REBEGINNINGS: AGRICULTURAL INTERVENTION AND THE CRAFTING OF
STATE AND STATUS IN EASTERN MADAGASCAR

By

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2011
To my grandfather
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research would not have been possible without a Dissertation Improvement Grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation and the support of an Alumni Fellowship from the University of Florida. I owe a debt of gratitude to all those individuals in Madagascar that participated in my research, allowing me access to their daily lives and their organizations. I must thank in particular the families of students at the Campus Ambanivohitra in Ilaka Est, Niarovana-Caroline, and Ranomafana Est and the villagers of Andakolosy.

This work would not have been possible without the support of a number of government officials who genuinely aspire to find new ways of making “development” a reality in their communities. While my treatment of organizations in Atsinanana is critical, I have no doubts in the beliefs and aspiration of administrators and bureaucrats to see the island improve. I hope that my critiques help open up discussions of the trajectories this improvement might take.

I also want to thank my research assistants, who suffered through my fumbling and, I think, grew with me through the research process. I look forward to working together again. The development community at large offered a great deal of support, particularly as we began to grapple with the 2009 political crisis that forced many project and plans into hiatus. The stress and cabin fever would have been unbearable but for the company and discussion of friends like An Bollen, Abel Tely, Fabiana Ilescas, and too many others to name.

This work would not have been possible without the patience, encouragement and intellectual guidance of my chair, Brenda Chalfin, who has continuously supported me in a process of story-telling that has been uncomfortable – as all dissertations
should be – and, at times, painful. Her keen understandings of power have been an inspiration and a useful benchmark to my understandings of what development means and what it does in Madagascar. Additionally, the guidance of my committee members has been central. Thanks are due to: Catherine Emihovich, who urged me to attend to the advocacy roles that anthropologists encounter in the field; Abe Goldman, who encouraged me to focus on the farmers; and Maria Stoilkova, who reminded me to begin on the ground with the individuals within the study, and work up from there.

Finally, this work would not have been possible without the support of my parents, William and Wanda, my husband Christian, and our two dogs, Cooper and Jasper. My family has been patient with my prolonged absences during fieldwork to Madagascar and during the writing process. They have been integral in keeping me grounded and thoughtful.

