Furthermore, pastoral mobility is not constrained by the typical conflicts of interest between (agro-) pastoralists and non-cattle-keeping pure agriculturalists known from many other African regions (e.g. Beyene 2009b, Tschopp et al. 2010). This is due to two reasons situated in the frames of 'ideology' and the 'constellation of actors': The society of the plateau and coastal people is a 'cattle civilization' (Hoerner 1990:150), that is, cattle play an important cultural and socio-economic role and still today in the villagers' mental models all people are per se agro-pastoralists – even today around 60% of the region's households are too poor to keep cattle (Neudert et al. 2015). In the local ideology, not owning livestock does not mean one is not a pastoralist as this is perceived as being just a temporary state, even if it lasts for decades. Furthermore, there are no fixed groups of cattle keepers and non-keepers, as animals are frequently bought or sold, and given away at cultural events (Feldt et al. 2016, Hänke 2016), causing a high fluctuation between the state of possessing or not possessing animals. This ideology of 'we are all pastoralists' means that overall solidarity with moving herders and their need for shelter and fodder is high, even among non-cattle-keepers, and it is also rooted in traditional moral values of solidarity.

However, there are herders who do not go on transhumance, and as a 'distributive consequence' (see Figure 13) of not moving they face the risk of being attacked by raiders. This behavior is caused by changes in the 'internal factors' entailing different kinds of social

constraints on pastoral mobility: Looking at the ‘constellation of actors’, the non-moving herders belong to the ethnic group of Mahafaly, while nearly all moving herders are mainly Tanalana people. While the coastal plain is traditionally and today still almost exclusively inhabited by Tanalana people, the Mahafaly are the traditionally predominant ethnic group on the plateau. While the Tanalana are listed by the state as a subgroup of the Mahafaly, the Tanalana and Mahafaly consider themselves as two different groups, albeit bound together by inter-ethnic and inter-regional marriages. Kinship bonds are closest between the coastal villages and the handful of mixed Mahafaly-Tanalana and pure Tanalana villages founded by coastal Tanalana some decades ago.

Formerly, relations between the people of the plateau and coastal plain were in general shaped by a social value of solidarity rooted in a mental model of kinship, seeing all people of the region as being one kin or “all one family,” regardless of whether they are Mahafaly or Tanalana people (see Figure 13: Ideology). However, over time these mental models of kinship have become narrower, leading to constraints to mobility. This change is triggered by the general environment of fear and mistrust towards all strangers created by the rustling attacks, possibly together with other factors related to social change (see Figure 13: External Factors changing Ideology). Today, Mahafaly plateau herders coming to a coastal village where they do not have a relative, friend, or at least a personal acquaintance with some inhabitant, are, as a kind of mental model, today considered ‘not trustworthy’ and ‘non-kin’. This is relevant, as unconditional hospitality and related social norms about one’s duty to host any herder aiming to stay on transhumance have been replaced by conditional hospitality. Therefore, guest rights and host duties now apply only to kin. As a consequence, the Tanalana villagers do not like moving herders who are not kin, friends, or otherwise known in the village to stay. As a form of agency, they force them to leave (see Figure 13: Ideology changing Institutions changing Agency).

Irrespective of the coastal villagers’ acceptance, the ideology of many plateau herders themselves puts constraints on transhumance (see Figure 3: Ideology changing Individual Behavior). According to many plateau herders’ discourse, a stay on the coastal plain necessarily requires having a relationship to some villager there. Not having such local kin or friends increases the likelihood of being a victim of cattle rustling. However, this discourse does not take into account that rustling is in fact frequent on the plateau while being very rare at the coast, and so the risk of being attacked is rather low.

Social constraints are far more relevant to the new movement than to the traditional movement as this is strongly ‘informally institutionalized’. Due to the long tradition of transhumance, neither the hosts nor the guest herders question the herders’ right to stay on the plateau,

irrespective of whether they are kin of the hosts or not. Therefore, coastal Tanalana people not only stay on transhumance in the Tanalana villages on the plateau, but also in the rather pure Mahafaly villages without having any personal or kinship relations with a villager. In terms of 'bargaining power', the coastal villagers are in a far better position, as the strong institutionalization of their transhumance stay on the plateau means that they do not need to bargain. The village communities' institutional repertoire includes formal agreements between village communities or clans. However, formal agreements that could institutionalize the move between plateau and coast, especially the acceptance of plateau herders in the coastal host villages do not exist (see Figure 13: Institutions changing Bargaining Power). As a consequence, every moving plateau herder needs to institutionalize his personal stay and bargain to be accepted in a coastal village, for example by practicing the known ritual for trust creation (see Figure 13: Bargaining Power plus Agency changing Institutions).

The picture of the transhumance movement seen through the lens of the framework is completed by looking at the factors outside of the box of 'internal factors'. The external background as well as relative prices are shaped not only by the risk of rustling, but also by other factors: Unlike the plateau's savannahs where grazing is 'for free', due to a recent privatization process of the coastal fodder resources, when going on transhumance to the coast, the moving herders need to buy most of the fodder. This increases the relative price of going on transhumance for preventing the loss of animals and indeed in some cases has influenced a herder's decision towards not moving (see Figure 13: Distributional Consequences changing Individual Behavior and Relative Prices). On a more general level, the new transhumance movement shifts economic resources from the plateau to the coast and increases the local demand for fodder.



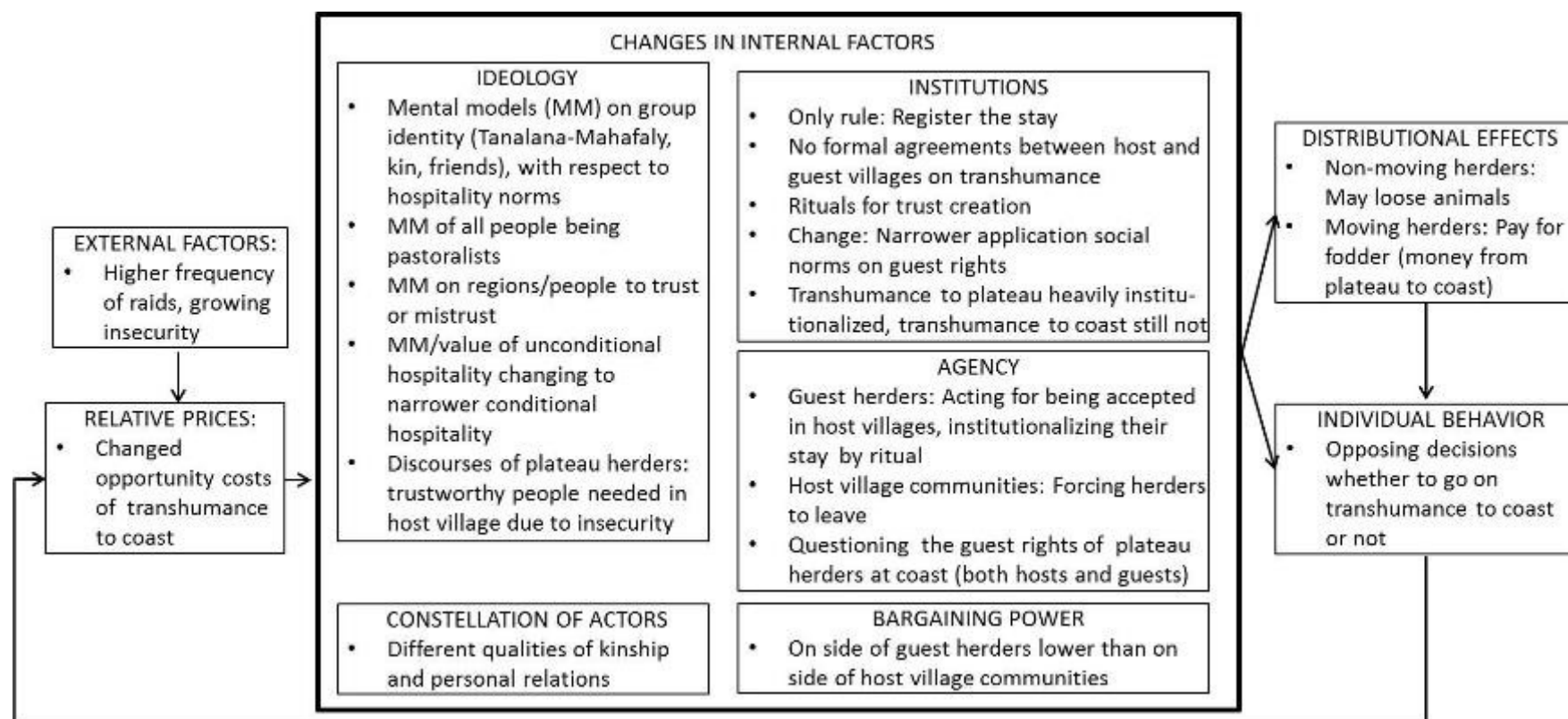


Figure 13: Modified framework for modeling institutional change (Ensminger 1992) applied to new transhumance and its constraints

#### 5.4. Discussion and Conclusion

In this paper, I discussed the role of formal and informal institutions and agency for development, and stressed the need for a rigorous analytical framework and theory. I review the strengths and weaknesses of New Institutional Economics and other disciplines when analyzing development. The Framework for Modeling Institutional Change (Ensminger 1992) rooted in a combination of NIE and anthropology called New Institutional Anthropology is presented as a solid analytical tool for development research. However, one of the main weaknesses the different disciplines are criticized for is also mirrored in Ensminger's framework – it does not explicitly give room to agency. Therefore, I present a modified version of the framework which includes agency as one of five core analytical elements influencing development and change. I then apply the framework to the case of adaptation to cattle rustling in Madagascar in order to demonstrate the framework's mode of operation and to create a basis for discussion of its general applicability and the usefulness of the integration of agency. This is done in the following.

The application to the empiric case demonstrates that the framework is pretty effective for presenting a comprehensive picture of the relevant factors and how these influence each other. The analytical strength of the framework clearly lies in the box of 'internal change'. This box is able to depict a detailed setting with different actors (individuals or groups) brought together in a specific constellation and bargaining for or against a certain change with their own power resources, shaped by their ideology, informal and formal institutions.

Another very valuable characteristic of the framework is shown to be the distinction between informal institutions in terms of social norms and other informal institutions, here labeled 'ideology'. In many cases it is essential to make sure that ideology, a factor that is even more 'invisible' to the researcher's eyes, is not forgotten and also does not get mixed up with 'other' informal institutions. In the present case study, the interplay between these mental models, moral values, discourses and narratives turns out to be highly complex and central to the development of the adaptation strategy, but also to its constraints.

Regarding agency, the application also proves that giving agency more room helps one to better understand the story and the interplay of factors. In this case, it becomes clear that one of the central points is that the moving plateau herders actively bargained for institutionalizing the new pastoral movement but did not really succeed because other people focused their agency on restraining the movement. Without agency as an independent factor, this aspect would easily have fallen out of the analysis due to having no proper visualization. Agency may be found to be

a less relevant factor when applied to cases that differ from the one illustrated here in that they are shaped less by intended or designed change than by evolutionary change, e.g., cultural change.

Limitations to the use of the framework for empiric studies in the sense that the framework is not appropriate for the case are rare, as its specific structure means it can be adapted for use, that is, one may make use of parts of the framework only, especially the box of 'internal change'. This analysis will always give important insights, while in many empirical settings other factors may turn out to be irrelevant or difficult to apply. In the presented case study, for example, 'distributional effects' and 'relative prices' are not essential to answer the research question and may be ignored. A case in point where these factors cannot even be filled with empirical material is Ensminger's own study on young Orma bargaining to change the social norm on whom they are allowed to marry (Knight & Ensminger 1998). Of course, there are also cases where the changes in the internal factors are directly linked to the distribution of economic resources, for example changes in property rights to natural resources (for example case study presented in chapter 3, also see Haller 2010).