Works such as this are heavily invested in the lives of real people, and as such pose a number of ethical quandaries. I have tried to balance the need to shield my informants with the need to lay bare one vantage of the politics of development. Throughout, I used power dynamics – and my perception of them – to dictate the contours of what should and should not be revealed. This work is, as I believe all anthropology should be, subjective and organic. Some informants or scholars may disagree with my description of events or my analysis of them, and I welcome their critique. I take full responsibility for any inaccuracies, omissions, or errors contained in this text.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANGAP  Association Nationale pour la Gestion des Aires Protégées
BRP    Bureau Régional de La Présidence
CIRAD  Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement
CNEP   Comptoir National d’Escompte de Paris
CTHT   Centre Technique Horticole de Tamatave
DRDR   Direction régionale du développement rural (Regional Directorate of Rural Development)
EASTA  École d’Application des Sciences et Techniques Agricole (Applied School for Agricultural Science and Technology)
FJKM   Fiangonan’i Jesoa Kristy eto Madagasikara (Church of Jesus Christ of Madagascar)
FOFIFA Foibe Fikarohana ampiharina amin'ny Fampandrosoana ny eny Ambanivohitra (National Center for Applied Research on Rural Development)
GRENE  Gestion des Ressources Naturelles et de l’Environnement
IFAC   Institut Français de Recherches Fruitières outre-mer et des Agrumes Coloniales
IFAD   International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFCC   Institut Français du Café, du Cacao et autres Plantes Stimulantes
IMVAVET Institut Malgache de Vaccins Vétérinaires
INSTAT  Institut National de la Statistique (National Statistical Institute)
IRAM   Institut de Recherches Agronomiques de Madagascar
LAMP   Leadership and Management Program
LAMSAD Laboratoire de modélisation statistique et analyse des données (Statistical Modeling and Data Analysis Lab)
MAEP   Ministre d’Agriculture, d’Élevage, et de Pêche (Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fishing)
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<td>MENRS</td>
<td>Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research</td>
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<td>NLIM</td>
<td>National Leadership Institute of Madagascar</td>
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<td>ONN</td>
<td>Office National de la Nutrition (National Office of Nutrition)</td>
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<td>ORSC</td>
<td>Office de la recherche scientifique et colonial (Colonial Office of</td>
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<td>ORSTOM</td>
<td>Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique d'Outre-mer (Overseas</td>
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<td>Office of Scientific and Technical Research)</td>
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<td>PRRR</td>
<td>Programme de Promotion des Revenues Ruraux (Program for the Promotion of</td>
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<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
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<td>PSDR</td>
<td>Projet de Soutien au Développement Rural (Support Program for the Rural</td>
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“Development,” as the improvement of the quality of individual lives, has been a mainstay of international relations since at least the post WWII era. While material improvements have taken place in key areas, “development” remains elusive for much of the world’s population. Rural farming, a main vector of “development” intervention, is one of the least satisfactory performers in improving the standard of living in rural communities. Avoiding the question of why development fails and how it might be fixed, this project asks how development interventions continue in the face of failure. Based on fieldwork among two agricultural development projects that target rural populations in Madagascar, I suggest that development remains salient despite its failures through a process of rebeginning that 1) offers bureaucrats, administrators, technicians, and farmers the chance to transform their lives, even if not in the way intended, and 2) offers a way for projects to obscure project missteps and failures, transforming them into rationalizations for further development intervention, or erasing them altogether.
It was 6:50 in the morning on the eve of my departure from Madagascar when I called the Minister of Decentralization to inform him that my university had asked me to leave the country. The United States Department of State issued a travel warning two days earlier, initiating the departure of non-essential personnel, and warning those who stayed behind that the embassy itself may close unexpectedly. I had been in Madagascar for 9 months conducting research on two rural development programs in the eastern region of Atsinananana. Malagasy politics were ever-present in the projects I studied, but as the Malagasy winter of 2008 dissipated, the situation in the capital turned critical. The mayor of Antananarivo, a young DJ nicknamed TGV after the French bullet train, had begun to gather support among the former leaders of the country. Andry Rajoelina (TGV’s real name) emerged as the unlikely leader of the first effective opposition to Marc Ravalomanana since he became president in 2002. As the opposition honed its rhetoric to exploit the contours of popular discontent, President Ravalomanana’s democratic practices and development policies came increasingly under fire.

By March, the nation was worn down by four months of crisis. In the capital the situation was tense and violence was an almost daily occurrence. In coastal regions like Atsinananana the tension was palpable. Rumors circulated about plans of ethnic

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1 Ravalomanana’s presidency also began within a context of crisis, when he was the mayor of Antananarivo and ran against former President Didier Ratsiraka, declared himself the outright winner of the election’s first round, and helped to propel the nation into a yearlong political crisis.
violence, shipments of arms provided to the opposition by China, and the use of South African mercenaries by the ruling regime.

The Minister of Decentralization had only been in the job for a few weeks when the violence began in earnest. He was the creator of the *Campus Fanantenana* (literally Campus of Hope) and had asked me to expand my research on rural development to include it. By mid-February his whereabouts were a secret closely guarded by his staff. With politicians and functionaries distracted by the crisis, the *Campus Fanantenana* (by now renamed the Village MAP) was thrust into a hiatus at the same moment that the interventions it had introduced threatened to throw the target population into a food crisis. Meetings to address the problem were postponed due to fears of attack at local government offices. To make matters worse, most of the individuals with the political power to address the situation were, like the Minister, unavailable.

When I spoke to him that morning, the Minister told me he was cornered in the capital of Antananarivo, trying to find a way to get his wife and children out of the country. In a few days, Andry Rajoelina would name himself the president of the *Haute Autorité Transitionnelle* (High Transitional Authority, HAT). Ravalomanana would be forced to resign at gunpoint.²

Two months earlier, the Minister had been a senator. At his New Year’s party, his staff and I presented him with a corpulent goose as he spoke proudly of how his senate colleagues had dubbed him ‘Obama.’ Two years earlier he was an economics professor, university administrator, and the Research Director of a new farmer-training

² According to President Ravalomanana, the US Ambassador, and a pro-Ravalomanana demonstration on the Island of Reunion held a week after Rajoelina declared himself president.
program in eastern Madagascar, named the Campus Ambanivohitra (Country Campus, the initial subject of my research).