Looking at the comprehensive picture of the interplay of economic incentives with people's behavior and agency shaped by bargaining power, institutions and ideology may be most valuable when dealing with cases of evolutionary change, e.g., typical cases of cultural change.

Taking the box of 'internal factors' alone with its complex and detailed structure may also be appropriate for analyzing rather static situations or settings in the broader development context which are found to be critical for understanding why development is accelerated, hampered, or taking another road than assumed. This broad fit is due to the interesting point that although the framework is said to be designed for analyzing institutional change, it does not leave much space for depicting the change itself (e.g., in the form of an illustration with Situation A leading to Situation B). Furthermore, its design does not predict that the analyzed changes have to be of predominantly institutional character (e.g., changes in formal institutions). Thus, the framework also fits to other societal processes predominantly shaped and driven by non-institutional factors, e.g., cultural change with main changes in informal institutions and ideology.

# **Chapter 6: Synthesis, discussion and conclusion**

## **Chapter 6: Synthesis, discussion and conclusion**

This chapter will first synthesize the research findings of the previous main chapters 2-5 and discuss these against the backdrop of the problem statement and the research objectives as presented in chapter 1. Subsequently, limitations of the dissertation and future research needs are presented. To close, a final conclusion is presented.

### **6.1. Synthesis of research findings**

This work aimed to contribute to our understanding of development and adaptation capacities of rural communities against the background of institutional change and ‘structure and agency’ (that is, the interplay between institutions, the community as a norm-group, and the influence of the actions of individuals) by conducting empirical research on the Mahafaly Plateau in South-West Madagascar in the form of three micro-case studies (chapter 2, 3, and 4), and by discussing and contributing to the development of appropriate analytical frameworks (chapter 5). Furthermore, the dissertation was concerned with social security mechanisms, namely those of solidarity and reciprocity regarding pastoral mobility and resource use (chapter 2 and 3), and in the form of funerary gift-giving (chapter 4). Additionally, the work aimed to contribute to our knowledge on pastoralism in Madagascar and on how Malagasy societies evolve and adapt and which role ‘structure and agency’ play here.

The following section presents a synthesis of chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5 with a focus on ‘structure and agency’, followed by a broader discussion:

Chapter 2 focused on assessing the development of a new transhumance movement in the Mahafaly Plateau region in relation to the local socio-institutional context of formal and informal institutions, especially traditions and mental models about guest rights and kinship. Regarding ‘structure’, the new movement is on the one hand enabled by traditional mechanisms of trust creation, and by a shared concept of hospitality and group identity. On the other hand, limits to the movement arise from a change in these concepts of hospitality, shifting from unconditional to conditional hospitality and to a narrower definition of group affiliation. With regard to ‘agency’, it is found that the new transhumance movement as an adaptation option to cattle raids is facilitated by herding families’ decision-making freedom and the procedural liberty to institutionalize and thus socially justify their personal movement. At the same time, the mental models of the different actors are found to be diverging and partly an obstacle to adaptation.

Chapter 3 analyzed the reasons for the failure of the coastal communities’ attempts to curtail the privatization of the important fodder tree *samata*, as well as the privatization mechanisms themselves. The case study revealed that private property rights were created only through

institutionalization by the cumulative behavior of individual users over time. With regard to 'agency', a high bargaining power deriving from not shying away from open conflict further helped the privatizers to assert their rights and to prevent the enforcement of the new community-based rules curtailing privatization. Concerning 'structure', the enforcement system turns out to be inappropriate as it contradicts the groups' ideology about resource use.

Chapter 4 demonstrated how the long-standing funerary gift-giving system in the study region evolved and is influenced by individualization, consumerism, market integration, and changes of ideological values attached to life and death. 'Structure' is shown to consist of diverging parameters: While on the one hand the institutions are found to be adaptive and pro-social, including exit-options on gift-duties for people in economic difficulties, on the other hand the group created a social pressure that outstripped institution-based options. Regarding 'agency', the accumulated action of funeral spectators in form of gossip, as well the bereaved family's aims to get famous, are found to be crucial.

Chapter 5 was concerned with the role of formal and informal institutions and agency for development and adaptation on a general level, and discussed shortcomings of recent theory and analytical frameworks. The *Framework for Modeling Institutional Change* (Ensminger 1992) rooted in a combination of New Institutional Economics and anthropology was presented in a modified version which includes agency as one of five core analytical elements. As a basis for illustration and discussion, the modified framework was applied to the case study on new transhumance patterns elaborated in chapter 2. With regard to 'structure' and 'agency', the box of 'internal change' was found to be appropriate for depicting a detailed setting with different actors brought together in a specific constellation and bargaining for or against a certain change with their own power resources, shaped by their ideology, informal and formal institutions.

## **6.2. Discussion**

### **6.2.1. Institutional diversity**

The case studies revealed that regarding the treated topics nearly all aspects of behavior and what is allowed, forbidden, socially accepted or disapproved, are guided by some kind of local or regional institution, be it a local rule, a social norm, or a shared mental model. However, at the same time there is a high heterogeneity regarding many issues: Several diverse and even contradicting institutions in forms of diverging mental models, social norms and even rules can be found in a form of 'institutional bricolage' (Clever 2002) – inside the relatively small regional society of the people of the Mahafaly Plateau region. Illustrations from the case studies are the social norm on appropriate funerary gifts for one's father-in-law (variations: "you must give at least a big castrated zebu", "you must give a zebu, but the type does not matter", "you must

give a (big) zebu, but only if you can afford it”, “you may give whatever you want”, see pages 91f.), and the deviating mental models on group identity defining guest rights and transhumance liberty in the region (see pages 39f.).

Regarding the set of ‘variations’ of rules (rules understood here as formal institutions, this is, institutions that are ‘established’ and socially transmitted (Hodgson 2006) – for example in the form of local community rules (*dina*)), it is specifically the case study on *samata* privatization that explores a wide range of ‘variations’. The emergence and development of such variations seems to be stimulated by the oral tradition of the Mahafaly Plateau society where the written word (e.g., the minutes of a meeting or a commune decree) plays a minor role and rules need to be institutionalized by oral repetition and dissemination. Even more, institutionalization of a rule is also dependent on internal institutionalization in the sense of rule compliant behavior. This is perhaps best illustrated by the regional rule on *samata* privatization of the *Commune de Beheloke* which, on the one hand, is unknown to many *samata* users (cf. Middleton 2013a), and on the other hand is even declared non-valid or non-existent by some because of an overall lack of rule compliance (“This rule doesn’t exist because nobody cares.”, see page 70).

This high diversity of all kinds of institutions ranging from mental models to rules implies the liberty to do ‘institution shopping’ (Toulmin 2009): People are relatively free to consciously or unconsciously pick some institutions as guidelines for many aspects of daily live, and to neglect the existence or validity of others. This leads to a broad set of different patterns of individual behavior which are mostly socially accepted in some way. Social acceptance also implies a lack of strong social disapproval or ‘sanctioning’, which, as a consequence, also encourages rule-deviant behavior even if ‘the rule’ is clear. To put it in more general terms, it encourages individuals to find their own way through the sets of institutions and to develop their own way of behavior.

The case of funerary gift-giving may at first glance somehow contradict this statement, as bringing few gifts typically entrains social gossip. However, the study reveals that this gossip is not ‘sanctioning’ after having broken with specific social norms or codes of conduct. Rather, it is a consequence of the combination of certain mental models and of a widespread thrill or pleasure in gossiping which institutionalized itself as socially accepted. Furthermore, the typical ‘social exchange game’ wherein “a member of a community earns social prestige and public respect if he or she conforms to the normative pattern of social cooperation, but experiences social shame and opprobrium if he or she does not” (Platteau 2011:5) mistakenly assumes that people’s strategies are per se guided by the aim of avoiding negative social feedback on their

behavior. As the case study – and also the one about *samata* privatization – has illustrated, individuals may also opt to not be bothered by public opinion and social gossip.

This issue of ‘cooperation’ versus ‘non-conformity’ is the traditional focus of commons literature, while issues of institutional change regarding commons are seldom addressed. It is typically the only way individuals and their behavior are studied, combined with the question of which setting best entrains cooperation. However, as the case study on *samata* privatization has shown, reality may often be so complex that it is not even really clear what ‘cooperation’ (or cooperative behavior, or rule compliant behavior) means to the community: The institutional setting presenting some kind of ‘legal pluralism’ also leads to ‘plural expectations’ about what a desirable behavior or ‘cooperation’ is about. Consequently, social norms cannot be automatically seen as ‘clusters of self-fulfilling expectations’ (Schelling 1966).

How institutions somehow institutionalize themselves, on the other hand, is best illustrated by the case study on transhumance: The traditional transhumance pattern (from the coast to the plateau) is today so clearly institutionalized in the sense that all actors holding well-defined roles within the setting and sharing idealized expectations about the action of others (cf. Berger & Luckmann 1966) that the social norm of hospitality linked to it is not called into question by anybody and the institution of blood brotherhood as the original basis of this hospitality has become irrelevant.

Besides the question of ‘cooperation’, some scholars (likely with an economic background) like to treat the use of common pool resources as a ‘coordination problem’ (e.g., Baland & Platteau 1997) where individual behavior can somehow be calculated. The same approach can also be observed in literature on gift-giving or more generally on social exchange (see discussion in Platteau 2006). Analogously, these approaches assume the existence of “prescribed conventions, which for participants of a culture are by and large given” and determine “what should or may be given or returned in a given type of situation defined in terms of the specific relationship between the participants, occasion for the exchange” (Befu 1977:260). Thus, they overlook that these conventions may exist only as a set of varieties and with diverging interpretations among people of one culture.

Also from an anthropological view in general, the described liberty in behavior and interpretation of institutions may at first sight seem a bit surprising. While it has been widely acknowledged by scholars with an institutional background (e.g., Platteau & Peccoud 2011) that ‘culture’ in the sense of informal institutions is not stable over time, the common anthropological literature on non-western societies very much deals with ‘culture’ (or



institutions) as being a stable thing. Furthermore, 'culture' is assumed to be universally valid in every single society. But, as Eggert (2001:314) has phrased it felicitously and a bit provocatively, it is only the "anthropological model that presupposes members of non-Western societies [...] to share a set of overriding cultural principles that unify their behavior" and that expects "abstract, overly generalized characters". Conversely, these societies consist of "diverse, complex individuals, each of whom has his or her way of seeing, thinking, and acting." People "are enormously varied in thought and action, and [...] the real problem for anthropologists is to discover how they manage to carry on social life at all." My work illustrates this very well. Moreover, the case study on funerary gift-giving demonstrates it for a topic which, being an important part of Malagasy 'culture' and formal 'customs', has been described very differently by most authors (see discussion on page 98), for example by describing people as being nearly blindly driven by the aim of 'fulfilling the custom', but having no "idea why they act in the way they do" (Astuti & Bloch 2013:109).

One might postulate that this 'individualism' is a relatively new phenomenon in Madagascar, and a consequence of the 'modernization' of the Malagasy societies. However, in my opinion and based on the insights from my research, 'modernization' has just added to the general individualism and, here, I would again like to cite Dahl's statement about Madagascar from 1940: "individualism is not dead in a collectivist society" (Dahl 1940:95).

### **6.2.2. Evolutionary and designed change of institutions**

The shown range of diverse and sometimes even contradictory mental models and social norms may be especially broad in the context of the described ongoing social change. How this social change, or better said the whole social and economic environment, influences the evolution of social institutions is best illustrated by the case study on transhumance and cattle rustling: The social norms based on mental models of unconditional hospitality, good relations and broad kinship (*filongoa*, *fihavanana*) evolve towards much narrower conceptions of kinship and a kind of hospitality based on reciprocity, at least regarding the 'new' transhumance movement from the plateau to the coastal plain, while the traditional one remains unquestioned.

While many (agro-)pastoral communities in Africa have been suffering from a weakening of local pastoral institutions and from a loss of rights to their common-pool resources due to "the gradual intrusion of the state into natural resource management" (Haller et al. 2016:409), this is de facto not the case in the study region. However, the case study on *samata* privatization demonstrates that with the ongoing social change process, also formal (pastoral) institutions become less 'institutionalized' in the sense that people start to incrementally 'not care' when it

comes to compliance to traditional socio-cultural enforcement mechanisms and rules called out by clan authorities.

As at the same time the local society has difficulties to create and apply new rules by collective action, a kind of 'power vacuum' is created. This power vacuum presents a window of opportunity for individuals – people use the chance to create facts and thereby act as 'agents of change' and induce institutional innovation (however mostly unconsciously) in the way that their changes become internally institutionalized because they are accepted and repeated by others, and eventually because the agents even succeeded in changing the preferences of others (cf. Vatn 2005).

Besides new private property rights on *samata* stands, this evolutionary institutional innovation is also described for the case of funerary customs, for example in the way that having a music band to play at a funeral went from being a 'novelty' tried out by some few families to a typical 'must have' and even 'new custom'. Without the approval and stimulation by the judging masses, the innovative behavior could not have become the 'new custom'. Although such customs somehow define more or less what is 'the right thing to do' (Evers 2006), these customs are not set in stone (for example by the ancestors). On the contrary, they are seen by the people of the region as something that is easily changed or even newly created ('invented by us', see discussion on page 90). Nevertheless, the example of inverse transhumance shows that such a society-wide approval cannot be seen as given, meaning that creating a 'new custom' is not an automatic sure-fire success.

In general, however, evolutionary institutional innovation seems to be relatively easy in this society, as it is fostered by the socio-cultural setting, namely the ideological flexibility regarding customs and a certain laissez-faire attitude towards rule and norm compliance in the society. Furthermore, institutional innovation is stimulated by the high possibility and partly even necessity of 'finding his/her own way of behavior' through the diverse sets of institutions. That institutional change in the form of evolutionary change happens relatively easily, and even including formal institutions ('rules'), is best illustrated by the case study on *samata* privatization.

The ways in which individuals act as agents of change, or how the accumulative behavior of the masses leads to evolutionary change of institutions as demonstrated in my work reminds me of the very illustrative terminology used by Van Den Bergh & Stagl (2003). They point out that in relatively small and isolated societies, culture is comparatively less stable as it needs relatively

few individuals who (with their behavior) can cause ‘cultural and institutional mutations’<sup>64</sup> that easily lead to ‘institutional drifts’.

On the other side of the coin, the general laissez-faire attitude and high esteem for personal freedom (defining a lot of things in life as a ‘personal affair’) makes collective action and designed institutional change relatively difficult – as for example shown by the failed efforts to create rules that limit *samata* privatization. The case study on transhumance also illustrates this: Here, attempts at collective action to institutionalize the new transhumance pattern did not take place on the level of clans or village communities or even on a higher level, but institutionalization took place just on a (nearly) individual level in the form of organizing sincerity oaths for individuals or very small groups.

Regarding collective action for creating institutional change, one could speak here about a quite high degree of institutional inertia. Besides the point that of course new institutional arrangements need time to be created and enforced and “assume[ing] instantaneous adjustments” is never adequate (Paavola & Adger 2005:357), this inertia is rooted in the cultural setting of the society. This is important to state, as the literature about collective action mostly stresses other factors that shape the ability for collective action and these factors could be seen as favorable in the study region. For example, creating a new rule on the village community level takes place in a ‘low cost arena’ where male community members meet under a tree, an arena which is, by my own observation, used quite often and for a diverse bundle of topics. Second, the society is relatively homogenous, and not, as in other regions of the world, divided into pastoralists and mere agriculturalists with contrasting interests.

Moreover, the findings support the claim of Agrawal & Gibson (1999:630) that seeing a “community as a small spatial unit, as a homogenous social structure, and as shared norms” is a severe shortcoming of traditional approaches to commons in literature, and that it is central to acknowledge the importance of “the internal and external institutions that shape the decision-making process” and “the multiple interests and actors within communities, [and] on how these actors influence decision-making.” Additionally, in socio-cultural settings such as in the study region, I would argue that (formal) decision-making of a community (for creating formal rules) may be less relevant for institutional change on common-pool resources than independent decision-making by individuals (for analogous results see Ruttan (2006)). This is an important result regarding the study of ‘commons’, as the literature on commons focuses heavily on the

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<sup>64</sup> While ‘institutional’ can be understood here as referring to ‘formal institutions’, ‘cultural’ addresses ‘informal institutions’.

questions of rule creation and adaptation through processes of some kind of community discourse in an explicit arena of decision making. The importance of institutional change happening outside these arenas, however, is mostly overlooked.

### **6.2.3. Institutional change and adaptation of social security mechanisms**

In general, social exchange mechanisms including traditional institutions of solidarity and moral obligations, as well as networks based on kinship affiliation are said to be always transformed under the influence of societal transition, namely 'modernization' and a higher degree of market integration. Many scholars found these changes to be completely negative (e.g. Alcorn 1993, Chapin 1991, Gardner et al. 2008), and described them using terms such as 'cultural dissolution' and 'erosion'. More precisely, the societal transition is found to trigger the "loosening [of] the web of traditional social relations", making people increasingly "free of group pressure" (Platteau 1991:158). This perception is mirrored in the case studies: Interviewees of different age classes worried about villagers that today 'think they are independent' and only 'do what they want' (see page 37).

But at the same time, scholars like Henrich et al. (2010) and Rosenbaum et al. (2010) argue that the higher the degree of market integration, the weaker the kinship affiliation and community sanctioning enforcement mechanisms, while at the same time social norms towards non-kin are strengthened. Analogously, results from economic experiments suggest that market integration enhances the potential benefit from cooperative activities, in opposition to traditional solidarity or family-based productive activities (Henrich et al. 2004). People tend to show a higher level of pro-social behavior, being motivated by gaining a good reputation which translates in higher market integration and thus a higher 'premium' (Ensminger 2004:380). These findings are not sustained by the case studies. Specifically, the case on *samata* privatization demonstrates that indeed community sanctioning enforcement mechanisms are today relatively weak and kinship networks have become narrower, but an enhanced need for pro-social behavior for one's own sake does not seem to have evolved. However, this finding may of course only be valid for the specific point in time of research and things may change in future: The already discussed laissez-faire ideology of the society may have just slowed down the evolution of pro-social behavior towards people one is not somehow affiliated with. Negative reactions to non-social behavior may gain weight and change individual strategies of how to behave in future. An example of this are the discussions of village communities on agreeing to not sell *samata* harvest rights to non-villagers anymore as they frequently overuse the stocks.

Of course, the question arises as to what a successful institutional adaptation would look like, for example regarding transhumance institutions and property rights to *samata*. The literature

about common-pool regimes in (semi-)arid areas clearly states that a good regime should allow for “flexibility in order to deal with ecological uncertainty” and that therefore pastoral “management institutions [that] would be considered weak or absent according to the design principle approach” are most appropriate for this setting (Quinn et al. 2007:100). Situations of (nearly) open access are therefore not a sign of ‘eroded commons’ but often the traditional regime in such regions (Moritz 2016), as it is also the case in the study region. Also here, the pastoralists appreciate the flexibility to move their cattle within the region to places with most fodder. Besides the transhumance movement between coastal plain and plateau, smaller transhumance movements also take place within the coastal plain, mostly in the direction north to south. Regardless of all privatization and the discussed weakening of unconditional hospitality, communities still stick to the transhumance guests’ right to use the grazing grounds of the plateau and the community *samata* at the coast for free.

Furthermore, the case study reveals that people in the study region are mainly concerned about intergenerational fairness. There has been an overall discourse that privatization should not lead to a situation of not leaving ‘anything for future generations’ (see page 62). Whereas this ideological consensus could be seen as a sufficient degree of common interest to successfully create an (intergenerationally fair) common-pool regime (Brunckhorst & Marshall 2008), de facto it is not. The creation of a new regime that limits private property rights started at a time when the communities already consisted of those who would benefit and those who would lose from this change, including their descendants who would inherit private *samata* parcels or not. As already known from property rights theory (Libecap 1989), the potential losers bargained for impeding the change.

Besides the aim of intergenerational fairness and reserving open access *samata* for transhumance guests, private property rights to *samata* and their unequal distribution are not per se questioned by the villagers. That rural societies do not necessarily aim for an equal distribution of property rights is known since the work of Ruttan (1998). Haller (2007:23) calls this “cooperation in so-called asymmetrical reciprocity” and states that it “does not hinder collective action, since non-cooperation is still worse than getting an unequal share”. Regarding the distribution of property rights to *samata*, however, collective action did not have the anticipated success. Two reasons already discussed are most people’s discomfort to openly insult others who do not cooperate, and the laissez-faire attitude wherein many actions are seen as a ‘private affair’ even if they touch public interests. Additionally, people also value the personal efforts of having appropriated *samata*, e.g., by fencing. This attitude is mirrored in the case of funerary gift-giving, where gift-bringers that did not ‘made an effort’ to be economically able to bring an appropriate gift receive disparaging remarks by the funeral spectators.

The case study on gift-giving also reveals that the funeral ceremonies have undergone some change which are however not in line, but contrasting the current socio-economic development of the region: On the one hand, some parts of funerary customs are today executed in an economically adapted way with less spending, and this adaptation is socially accepted and fits into the conceptualization of the attached institutions. On the other hand, though, costs spent on funeral parties and gift-giving are not declining but increasing; people even worry about it in view of the ongoing general impoverishment.

Besides the traditional rules demanding a certain standard of gifts and entertaining on both sides, funeral parties have today developed into the one and only platform in the region for to 'see and to be seen'. Boasting and competition for becoming famous with the highest spending have made funerals a heavy economic burden, especially for those many households not counting with bigger savings. Although the traditional rules on gift duty are found to be very flexible and easily adaptable to the people's individual economic situation, the fear of gossip and social shame makes lower spending for parties or gifts to be mostly not an option. Today, both organizing relatives as well as invited guests of funeral parties often spend their fortune or run into debt for entertaining and gifts. In a nutshell, the 'new custom' of funerary gift-giving and parties is not well adapted to the people's economic needs. The case study adds proof to the insight that the traditional customs of 'safety nets' among (agro-)pastoralists in Africa that still exist do not necessarily function in the way they are culturally labeled and were maybe formerly also practiced (Bollig 1998, Moritz 2013).

My findings regarding gift-giving show strong analogies to the reciprocity institutions inside a lineage or kin-group that Haller (2011) has studied in Zambia and that today exist "in a transformed way including massive monetary obligations, where everybody seems to know how much another owes him or her" (Haller 2011:9). However, with two important differences: Haller (2011:7) notes a "monetarized socio-political environment, where marriage, kinship and other social networks are based on monetary obligations nowadays." In the Mahafaly Plateau region, these customs and networks have always been tied to monetary obligations (also see "Digression 4" in the appendix to Chapter 4) – these have only increased and some logics have changed. Furthermore, the gift-giving case contradicts the hypothesis of Haller (2011) and Merten & Haller (2005) that many traditional (social exchange) institutions in Africa will only survive if powerful bargaining actors manage to transform them in a way which allows them cash-gaining or other monetarized uses.

In general, especially the case study on transhumance demonstrates that individuals' adaptive capacity may differ considerably within the same social community. Here, adaptation options

largely depend on the individuals' mental models in the sense of the interpretation of the problem, the environment, and especially the society in which they live. Also the case study on *samata* privatization reveals that individuals reacted very differently, e.g., to the window of opportunity in form of the emergence of a market for harvest rights to *samata*. But in general, adaptation by individuals and households mostly benefits from the described institutional bricolage and the certain liberty of action. As already described, on the level of bigger groups such as the village communities, however, it constitutes a challenge for cooperation and collective action.