Now, his political future was bleak, as was that of his wife, a member of the Malagasy parliament. Both had been visible and vocal supporters of the President. They had invested themselves in his development initiatives, tying their futures to his fate. In short, they had - like many Malagasy in power - staked their political careers on their faith in Ravalomanana’s ability to retain stable governance despite the popular discontent of a citizenry that either saw little effect in their lives, or imagined the nation, and their birthright, turned over to commercial interests that profited the president and his advocates.

Now their allegiance to Ravalomanana could very nearly cost them their lives. This, at least, is what I heard in his voice that day. I asked if he was secure. “For the moment,” he responded shakily. He was alluding to the danger of being targeted by the opposition, but also the possibility that the gendarmes sent to protect him might turn against him at any moment.

In a way that echoes the fates of the loyal cadres of previous presidents, political survival under a new political regime in Madagascar would mean a necessary reinvention, a rebeginning either in Madagascar or outside; a shift in allegiances and networks, hopes and aspirations. Rebeginning would mean survival in both political and material ways.

Rebeginning as a Phenomenon of State-led Development in Madagascar

The story of the 2009 coup and its effects on individuals and groups involved in Malagasy development offers a point of entry into the theme of rebeginning that drives this text. Simply put, rebeginning is a way to conceptualize change that gives credence
to the creation of new things – concepts, strategies, and relations - that are never quite new, but rather reconstructed, reoriented and redeployed. Rebeginnings are neither radical disjuncture nor gradual change; they are punctuations for survival that are key in the durability of the ideas and practices of “development,” where adjustments are constantly being made according to the shifting desires and capabilities of states, development agents, international donors, and “target” populations. Rebeginnings are political in every sense of the word – they are centered in power and the struggles over it and its attendant social and material advantages. What results is a development industry that is in a constant process of erasure and rebeginning in an effort to ensure survival. These rebeginnings – and the contextual and cultural factors which accompany them – are the focus of this analysis.

This study concentrates on the development industry in Madagascar, specifically two state-led rural development projects that aimed to transform farmers and their communities: the Campus Ambanivohitra and the Campus Fanantenana. The projects were closely linked to the political fortunes of their directors, the policy plans of the Malagasy state, and the priorities of international organizations and agents, like the World Bank’s Poverty Reduction Strategies, the United Nation’s Millennial Development Goals and the Decentralized Cooperation priorities of regional aid partners like Haute and Basse Normandie in France. Led by an economist and a mathematician from the University of Toamasina, both relied on practical training to disseminate agricultural knowledge and utilized the same pool of expert technicians and government partners.

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3 The names of selected organizations have been altered to protect their anonymity. All proper names used within this work are pseudonyms. Exact dates have been omitted to offer individuals involved another layer of anonymity.
They also both experienced a number of rebeginnings throughout their tenure that obscured, shifted, or otherwise redefined their previous incarnations at the same time that they renewed their possibilities. Processes of rebeginning cleared away the debris of previous power relations and ensured the continuation of multiple circulations of land and labor, knowledge and status, and material and ideology that attended “development.” Ultimately, rebeginnings acted to preserve power at the same time that they smoothed out its disruptions.4

Within this framework, rebeginnings are deeply connected to the reproduction and redistribution of the political, economic, and epistemological power and status of a diverse group of actors that includes: development brokers, agents, targets, funders, bureaucrats, and politicians. Among these divisions run supplementary contours of differentiation – expert/non-expert, urban/rural, bureaucratic/political, and north/south. The coalescence of multiple agents and agencies renders development an important space for understanding ways that layered organizational and individual interests articulate within the development industry. Focusing on the intersections where the borders of status and sovereignty are patrolled, I ask: How do multiple organizational and individual agencies and structures interact as they mediate the flows of social, economic, and political capital within the networks of development? How are these relations sustained? How do they suppress, reinforce, or otherwise transform the

4 As an example: The name of the Malagasy ministry concerned with rural agriculture has changed several times since the island gained independence in 1960. Lined up, these names reflect political movements that were varied: the desire to appease the opposition, the move to distinguish one administration from others, a signal of a willingness to embrace neo-liberal reforms, or the desire to expand the bureaucratic apparatus and the ability to create offices (as Rajoelina has done since 2010). These movements are deeply political and have, over time, the effect of expanding state power by a series of extensions and retractions that keep the state more present in people’s experiences.
contours of inequality on the island? What does it mean when they fall apart? What are the implications for a Malagasy state that continues to start over in new hands?