#### **6.2.4. Research limitations and future research**

Research limitations of this thesis mainly arise from limitations of data availability, the character of data collection, and language barriers. Limitations of interview data such as different kinds of biases, as well as limitations arising from interviewing with the help of an interpreter, are discussed in Chapter 1 on pages 17f., including ways to mitigate these limitations. A limitation of interview data which is difficult to mitigate is that the 'living memory' of interviewees may be somehow distorted, fragmentary, and especially vague when it comes to time frames, e.g. periods or years. Therefore, timeframes and dates given in the thesis often turned out to be proximate only. Furthermore, I tried to triangulate the data from living memory with the very few written documents on the region. Anyhow, for the research questions and the focus on dynamics and logics of change, precise timeframes are of minor relevance.

Future research could complement the insights of this dissertation by adding analysis on how the development of the three case studies on transhumance, *samata* privatization and funerary gift-giving goes on after 2014. With regard to funerary customs, it would be interesting to see if the ongoing Christianization of the region has an impact and, if so, in which way. This would add another aspect to the question of the interplay of (changing) internal and external parameters leading to change, and the tracking of socio-cultural shifts. Furthermore, it would be very interesting to quantify the current economic impact of funeral parties and gift giving with quantitative data. Concerning drivers of natural resource use, future investigations could address the question of how the growing scarcity of natural resources changes property rights perceptions and negotiations between the inhabitants of the region regarding resources other than *samata* (e.g., agricultural land, as land scarcity has already become an agricultural constraint (Coral Guerra 2014)).

With regard to my general research questions on development, adaptation, and institutional change, more research in the form of case studies from other regions of Madagascar and the

world would be needed to sustain, complement or dispute the conclusions drawn from the findings of the case studies and to hopefully shed light on societies' adaptation capacities.

Regarding the modified version of the Framework for Modeling Institutional Change developed by Jean Ensminger (1992) and its usefulness for analysis, further research in the form of applying it to case studies would help to further prove the added value of having included 'agency' as a core element into the framework. It would also be interesting to follow the logic of Schmid (2004) who stated that changes in informal institutions should be understood as result of the aggregated changes in the behavior of individuals, rooted in a change of the perceptions of these individuals. Further research could investigate if allowing room for this change in the perceptions of individuals presents an added value.

### **6.3. Conclusion**

This work contributed to the understanding of how development and adaptation takes place in rural communities of the developing world – especially regarding social security mechanisms –, which role institutional change and agency play, and how suitable analytical frameworks for such changes should be structured.

The case studies on changes in an agro-pastoral society in South-West Madagascar reveal that agency is indeed an important factor shaping institutional change on the local or regional level, at least in such small societies as the one studied here. Institutional change is found to be both driven by collective action as well as evolutionary mechanisms, and consequently, analytical frameworks that are able to consider both are best suited (also see Paavola & Adger 2005, Ruttan 2006). Importantly, agency is influencing both of these mechanisms of change.

The Framework for Modeling Institutional Change (Ensminger 1992) applied to the cases is shown to be suitable as it allows to shed light on changes in institutions including ideology as a result of the interplay between individual actors and their behavior, changes in external factors such as relative prices, the constellations of actors, and their bargaining power. By modifying the framework in the way of adding agency as one of the core elements, however, the analysis becomes even more comprehensive.

With regard to social security mechanisms, first, the studies contributed new insights into our common understanding of gift-giving systems and presented a 21<sup>st</sup> century example of an individualized and agonistic gift-giving system which is on the rise in terms of societal and socio-economic importance, but has developed into a mechanism that induces risks more than social security.



Second, social security mechanisms in the form of solidarity and allowed open access to pastoral resources are found to be maintained even in times of privatization of these resources. However, the ideological conception of who is deserving solidarity and in which form is changing. The village communities' aim of securing allowed open access and creating a certain level of intra- and inter-generational fairness by not privatizing all resource stocks is hampered by a low internalization of new local rules. This problem may be exemplary for other self-governance systems in other developing countries.

The results of the studies may be best transferable to other rural societies of the developing world that also base the enforcement of their formal institutions on orality, do ideologically value personal freedom and procedural liberty, and show a high diversity of institutions of all kinds, such as local legal rules, social norms, and mental models. For such societies, the results suggest that the societal environment on the one hand favors adaptation on the level of individuals or small groups and allows these actions to evolutionary change institutions. On the other hand, adaptation based on designed institutional change and collective action is difficult to plan and execute.

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# Appendix

## Appendix

### Appendix to Chapter 1

#### *Photos*

(All photos taken by Johanna Goetter, except for Figure 20 and Figure 21)

#### Photos of daily life in the study region



Figure 14: Men having a meeting (village of Efoetse)



Figure 15: View of a part of the village of Itomboina



Figure 16: People passing through Miarentsoa



Figure 17: "Parked" cart oxen at the market of Itomboina

Appendix



Figure 18: Ox card returning from the market day in Itomboina



Figure 19: Locust invasion in Ampasindava



Figure 20: Cattle to be sold on the market day in Itomboina (Photo: L. Andrianjohary)



Figure 21: Locally produced cassava to be sold on the market day in Itomboina (Photo: L. Andrianjohary)



Figure 22: *Raketa* (*Opuntia* spp.) hedge to mark private property (next to Marofijery)



**Photos of animal husbandry**



Figure 23: *Raketa* plantation (next to Maromitilike)



Figure 24: Zebu eating *raketa* cactus



Figure 25: Zebu eating leftovers of maize



Figure 26: Cattle in the shade (village of Efoetse)



Figure 27: Cattle at the watering place near Miarentsoa



Figure 28: Cattle grazing on the plateau

Appendix



Figure 29: Cattle herd on its way in the *monto* of Efoetse

## Appendix

### *Interview documentation*

**Table 4: List of all interviews**

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
16.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	30	transhumance, samata	author
16.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	27	transhumance	author
16.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	45	transhumance, samata	author
16.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	55	transhumance, raiding, samata	author
16.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	~ 25	transhumance	author
17.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	25	transhumance, samata	author
17.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	17	transhumance, samata	author
17.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	26	transhumance	author
17.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	25	transhumance, samata	author
18.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	~ 40	transhumance, raiding, samata	author
18.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	~ 50	transhumance, raiding, samata	author
18.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	40	transhumance, raiding, samata	author
19.05.2012	Beroka	coastal plain	1	male	~ 40	samata	author

<sup>65</sup> Ages were given by interviewees, partly estimated (~).

<sup>66</sup> The topics of interviews are clustered into the following sections: *samata* (use, property rights, privatization and curtailment process, etc.), *samata* in Vezo villages, transhumance, changes in customs (daily live and rituals like wedding, circumcision, etc.), funerals among the Tanalana/Mahafaly including funeral parties, livestock (possession, behaviour and strategies regarding its use and investment, cattle versus money, etc.), raiding (everything related to livestock raiding), funerals among the Vezo.



Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
19.05.2012	Beroka	coastal plain	4 or more	male	mixed	transhumance, raiding, changes in customs	author
19.05.2012	Beroka	coastal plain	1	male	around 40	samata, transhumance	author
19.05.2012	Beroka	coastal plain	1	male	30	transhumance	author
19.05.2012	Beroka	coastal plain	1	male	~ 50	samata	author
20.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	17	samata	author
20.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	2	male	~ 40, ~ 50	samata, transhumance	author
20.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	~ 40	samata, transhumance	author
21.05.2012	Antanandranto	coastal plain	4 or more	male	mixed	samata, transhumance, raiding	author
21.05.2012	Antanandranto	coastal plain	3	male	mixed	samata	author
21.05.2012	Antanandranto	coastal plain	1	male	around 25	transhumance	author
24.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	42	transhumance	author
24.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	27	samata	author
24.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	35	samata, transhumance	author
24.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	30	samata	author
24.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	30	samata	author
25.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	~ 50	samata	author
25.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	30	samata	author
25.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	4 or more	male	mixed	samata	author
26.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	~ 55	samata	author

Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
26.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	~ 30	transhumance	author
26.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	~ 45	changes in customs	author
26.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	11	male	30	samata	author
27.05.2012	Ankiririza	coastal plain	1	male	~ 60	samata, transhumance	author
27.05.2012	Ankiririza	coastal plain	1	male	~ 30	samata	author
27.05.2012	Ankiririza	coastal plain	1	male	~ 30	samata	author
27.05.2012	Ankiririza	coastal plain	2	male	~ 40, ~ 30	samata	author
27.05.2012	Ankiririza	coastal plain	4 or more	male	mixed	samata, raiding, transhumance	author
27.05.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	55	samata	author
28.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	~ 30, 72	livestock	author
28.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	4 or more	male	~ 60	transhumance, samata	author
28.05.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	3	male	~ 30, 72	samata, livestock	author
07.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	female	~ 35	transhumance, raiding	author
07.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	4 or more	mixed	60, 40, 40, ~ 30	transhumance, livestock	author
07.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	25	raiding	author
07.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	2	mixed	26, ~ 50	transhumance, raiding, samata	author
07.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	40	transhumance, raiding, transhumance, samata	author
07.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	female	~ 30	transhumance	author

Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
08.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	2	male	47	transhumance, raiding	author
08.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	53	transhumance, raiding, livestock, samata	author
08.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	39	transhumance, raiding	author
08.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	2	female	40, ~ 30	changes in customs, funerals, livestock	author
09.06.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	around 50	transhumance	author
09.06.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	57	changes in customs, funerals, livestock, raiding	author
09.06.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	57	transhumance	author
09.06.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	57	transhumance	author
09.06.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	~ 35	transhumance, raiding, samata	author
09.06.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	~ 25	transhumance	author
10.06.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	around 40	livestock, raiding	author
10.06.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	45	transhumance, raiding, samata	author
10.06.2012	Itomboina	plateau	2	male	63, 57	livestock	author
11.06.2012	Maroarivo	plateau	4 or more	male	47, 42, 54	transhumance, raiding, changes in customs, livestock	author
11.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	2	mixed	~ 60, ~ 60	livestock, raiding	author
11.06.2012	Miarentsoa	plateau	4 or more	male	mixed	transhumance	author
12.06.2012	Andremba I	plateau	2	male	37, 62	transhumance	author
12.06.2012	Andremba I	plateau	2	mixed	50, 37	livestock, raiding	author

Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
12.06.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	around 45	transhumance	author
07.08.2012	Ankilibory (E) <sup>67</sup>	coastal plain	1	male	49	samata, transhumance	author
07.08.2012	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	55	changes in customs, funerals	author
07.08.2012	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	55	changes in customs, funerals	author
08.08.2012	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	62	changes in customs, livestock	author
08.08.2012	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	50	transhumance	author
08.08.2012	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	49	livestock	author
08.08.2012	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	49	samata	author
08.08.2012	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	25	transhumance	author
09.08.2012	Anakaraka	coastal plain	2	male	~ 50, ~ 40	changes in customs, funerals	author
09.08.2012	Anakaraka	coastal plain	2	male	~ 50, ~ 40	samata, transhumance, raiding	author
09.08.2012	Anakaraka	coastal plain	1	male	22	samata	author
09.08.2012	Anakaraka	coastal plain	1	male	53	changes in customs, livestock	author
10.08.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	35	funerals, livestock	author
10.08.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	70	changes in customs, funerals	author
11.08.2012	Maytelime	coastal plain	1	male	~ 40	samata	author
11.08.2012	Maytelime	coastal plain	2	male	42, ~ 40	changes in customs, livestock, raiding	author
11.08.2012	Maytelime	coastal plain	2	male	42, ~ 40	samata, transhumance	author

<sup>67</sup> There are two villages named Ankilibory in the study region, one is next to Efoetse, in the former Commune of Beheloke (now Commune of Efoetse, marked here with "E"), the other one in next to Antanandranto in the Commune of Itampolo ("I")

Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
12.08.2012	Ankilibory (I)	coastal plain	4 or more	male	~ 70	funerals	author
12.08.2012	Ankilibory (I)	coastal plain	3	male	around 50	samata	author
12.08.2012	Ankilibory (I)	coastal plain	4 or more	male	around 40	samata	author
12.08.2012	Ankilibory (I)	coastal plain	1	male	~ 70	funerals, livestock	author
12.08.2012	Ankilibory (I)	coastal plain	1	male	~ 70	samata	author
13.08.2012	Maromitilike		1	male	63	changes in customs, funerals	author
13.08.2012	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	male	63	samata, transhumance	author
13.08.2012	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	male	35	samata	author
10.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	65	changes in customs, funerals	author
10.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	female	25	livestock	author
10.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	~ 50	changes in customs, funerals	author
10.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	female	70, ~ 30, ~ 50	changes in customs, funerals	author
10.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	77	changes in customs, funerals	author
11.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	30	livestock	author
11.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	2	female	19,17	changes in customs, livestock	author
11.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	45	livestock	author
11.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	3	mixed	50, ~ 30, ~ 16	changes in customs, funerals	author
13.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	65	changes in customs, , funerals, livestock	author
13.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	65	raiding	author

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Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
13.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	mixed	70	changes in customs, funerals	author
13.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	2	mixed	54, 35	changes in customs, funerals	author
13.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	25	changes in customs, livestock	author
13.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	around 30	samata	author
13.09.2012	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	60	samata	author
14.09.2012	Beheloke haut	coastal plain	1	mixed	~ 40	changes in customs, funerals	author
14.09.2012	Beheloke haut	coastal plain	1	male	40	samata	author
14.09.2012	Beheloke haut	coastal plain	1	male	15	samata	author
15.09.2012	Ankalindrano	coastal plain	1	male	55	samata	author
15.09.2012	Vatolalake	coastal plain	3	mixed	55, 35, 55	samata	author
17.09.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	2	female	32, 90	changes in customs, funerals	author
17.09.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	~ 35	changes in customs, funerals	author
18.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	1	male	39	samata in Vezo villages	author
18.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	1	male	19	samata in Vezo villages	author
18.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	1	male	70	changes in customs, funerals among the Vezo	author
18.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	4 or more	female	30, 18, 21, 45	changes in customs, funerals among the Vezo	author
18.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	1	male	~ 40	samata in Vezo villages	author
19.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	2	male	~ 20, ~ 40	samata in Vezo villages	author
19.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	1	female	32	samata in Vezo villages	author

Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
19.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	1	female	32	samata in Vezo villages	author
19.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	1	male	35	samata in Vezo villages	author
19.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	1	male	around 40	samata in Vezo villages	author
19.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	2	mixed	56, ~ 30	changes in customs, funerals among the Vezo	author
19.09.2012	Ambola	coastal plain	1	male	56	samata in Vezo villages	author
19.09.2012	Marofijery	coastal plain	2	female	36,32	funerals	author
20.09.2012	Antanandranto	coastal plain	2	female	~ 60	funerals	author
20.09.2012	Antanandranto	coastal plain	4 or more	male	~ 60	funerals	author
20.09.2012	Antanandranto	coastal plain	4 or more	male	all between 20-30	samata, transhumance	author
20.09.2012	Antanandranto	coastal plain	1	male	63	samata	author
20.09.2012	Antanandranto	coastal plain	1	male	40	samata	author
20.09.2012	Antanandranto	coastal plain	1	male	~ 40	samata	author
21.09.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	~ 60	transhumance, samata	author
21.09.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	30	transhumance, samata	author
21.09.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	50	transhumance, samata	author
21.09.2012	Maroarivo	plateau	1	male	~ 80	funerals	author
21.09.2012	Maroarivo	plateau	1	male	38	transhumance, samata	author
21.09.2012	Maroarivo	plateau	1	male	~ 60	funerals	author

Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
21.09.2012	Maroarivo	plateau	1	male	~ 60	transhumance	author
22.09.2012	Ambory	plateau	3	male	28, ~ 60, ~ 60	transhumance, changes in customs	author
22.09.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	~ 60	transhumance, samata	author
22.09.2012	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	55	funerals	author
23.09.2012	Ambory	plateau	4 or more	male	mixed	transhumance	author
23.09.2012	Ankazomateila	plateau	1	male	55	funerals	author
23.09.2012	Ankazomateila	plateau	1	male	55	transhumance	author
23.09.2012	Behalitany	plateau	1	male	20	transhumance, samata	author
18.04.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	unknown	samata	assistant
18.04.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	60	samata	assistant
19.04.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	67	samata	assistant
19.04.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	30	samata	assistant
21.04.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	unknown	samata	assistant
22.04.2013	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	male	40	samata	assistant
23.04.2013	Beheloke haut	coastal plain	1	male	32	samata	assistant
29.04.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	48	samata	assistant
06.06.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	~ 40	zebu herd history	assistant
06.06.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	62	zebu herd history	assistant
06.06.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	~ 40	samata	assistant



Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
07.06.2013	Beheloke	coastal plain	1	male	30	samata	assistant
07.06.2013	Beheloke	coastal plain	1	male	90	zebu herd history	assistant
07.06.2013	Beheloke	coastal plain	1	male	40	samata	assistant
07.06.2013	Beheloke	coastal plain	1	male	70	samata	assistant
07.06.2013	Beheloke	coastal plain	1	male	60	zebu herd history	assistant
07.06.2013	Beheloke	coastal plain	1	male	80	samata	assistant
08.06.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	40	samata	assistant
08.06.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	49	samata	assistant
08.06.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	48	samata	assistant
08.06.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	50	samata	assistant
08.06.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	45	samata	assistant
09.06.2013	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	male	40	samata	assistant
09.06.2013	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	male	50	zebu herd history	assistant
09.06.2013	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	male	60	samata	assistant
09.06.2013	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	male	42	zebu herd history	assistant
10.06.2013	Ambahivahy	coastal plain	1	male	40	samata	assistant
10.06.2013	Ambahivahy	coastal plain	1	male	36	samata	assistant
11.06.2013	Andremba I	coastal plain	1	male	75	zebu herd history	assistant
12.06.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	male	46	zebu herd history	assistant

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Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
13.06.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	male	85	zebu herd history	assistant
15.06.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	39	zebu herd history	assistant
16.06.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	73	zebu herd history	assistant
16.06.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	47	zebu herd history	assistant
17.06.2013	Beheloke haut	coastal plain	1	male	42	samata	assistant
17.06.2013	Beheloke haut	coastal plain	1	male	38	samata	assistant
17.06.2013	Beheloke haut	coastal plain	1	male	65	samata	assistant
17.06.2013	Beheloke haut	coastal plain	1	male	34	samata	assistant
03.08.2013	Itomboina	plateau	1	female	46	funerals	assistant
04.08.2013	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	34	funerals	assistant
05.08.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	31	funerals	assistant
06.08.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	52	funerals	assistant
08.08.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	~ 60	funerals	assistant
09.08.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	~ 35	zebu herd history	assistant
09.08.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	37	funerals	assistant
10.08.2013	Beheloke	coastal plain	1	female	31	funerals	assistant
13.08.2013	Andremba II	plateau	1	male	~ 45	funerals	assistant
14.08.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	male	50	funerals	assistant
16.08.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	61	funerals	assistant

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Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
27.08.2013	Andreмба I	plateau	1	male	30	transhumance	author
27.08.2013	Ambola	coastal plain	1	male	35	funerals	author
27.08.2013	Sainta	plateau	1	male	33	transhumance	author
27.08.2013	Sainta	plateau	1	male	unknown	transhumance	author
27.08.2013	Sainta	plateau	1	male	55	transhumance	author
28.08.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	3	mixed	45, 20, 60	funerals	author
28.08.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	66	transhumance	author
28.08.2013	Vatolalake	coastal plain	2	female	45	funerals	author
28.08.2013	Vatolalake	coastal plain	1	male	60-70	samata	author
28.08.2013	Vatolalake	coastal plain	1	male	unknown	samata	author
29.08.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	around 55	funerals	author
29.08.2013	Maytelime	coastal plain	2	mixed	48,66	funerals	author
29.08.2013	Maytelime	coastal plain	2	mixed	~ 50	transhumance	author
29.08.2013	Maytelime	coastal plain	1	male	66	samata	author
30.08.2013	Anakao	coastal plain	1	male	53	samata	author
30.08.2013	Anakao	coastal plain	1	male	53	transhumance	author
30.08.2013	Anakao	coastal plain	3	mixed	55,53, 53	funerals	author
30.08.2013	Anakao	coastal plain	2	male	52, 50	samata	author
07.09.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	23	funerals	author

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Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
07.09.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	2	male	17,18	funerals	author
08.09.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	male	85	funerals	author
08.09.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	male	85	Transhumance	author
08.09.2013	Ambatry	plateau	2	mixed	67, 61	funerals	author
08.09.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	~ 50	funerals	author
09.09.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	38	funerals	author
09.09.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	46	transhumance	author
09.09.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	female	45	funerals	author
09.09.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	28	funerals	author
09.09.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	28	transhumance	author
09.09.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	20	funerals	author
09.09.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	female	15	funerals	author
09.09.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	female	40	funerals	author
10.09.2013	Anakaraka	coastal plain	2	male	~ 80, ~ 25	funerals	author
10.09.2013	Anakaraka	coastal plain	1	male	~ 80	samata	author
10.09.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	~ 60	transhumance	author
10.09.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	female	27	funerals	author
10.09.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	2	female	15, 20	funerals	author
10.09.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	46	funerals	author

## Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
14.09.2013	Anakao	coastal plain	2	male	~ 80, 22	funerals	author
14.09.2013	Anakao	coastal plain	1	female	65	funerals	author
15.09.2013	Ankalindrano	coastal plain	1	male	30	samata	author
15.09.2013	Soalara	coastal plain	1	male	~ 66	samata, transhumance	author
15.09.2013	Soalara	coastal plain	2	male	50, ~ 40	funerals	author
15.09.2013	Soalara	coastal plain	1	male	50	samata	author
15.09.2013	Soalara	coastal plain	1	male	59	transhumance, funerals	author
15.09.2013	Soalara	coastal plain	2	male	59	funerals	author
16.09.2013	Behazomby	coastal plain	1	male	42	samata	author
16.09.2013	Behazomby	coastal plain	1	male	42	samata	author
16.09.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	2	male	~ 70, 45	funerals	author
16.09.2013	Manasy	coastal plain	1	male	~ 60	samata	author
16.09.2013	Manasy	coastal plain	1	male	~ 20	samata	author
16.09.2013	Manasy	coastal plain	1	male	42	funerals	author
16.09.2013	Manasy	coastal plain	1	male	42	funerals	author
16.09.2013	Manasy	coastal plain	1	male	42	samata	author
16.09.2013	Manasy	coastal plain	1	male	~ 40	samata	author
17.09.2013	Ankilimivony	coastal plain	1	male	54	funerals	author
17.09.2013	Ankilimivony	coastal plain		male	54	samata	author

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Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
17.09.2013	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	female	17	funerals	author
17.09.2013	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	female	17	funerals	author
17.09.2013	Maromitilike	coastal plain	2	both	40, 56	funerals	author
17.09.2013	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	male	56	samata	author
18.09.2013	Ankilibory (I)	coastal plain	1	male	67	funerals	author
18.09.2013	Ankilibory (I)	coastal plain	1	male	67	samata	author
18.09.2013	Tariboly	coastal plain	3	male	30, 35, 60	samata in Vezo villages	author
18.09.2013	Tariboly	coastal plain	3	male	30, 26, 20	samata in Vezo villages	author
18.09.2013	Tariboly	coastal plain	3	male	52, 58, 28	samata in Vezo villages	author
18.09.2013	Vohombe	coastal plain	1	male	56	samata	author
18.09.2013	Vohombe	coastal plain	1	male	45	funerals	author
18.09.2013	Vohombe	coastal plain	1	male	45	funerals	author
18.09.2013	Vohombe	coastal plain	1	male	45	samata	author
19.09.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	2	male	both ~ 45	funerals	author
19.09.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	~ 25	funerals	author
19.09.2013	Besambay	coastal plain	1	male	45	samata in Vezo villages	author
19.09.2013	Besambay	coastal plain	1	male	20	samata in Vezo villages	author
19.09.2013	Besambay	coastal plain	2	male	~ 35, 53	samata in Vezo villages	author
19.09.2013	Besambay	coastal plain	3	both	35, 32, 14	samata in Vezo villages	author

Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
20.09.2013	Ambahivahy	coastal plain	4 or more	mixed	mixed	funerals	author
20.09.2013	Ambahivahy	coastal plain	2	male	~ 70, 53	samata	author
20.09.2013	Ampasinabo	coastal plain	1	male	37	funerals	author
20.09.2013	Andranotohoke	coastal plain	4 or more	mixed	mixed	funerals	author
20.09.2013	Beheloke haut	coastal plain	1	male	~ 45	funerals	author
20.09.2013	Beheloke haut	coastal plain	1	male	~ 45	funerals	author
21.09.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	~ 70	funerals	author
21.09.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	2	male	35, 42	funerals	author
21.09.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	38	funerals	author
21.09.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	36	funerals	author
21.09.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	36	funerals	author
22.09.2013	Antanandranto	coastal plain	1	male	64	funerals	author
22.09.2013	Antanandranto	coastal plain	1	male	64	samata	author
22.09.2013	Behazomby	coastal plain	2	male	30	samata	author
22.09.2013	Kaikarivo	coastal plain	4 or more	mixed	mixed	funerals	author
22.09.2013	Kaikarivo	coastal plain	1	male	60	funerals	author
22.09.2013	Kaikarivo	coastal plain	1	male	60	samata	author
22.09.2013	Kaikarivo	coastal plain	1	male	49	samata	author
16.10.2013	Maromitilike	coastal plain	1	male	43	funerals	assistant

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Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
17.10.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	57	funerals	assistant
17.10.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	50	funerals	assistant
17.10.2013	Ankilibory (E)	coastal plain	1	male	53	funerals	assistant
17.10.2013	Behazomby	coastal plain	1	male	28	funerals	assistant
17.10.2013	Behazomby	coastal plain	1	female	40	funerals	assistant
18.10.2013	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	22	funerals	assistant
18.10.2013	Maromena	coastal plain	4 or more	female	30, 22, 18, 21	samata in Vezo villages	assistant
18.10.2013	Maromena	coastal plain	1	male	45	samata in Vezo villages	assistant
18.10.2013	Maromena	coastal plain	1	male	65	samata in Vezo villages	assistant
19.10.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	unknown	funerals	assistant
19.10.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	30	samata	assistant
19.10.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	23	funerals	assistant
22.10.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	male	27	funerals	assistant
22.10.2013	Miarentsoa	plateau	1	male	36	funerals	assistant
25.11.2013	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	50	funerals	assistant
25.11.2013	Itomboina	plateau	1	female	~ 40	funerals	assistant
25.11.2013	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	28	funerals	assistant
25.11.2013	Itomboina	plateau	1	female	25	funerals	assistant
25.11.2013	Itomboina	plateau	1	female	20	funerals	assistant



## Appendix

Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
26.11.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	27	funerals	assistant
26.11.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	20	funerals	assistant
26.11.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	18	funerals	assistant
26.11.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	female	36	funerals	assistant
26.11.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	38	funerals	assistant
26.11.2013	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	~ 70	transhumance	assistant
26.11.2013	Andremba II	plateau	1	female	23	funerals	assistant
26.11.2013	Andremba II	plateau	2	male	35	funerals	assistant
26.11.2013	Itomboina	plateau	1	female	36	funerals	assistant
26.11.2013	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	60	funerals	assistant
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	2	male	31, 36	funerals	assistant
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	36	funerals	assistant
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	~ 20	funerals	assistant
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	female	41	funerals	assistant
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	19	funerals	assistant
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	unknown	funerals	assistant
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	2	female	48	funerals	assistant
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	64	samata	assistant
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	female	30	funerals	assistant

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Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	37	funerals	assistant
27.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	20	funerals	assistant
28.11.2013	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	45	funerals	assistant
28.11.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	25	funerals	assistant
28.11.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	female	~ 45	funerals	assistant
28.11.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	female	43	funerals	assistant
28.11.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	female	28	funerals	assistant
28.11.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	27	transhumance	assistant
28.11.2013	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	21	funerals	assistant
29.11.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	female	45	funerals	assistant
29.11.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	female	39	transhumance	assistant
29.11.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	female	19	funerals	assistant
29.11.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	female	29	funerals	assistant
29.11.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	male	41	funerals	assistant
29.11.2013	Ambatry	plateau	1	female	25	funerals	assistant
04.02.2014	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	35	funerals	assistant
04.02.2014	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	21	funerals	assistant
04.02.2014	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	18	funerals	assistant
04.02.2014	Andremba I	plateau	1	female	22	funerals	assistant

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Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
04.02.2014	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	32	funerals	assistant
04.02.2014	Andremba I	plateau	1	male	52	funerals	assistant
05.02.2014	Ambahivahy	coastal plain	1	male	35	funerals	assistant
05.02.2014	Ambahivahy	coastal plain	1	male	50	samata	assistant
05.02.2014	Ambahivahy	coastal plain	1	male	17	funerals	assistant
05.02.2014	Ambahivahy	coastal plain	1	male	~ 50	samata	assistant
05.02.2014	Ambahivahy	coastal plain	1	female	23	funerals	assistant
05.02.2014	Ambahivahy	coastal plain	1	female	22	funerals	assistant
06.02.2014	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	32	funerals	assistant
06.02.2014	Itomboina	plateau	1	male	34	funerals	assistant
07.02.2014	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	60	funerals	assistant
07.02.2014	Marofijery	coastal plain	1	male	31	funerals	assistant
08.02.2014	Efoetse	coastal plain	2	male	28, 27	funerals	assistant
08.02.2014	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	20	funerals	assistant
08.02.2014	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	23	funerals	assistant
08.02.2014	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	female	40	funerals	assistant
09.02.2014	Maromena	coastal plain	1	male	65	samata in Vezo villages	assistant
09.02.2014	Maromena	coastal plain	1	male	65	samata in Vezo villages	assistant
09.02.2014	Maromena	coastal plain	1	male	60	samata in Vezo villages	assistant

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Date	Village / hamlet	Area	No. interviewees	Sex	Age <sup>65</sup>	Topic <sup>66</sup>	Conducted by
09.02.2014	Maromena	coastal plain	1	male	28	samata in Vezo villages	assistant
10.02.2014	Ambatry	plateau	3	mixed	27, 38, 40, 45	funerals	assistant
10.02.2014	Ambatry	plateau	2	male	50, 70	funerals	assistant
10.02.2014	Ambatry	plateau	1	male	38	funerals	assistant
10.02.2014	Ambatry	plateau	2	male	40, 28	funerals	assistant
23.04.2014	Efoetse	coastal plain	1	male	47	funerals	assistant
24.04.2014	Maromena	coastal plain	1	female	45	samata in Vezo villages	assistant
24.04.2014	Maromena	coastal plain	1	female	50	samata in Vezo villages	assistant

## **B: Appendix to chapter 2**

### **Interview documentation**

#### *Interview guideline for one-person-interviews (men) on the zebu herd passport*

- Who owns a passport?
- What is written in the passport?
- What is the way this passport was introduced?
  - o Who got the idea? Where, which village? Which organization?
  - o When was this?
  - o What was the idea behind it?
- How did it happen that today all people who go to another village have to show this passport?
- Where do people get the passport?
  - o When they have to show the passport to the *president de fokontany*, does the president write something down in the passport, sign it, etc., or he just has a look on it? Does this always cost money? If yes, how much?

### **C: Appendix to chapter 3**

#### ***Digression 1: Samata privatization and conflicts on Vezo-territory***

My research assistant and I conducted 15 interviews in different Vezo-villages (Besambay, Ambola, Tariboly, Maromena). These villages and their territory are all close to neighboring Tanalana-villages. As Vezo-people gain their livelihood from fishing and use zebu as gifts but are not involved in livestock raising itself<sup>68</sup>, they do not have a use of the samata growing on their territory. Thus, my interest was to know if and how this samata is used, if private property rights or right claims on the stocks exist, and how Vezo-people think about samata-ownership.

The interviews revealed that in all four Vezo-*fokontany*, both Vezo-people as well as herd owners from the neighboring Tanalana-villages have appropriated *samata* by fencing, marking, or putting livestock corrals.

However, a strong discontent with appropriation - may it be by Vezo or Tanalana - was only reported twice. The discourse that *samata* naturally belongs to cattle owners was however often presented, tight to the perception that the people from the neighboring Tanalana villages are currently the legitimate owners also of all wild *samata* on Vezo-territory. Furthermore, most Vezo-interviewees stated indifference that Tanalana-people use, appropriate and today also sell the *samata* on Vezo-territory, or might potentially do so in the future. In general, interviewees felt that it was anyhow better to avoid conflicts with the Tanalana-people and thus to keep passive, or that the current situation could anyway not be changed in favor of the Vezo.

However, some Vezo-communities had faced specific or general conflicts about the appropriation of samata by locals or neighboring Tanalana. In Maromena and Besambay, in 2012 these conflicts led to the creation of community rules banning appropriation. Similar to the situation in the Tanalana-villages, also most of the Vezo-interviewees had very little knowledge on this issue.

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<sup>68</sup> Livestock and particularly cattle is exchanged, given away, and received in the course of cultural events, especially in Vezo-funerals.

***Interview guidelines***

**Guideline for one-person-interviews with samata plantation owners<sup>69</sup>**

- How many places with planted samata do you have?
- How many samata trees comprise the plantation(s)?
- Why did you or your father decide to start planting samata?
- Does the land belong to somebody?
- Did the land belong to somebody before you started planting there?
  
- How was the land used before the establishment of the plantation? What type of places are these? (around the house, field, *vala n boka*, around the corral, *monto*, etc.)
- When did you or your father start to plant samata on this place?
- Where did you (or your father) get the trees from?
- Did it happen that the samata trees died after you have planted them?
- How old where the trees you planted?
- In which months can you plant samata?
- Where did you learn from how to plant samata?
- Do you know a method how to sow/multiply samata?
- Does the former use of the land (i.e. as field, pasture or corral) have an effect on the growth of the samata?
- When will the trees you planted be ready for harvesting – how old should they be then, minimum?
- When the trees are ready for harvesting, for how many zebu und for how long will the samata in your plantation or plantations approx. last?
- Is there any method to speed up the growth of samata or to influence its quality?
- If you harvested the samata moderately now, how long does it take until you can harvest it again?
- Does the amount of rain influence the growth of samata?
  
- Do you or your family harvest/plan to harvest the samata yourself or do you sell/plan to sell it?
  - If the samata is harvested: When/under which conditions will you start using it?

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<sup>69</sup> This guideline was developed together with my colleague Dr. Regina Neudert who also worked on livestock issues.

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- If you own livestock on your own, and feed your animals on samata: Why don't you prefer to sell it?
  
- Do you own livestock? (zebu, sheep, goats)
  - o If yes: Do you feed your livestock with samata?
    - If yes, only the cattle or also goat/sheep?
    - If yes, where do you get this from normally?
    - Do you have to pay for access on samata?
  
- Do you/your herder go on transhumance to other areas of the coastal plain with the livestock?
  
  
- Do you think the total amount of samata around the village (both the private one and the one for the *fokonolo*) is enough for feeding the livestock of your village?
  
- How many people in your village approx. plant samata?
  - o How many people plant just a few trees around their house or around/inside the corral, or field?
  - o How many people plant "real", bigger plantations?
  
- Compared to 10 years ago, do now people in your village plant more or less samata?
  
- Compared to other villages, do the people in your village plant less or more samata?
  
- What are, according to your opinion, the causes why people plant more/less samata in your village compared to elsewhere?
  
- Is there an agreement for your village to limit the size of samata plantation every person is allowed to have? (like a *dina*, or *lily*, or other agreement).
  - o If yes, how big is this area?
  
- Do you plan to extend or reduce your samata plantation in the future?
  - o If yes: Please explain why you want to extend or reduce it.



**Guideline for one-person- or group-interviews on samata in Vezo-villages (applied in Maromena)**

- To whom does the samata around your village of Maromena belong?
- Is there private samata on the territory of your village?
  - o If yes, who owns the private ones?
  - o If yes, what are the signs of privacy/how can somebody see that this samata is private and should not be used by others/does not belong to the fokonolo or others?
- Are there Tanalana people who use samata here?
  - o If yes, why do they have the right to use it? Does it belong to them?
- Is there anybody from this village who keeps livestock and uses the samata for feeding it? Does he/they own the samata?
- What, if or when somebody from somewhere else (Tanalana village far away) comes here to use the samata for free - Is this okay?
- Are there people/cattle owners who fence samata on the village territory?
- Do you know if everybody is allowed to fence and as much as he likes?
- Do the cattle owners from the neighboring Tanalana villages have cattle corrals on the territory of this village?
  - o If yes, do you know about the Tanalana-rule that the samata around the corral is private?
    - If yes, how big is this area?
- Have the people here ever thought about selling samata to people coming from other villages?
  - o If no, wouldn't it be a good business?
- Would it be okay, or if this happens, is it okay if/that Tanalana people sell samata growing on the territory of this village?
- Have there ever been conflicts about samata in which people from this village were involved?
  - o If yes, when was it and what was the conflict about

***Photos of samata and its use***

(All photos taken by Johanna Goetter)



Figure 30: *Samata* (*Euphorbia stenoclada* Baill.)



Figure 31: A *samata* landscape - view into the monto towards the coast (next to Ankiririza)



Figure 32: *Samata* used for shade in the village of Manasy



Figure 33: *Samata* is also welcome for drying newly washed laundry



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Figure 34: Cattle eating chopped *samata* inside a village corral



Figure 35: *Samata* brought to the village to feed the cattle (village of Efoetse)



Figure 36: Leftovers of having cut *samata* (next to Maromitilike)



Figure 37: Heavily cut *samata* tree (next to Ambatomainty)



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Figure 38: Oldest *samata* tree on the territory of Ankiririza, according to our guides



Figure 39: Old *samata* tree next to Marofijery



Figure 40: Heavy cutting heaving let to the death of the *samata* tree (next to Maromotilike)



Figure 41: Another example of too heavy cutting heaving let to the death of the *samata* tree (next to Maromotilike)



**Freely available *samata* stocks (*samata na fokonolo*)**



Figure 42: Free *samata* stock (next to Maromitilike)



Figure 43: Heavily cut free *samata* stock (next to Marofijery)



Figure 44: Free *samata* stock of very low density (next to Ankilibory, Commune de Itampolo)



Figure 45: Free *samata* stocks (next to Ankiririza)



Figure 46: Free *samata* stocks (next to Beroka)



Figure 47: Dense free *samata* stock (next to Maromitilike)

**Samata stocks with restricted use**

*Samata in the vicinity of livestock corrals*



Figure 48: Private *samata* around a livestock corral (next to Ankilibory, Commune de Beheloke/Efoetse)



Figure 49: Same livestock corral as in Figure 48, view from inside



Figure 50: Private *samata* in the vicinity of a livestock corral (next to Kaikarivo)



Figure 51: Private *samata* in the vicinity of a livestock corral (next to Ankilibory, Commune de Itampolo)



*Fenced samata*



Figure 52: Private (fenced) *samata* stock inside an agricultural field (next to Marofijery)



Figure 53: Fenced *samata* stock (next to Maromitilike)



Figure 54: Private *samata* (fenced with agave) (next to Beroka)



Figure 55: Private *samata* (fence not visible) (next to Antanandranto)

*Marked samata*



Figure 56: Private *samata* marked by cactus (next to Manasy)



Figure 57: Cactus as a "mark" indicating private property claims (next to Efoetse)



*Samata plantations*



Figure 58: Small *samata* plantation in the village of Maromitilike



Figure 59: Young man in front of the old *samata* plantation of his father in the monto (Ankiririza)



Figure 60: *Samata* plantation inside the Vezo village of Kaikarivo



Figure 61: *Samata* plantation next to the Vezo village of Besambay

*Samata* next to graves



Figure 62: *Samata* stock taboo to cut because of its vicinity to grave next to (east of) the main road from Beheloke to Ankalindrano – see Figure 63 for comparison, about 5 meters away



Figure 63: Free *samata* stock next to (west of) the main road from Beheloke to Ankalindrano

## C: Appendix to Chapter 4

### ***Digression 2: Activities of a funeral***

The death of a person entrains the following activities and ceremonies of a burial (*fandevena*):

1) Right after having passed away: Condolence by the other families of the village [during interviews, this was not seen as a custom (*fomba*), respectively not described by interviewees when asked to relate the steps what is done after a death, or asked to describe the customs related to funeral]. Often there is food and money collected from other families of the same *raza*, to be given to the family.

2) Making the coffin (*firahazo*): Most coffins are still not brought from the town, but made by the villagers themselves with wood taken from the nearest forest. This cutting of the wood is a public activity, where several men from the village are involved, normally all clans are represented. The activity demands the slaughtering of at least one zebu (ideally a big castrated one) which is eaten by all helpers in the forest, and of a goat. Also alcohol (*toake gasy*) is distributed. The meat of the goat is distributed to the village community (*fokonolo*). The number of slaughtered zebras may rise up to 10. Since some few years (e.g. 2010), alternatively the coffin is directly bought in Toliara, as it is often difficult to find proper wood in the forest (means trees are too small). Also then, a zebu has to be slaughtered and its meat given to the *fokonolo*.

3) Few days after passing away: First burial to bury the corpse in a provisional way (under stones), killing a zebu and announcing the death to the ancestors (*fagnambara*).

4) Preparing the stones for the grave (*mitaombato*): This activity take around 4-6 days. Every single day of work, a goat is slaughtered for food and alcohol is distributed, and in the end a sheep is slaughtered on the tomb.

5) Mostly one to two years after the death: Several days' funeral party (*fisa, havoria, havoriambe*) finished by specific gift-giving day (*rorombola*): see explanations in Chapter 4.

5) Same day of *rorombola* or the day after: Destroying the death person's hut (*homan trano*): Taking the hut out of the village and burn it.

6) The same day: Completing the grave by filling it up with stones.

7) Afterwards: Slaughtering some livestock (normally a zebu and a goat) and distribute the meat to the different clans and important people (only men are present, the women go back to the village after having participated in completing the grave. The women all have a meal together).

***Digression 3: Famous funeral music bands***

List of all reported famous funeral orchestras:

The interviews revealed the following most famous music bands (*orquestra*) that play at funeral parties

1. Star/Sitara – the most famous and expensive one (costs: 120.000 to 3.000 000 MGA (when for one week))
2. Behadsa/Ehadsa - the second most famous (costs: minimum 600.000 MGA reported)
3. Mahita
4. Rebiry, Ebiry
5. Emiha
6. Emare/Remare
7. Solange
8. Sahidy
9. Mahafaly Mihisa
10. Njara
11. Lambodoary
12. Theodore
13. Mahavoahy
14. Mila mihetsike



Figure 64: The band “Mila mihetsike” preparing to play at a funeral party in Andranotohoke (15.09.2013)

***Digression 4: Changes in customs not related to funerals***

Analogous to customs about funerals, the new customs reported in interviews on other issues such as weddings and circumcisions are also said to be taken over from another ethnic group or 'just invented' by the people.

The new or changed customs always imply additional spending for each event like wedding or circumcision, mainly in the form of a ceremonial gift towards somebody (e.g. money for the bride's mother, so-called *peteroly*). More importantly, many traditional customs have changed in the way that the original design was supplemented by new ceremonial duties or standards (e.g. new or higher gift duty, new standard that a wedding needs a party or at least some kind of banquet).

In general, this has made most ceremony packages (e.g. a wedding) much more expensive, and, as many older people say, 'much more complicated'.

"No, [the size and type of the present] is different [today], because in the past, people just followed their own way of making a gift, even if it was a small present it was kindly received, whatever you gave away, even if it was only one Ariary or one goat. But nowadays, there is gossip about the gift, for example people make nasty remarks about you when you don't give a lot. Nowadays, when people want to do a wedding, that will mean a lot of expenses..." [18:46, female, age: around 70]



***Digression 5: Overview of customs related to marriage and getting children***

Giving a comprehensive, triangulated picture on actual wedding customs in the study regions turns out to be relatively difficult as it seems that there are many different ways of doing a wedding and terms of customs differ highly from region to region, or change names although people state that in the end it is the same thing.

However, it is undoubted that today a marriage includes more activities like parties or rituals and more spending or consumption of livestock (and alcohol).

An elder woman from the village of Efoetse described it like this:

“About wedding, formerly people were *loihé ty ndaty*, the woman was taken by the man without somebody’s knowledge, like stealing the woman. When she arrived at the man’s home, his family sends people to let her father know, to tell him that he shouldn’t worry, but that his daughter was taken by the son last night. And they brought one or two goats, that depended on the possibility of the man, that was not complicated, in the past. [...] Nowadays, the custom is that when you love each other, the man’s parents go to the woman’s parents and bring two goats with some drinks and ask the woman to her father. The real custom is now, when there is a wedding, you bring two goats, some drinks in crates, alcohol, and money called *peterolin-droakemba (peteroly)* for the bride’s mother, it’s about 40.000 Ariary or 70.000 Ariary or 80.000 Ariary, that depends on your possibility. [...] Nowadays, there are a lot of different ways of wedding here in the village, like a custom called *falintsitake*. For this, the father of the man brings three goats - two goats for doing the *soritroke* and one more goat for doing *falintsitake*, that is to say: two goats get slaughtered - one for *soritroke* and one for *falintsitake*, these are eaten together, and one goes to the woman’s parents. The money called *peteroly* is received by the woman’s mother, but you are sharing that money while you give it to the mother, like for example, you bring 80.000 Ariary, then 40.000 Ariary are shared between the sisters of the mother in law and 40.000 Ariary are for her.” [27:32, female, age: around 70]

In the words of an elder man from Ambatry, a Tanalana village on the plateau, marriage has developed in the following way:

“In the past, the marriage was done simply - but today it’s a little bit complicated. Before it was like this: For example I have a son and somebody else has a daughter, and here, in the past, people chose an ethnic group before marrying, like I wanted a person who has the same ethnic as mine for marrying my children. As I have the son, I asked for the

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daughter of somebody for being the wife of my son. So then her father agreed by saying “bring her”. And I chose a day to take the daughter home. Then I brought her home, and after eight days I brought a zebu for doing *sacrificing it* at the *hazomanga* (ceremonial rodd of the Tanalana clans, kept by the corresponding *mpitan-kazomanga*), so she becomes my son’s wife. And when the couple had a child, I brought a zebu again to the *hazomanga* to do a sacrifice, and that was the marriage in the past. Today, when two people, a girl and a boy, meet each other and love each other, I ask my son: “Whose daughter do you take?”. So then he says “the daughter of the man living somewhere there”. Then I go to request her hand at her father there; and then I do *fiboaha* [giving a zebu to the parents in law], so if the parent accepts, I pay her parents some money, like 60,000 Ariary or 100,000 Ariary. And then I go back home, and the next time I will again go to her father and bring some money for looking after his daughter - it’s about 60,000 Ariary up to 1,000,000 Ariary, so that her parents can buy some things and furniture and the daughter brings those stuff here to me for my son and her household. And one month later, I will bring another zebu to her parent again. That is the marriage in Malagasy custom.” [100:101, male, age: 85]

In a nutshell, the most relevant customary or ritualized activities concerning a marriage and the birth of children are the following:

*Takomaso*: The future groom requests his future wife’s hand in marriage at her parents (only if she still lives with them). The act involves slaughtering a goat and spending alcohol.

*Soritroke / sintake / tombopoetse / fiboaha / falintsitake*: Described as a relatively “new” custom, or better said several customs often performed together. The activities require slaughtering a zebu or at least two goats (one for the *falintsitake*, one for the *soritroke*) with the meat distributed to the present families of bride and groom, as well as one goat in the frame of the *soritroke* that is a gift for the bride’s parents. The custom is often ending in a party with many guests and gifts from those (money, items for the household). In the case of Tanalana people, the activities often also include a ceremony for good luck and good wishes (*falintata*) with the *mpitan-kazomanga* who slaughters a sheep or cook. The custom is in general said to make the parents in law accept the husband.

*Mandiavay*: Custom described as “new” and carried out during a funeral party of a man’s family in law in case he has still not done the required customs of a wedding, done “normalize” his marriage and make it official. The *mandiavay* implies giving a zebu to his father in law and money (*peteroly*) to his mother in law.

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*Soronanake*: The husband of a pregnant wife sacrifices a zebu for the father in law.

*Fandeo*: The ceremony is done in order to make an official bond between father and children, to make the children “belong” to the father. The father has to give one zebu to his parents in law. Often a party takes place and the guests give presents to the couple (but no animals), in the case of a party the father also gives money and drinks to the parents in law.

For more information on these customs, see Lucien (without year).



***Interview guidelines for the study on changes in funerary gift-giving***

**Guideline for one-person interviews (men and women) about their participation in funerals and their perception of continuity and change**

About his/her own gift-giving behavior:

- Did you attend any funeral as a guest in the last 3 years including this year?
  - o If yes, please describe for every single funeral: Where and which year the funeral took place/will take place, which relation you have with the dead person and who invited you.
  - o Did you/your husband give/will you give a gift?
    - If yes, please explain what/how much and to whom.
- Did and do you/your husband have zebu now and had at the time of these funerals?
- On what does it depend what (e.g. zebu, other animal or money) and how much you give away as gift for a funeral?
- Please explain if the type and amount of gift (zebu, money, etc.) you gave away in the last years were defined by a certain rule (*lily*) or custom (*fomba*) or expectation by the receivers or if you did freely decide what to give.
- Have these family been attending a funeral organized by you/your husband before?
- If yes, is there a reciprocal giving relation (*kivaleo*) with the gifts?
  - o If no, please explain why not.
- About *kivaleo*: What is the custom? Should the gift given back be same size/bigger/smaller as the one first given away? Is it okay when the gift given back is something smaller/of less value?
- Did you/your husband ever give away - or do you plan to give away in future - zebus as gifts to people you are not family (in law) with, but friends, other people you know, etc...?
- Did you ever loan a zebu for giving it away as a gift?
  - o If yes, please explain when (approximately) and to whom you gave it away.
- Was there an occasion of gift-giving for funeral where you/your husband gave more than 1 zebu away in one single funeral?

About funerals and gift-giving more in general:

- What is your opinion: is the way of doing funeral, including funeral parties, today still the traditional *fomban-draza*? If no, please explain why it is not the *fomban-draza* anymore.

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- Some people say that the parents today are stricter about the gifts and that they often demand to ask for the gift they think they should receive or have the right to receive. Is this true<sup>70</sup>?
- Please explain how the invitations for funeral parties are done in your region: Do people say “*mitalily*” and “*manambara (aomby)*” and do these expressions mean the same? Is there an expression to inform you to bring a zebu?
- How often did it happen that you got an invitation saying you/your husband should bring a zebu?
- Did you ever organize or attend a funeral, or heard from sons in law that didn’t bring at least 1 zebu to their father in law?
  - If yes, what is your estimation how often this happens?
- Is it true that that today and/or in the past there were parents who took their daughter back and married her again because the son in law didn’t bring a zebu?
  - If yes, why can they do this, is it a rule or custom that allows them to do so?
  - If yes, what is this custom called?
  - Do you know any case from this or another village where it happened?
  - If yes, when?
  - If yes, was this only before, or does it happen or at least could happen also today?
- Some people say that in the past there were some explicit rules for the guests on what and how much to bring. Others say that in the past you brought what you wanted to give or could afford and it was okay for the organizers. What is your perspective of the situation in the past, and of the situation today?
- Do you think it is true that today people focus more on the gifts and the ‘what and how much’, guests as well as organizers?
  - If yes, what is the reason this attitude changed?
  - If yes, if people today focus mostly on gifts while there is a funeral party, on what did people focus in the past?
- Some people say it is a new development that people try to boast/get fame/do *rengerenge* when being a guest in a funeral party. What is your opinion: Did the *rengerenge* from guests exist already in the past when there were occasions to bring gifts to the family of a death?
- If yes, what did people bring in order to do *rengerenge*? Did this start sometime in the past, or was it always like this?

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<sup>70</sup> Although it is often said that a good practice of interviewing avoids such closed questions that already pretend an opinion or description, my own experience from field work is that people in the study area mostly openly contradict a suggested opinion or information if they think this is wrong.

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- Is it today, or was it in the past the custom of this village to put the horns of all zebus spend for the burial of a men on the grave? Please explain.

**Guideline for one-person-interviews (men only) about their participation in funerals**

- Did you ever organize a funeral where you got gifts?
  - o If yes, when and where was this funeral and who had died? (if several, please give a short information about all).
  - o In all the funerals that you have organized: Where there gifts that astonished you a lot, because they were very small or very big or a in another way you hadn't expected to get?
  - o Did it happen that you did already know what a guest would bring because he/she announced it to you or you heard rumors, somebody else told you, etc.?
  - o Did you cover the expenses with the gifts you got in the party you organized?
  - o Have there been guests who gave more than 1 zebu per person or per family?
  - o If yes, which relation did they have with the dead person or your family? (parent in law, friend, ...)
- Please choose one funeral party you have organized:
  - o Which type of grave did the death person get (traditional rocks, well worked rocks, cement...)
  - o How much livestock and money did you "spend" for organizing the funeral?
  - o Please explain how many animals were used for the different steps of preparing the funeral (cutting the wood for the coffin, digging the rocks,...), how the animals were used (sacrificed, killed as food, sold for getting money,...) and how many of these were given by you.
  - o How much money and sheep did you spend for organizing the party, like goats for food, money for rice and drinks, share of money for the music band or DJ?
  - o Where did you get the goats from? Did you buy them with money, did you loan them and paid back in zebras you got as gifts? If yes, how many goats did you buy/loan and how much did you have to give back in zebras?
  - o How many zebras, goats/sheep and money did you get from the guests as gifts?

**Guideline for one-person- or group-interviews (men and women) on funerals and gifts in the year 2013**

- Please cite all funeral parties in the region that took place or will take place in this year (2013), with village and month.
- For each party, please indicate how much gifts (livestock, money) were given, as far as you know.
- Please tell about a party longer ago than 2012 which was famous and tell why it got famous and how much gifts were given.
- If the funeral got famous because the dead person was very rich, in which way did this lead to the funeral's fame, how was his wealth visible in the funeral.

**Guideline for one-person-interviews with people between 17 and 25 (men and women) on their knowledge on funerary customs**

- Have you ever heard some older people talking about the way funerals were done in the past or about a special funeral that took place many years ago (like the grandmother's funeral)?
  - If yes, was it while you were having a direct conversation with this older person, or did you just hear other people talking about this?
- In general, do you know if the way of doing funerals, including funeral parties, is the *fomban-draza*, or have there been changes?
  - If yes, what are these changes?
- When a guest is invited to a party and wants to bring a gift, is there any *lily* or *fomba* what to bring?
- Do you know if the costs of doing a funeral are the same as in the past, let's say 15 or 30 years ago?

***Photos of funerals and funerary parties***

(All photos taken by Johanna Goetter)



Figure 65: Zebu gift driven through the dancing ground at a funeral party in Efoetse (22.09.2013)



Figure 66: Zebu gift driven through the dancing ground at a funeral party in Ankilibory (21.09.2013)



Figure 67: Furniture gifts presented on the dancing ground at a funeral party in Efoetse (22.09.2013)



Figure 68: Group of guests waiting to display their gifts (fabric and bowls) at a funeral in Efoetse (22.09.2013)



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Figure 69: Soft drinks for sale at a funeral party in Efoetse (22.09.2013)



Figure 70: Coffee and fruits of Ziziphus for sale at a funeral party in Ankilibory (21.09.2013)



Figure 71: Non local guests waiting in their camp during a funeral party in Ankilibory (21.09.2013)



Figure 72: Gift money (in a plastic bag), fabrics and cooking pot displayed at a funeral party in Efoetse (22.09.2013)



Figure 73: A music band playing at a funeral party in Efoetse (22.09.2013)



Figure 74: Spectators at a funeral party in Miarentsoa (09.09.2013)



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Figure 75: Corral with gift zebus at a funeral in Miarentsoa (09.09.2013)



Figure 76: Clearing up after a funeral party in Miarentsoa (10.09.2013)



Figure 77: People finishing the grave by filling it up with stones (Miarentsoa, 10.09.2013)



Figure 78: Zebu bucrania decorating the tomb (Miarentsoa, 10.09.2013)



Figure 79: All women having attended the finishing of the grave go back to the village of Miarentsoa (10.09.2013)



Figure 80: Sheep being slaughtered after having finished the tomb (Miarentsoa, 10.09.2013)



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Figure 81: Zebu going to be slaughtered after having finished the tomb (Miarentsoa, 10.09.2013)



Figure 82: Men waiting to get their share of goat and zebu meat (Miarentsoa, 10.09.2013)



Figure 83: The house of the deceased is disassembled and carried out of the village (Miarentsoa, 10.09.2013)



Figure 84: The house of the deceased is burnt (Miarentsoa, 10.09.2013)



Figure 85: Grave next to the road between Ankilibory and Besambay (coastal plain)



## Appendix



Figure 86: Grave next to the road from Bero to the North (coastal plain)



Figure 87: Graves next to the road from Behazomby to Maromitilike (coastal plain)



Figure 88: Grave next to the road north of Antanandranto (coastal plain)



Figure 89: Graves in the *monto* East of Andremba I (plateau)



Figure 90: Grave next to the road between Ambatry and Itomboina (plateau)

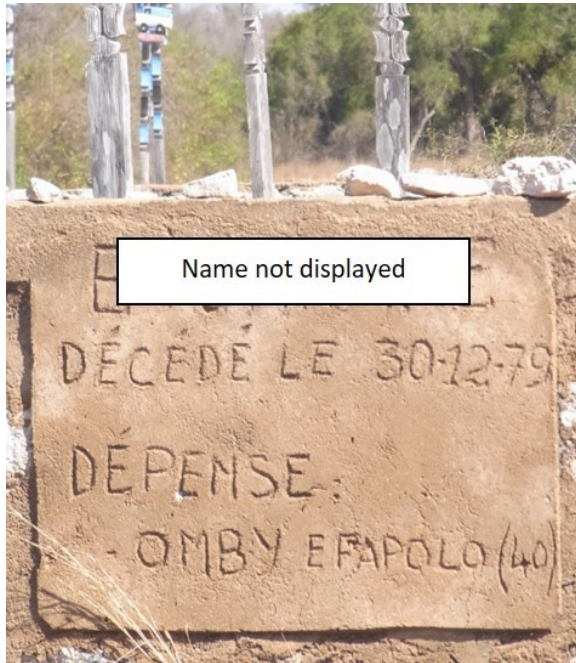


Figure 91: Detail of grave from 1979 in the monto East of Andremba I, indicating name, date and expenses in form of zebus

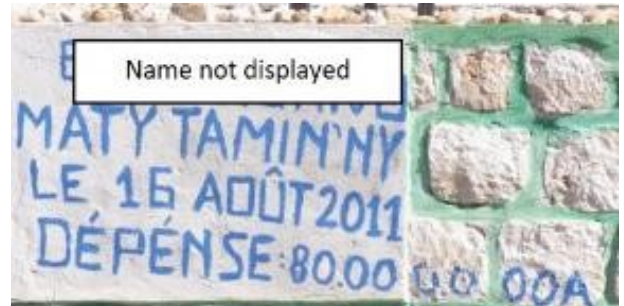


Figure 92: Detail of grave from 2011 in the monto East of Andremba I, indicating name, date and expenses in form of money