The Campus Ambanivohitra, created in 2005, was championed by the then president of the University of Toamasina. The project was originally meant to transform university students and rural farmers into experts of development knowledge – specifically through the dissemination of knowledge about “modern” agricultural practices and market phenomenon. Over time, the project dropped its efforts to create a cadre of university experts, focusing solely on training rural farmers and facilitating their entry – through this “new” knowledge – into agricultural markets. Later the project became concerned with creating showcase farms in rural areas that assured the Campus a stake in future harvests and gave participant farmers the opportunity to direct the labor of others in their communities. The transformation of project objectives was echoed in the spatial shifts of the campus, which moved between several villages from its 2004 inception to its 2009 reality.

The Campus Fanantenana was a similar project initiated by the former research director of the Campus Ambanivohitra who would later become the Minister of Decentralization introduced at the beginning of this chapter. The project’s initial goals were to address the needs of “real” peasants – who were conceived of as the poorest and most destitute of rural individuals. The link to political power meant, however, that the project soon came to be re-envisioned. Its target population shifted from a large group of individuals from disparate areas (like the Campus Ambanivohitra) to an extant group of villagers living on land held by the state. The name changed from Campus
Fanantenana to Village MAP. This new designation came from the acronym of the Madagascar Action Plan (MAP).

The Madagascar Action Plan (MAP) was key to President Ravalomanana’s World Bank mediated Poverty Reduction Strategy, and was one of the state objectives that earned the country a space among nations benefiting from the United States’ Millennium Challenge Account. As state power entered the project, it transformed into one centered on creating the state’s vision of its ideal presence, and the concomitant ideal peasant, in rural areas. It signaled the state’s commitment to development, but also revealed the content of state ideas of model intervention and strategies in the face of contextual changes and project failures – all while contributing to the reproduction and reorientation of status among the projects agents and targets. Like the Campus Ambanivohitra, the alterations and reinventions of the project reflected struggles over power and resources among farmers, administrators, politicians and partners.

These various rebeginnings reflected contextual shifts in state and international conceptions of development, the material constraints of the programs, and the friction that emerged between the agents implicated in the project as they struggled over access to the resources it set loose. Political, social, and economic capital flowed through the personal, governmental, and organizational networks that the project opened. The way agents – state and non-state, urban and rural, high and low status – sought to access, cut off, or divert these resources came to shape the way the project looked “on the ground.” In the process, power was diffused through agents and agencies whose presence offered important potentials to reproduce state power – to offer, as it were, a rebeginning of the state. These uses, and the disruptions they
cause, are obscured and smoothed over through the project’s almost constant reinvention.

“Development” occurs as a site for the production and reproduction of political and economic power. This is - in part – its goal. Development moves money, people and things in ways that move power. Foremost among this is state power. The state – writ large as a surprisingly durable form of political organization complicated but not destroyed by increasing mobility (Chalfin 2006) – presents itself in the projects’ efforts to render rural farmers governable and self-governing alongside the subjection of expert and non-expert state agents to similar efforts to proliferate self-management through audit and evaluation. Writ small – as in individual nation-states – the projects speak to state efforts to craft national identity, to extend its territorial scope, and to craft legitimacy at multiple levels. In both cases, the state’s “materiality resides much less in institutions than in the reworking of processes and relations of power so as to create new spaces for the deployment of power” (Trouillot 2001: 127). This does not negate institutional relations, but shifts focus to the ways similar processes inhere across the multiple institutions implicated in state-based development. The Campus Ambanivohitra and the Campus Fanantenana represent two institutional distances from the state – one diluted through partnerships and positioned outside the core of Malagasy state power (two levels below the Ministry of Education with the backing of multiple national and international institutions); the other intimately linked with the state through a parallel chain of power that connects directly to the nation’s political leadership (specifically, the Bureau Régionale de la Présidence, Regional Office of the
Figure 1-1. Public institutional networks of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* and *Campus Fanantenana*. Gray borders and lines indicate partnership that were secondary or disappeared over time.
Presidency, see Figure 1-1). At the same time, the two programs are closely connected to each other and, in a way, mutually constituted.

This mutual constitution is related to the networks that development opens for the diverse actors involved. While the programs themselves focus on a “target population” – for whom certain networks are opened – efforts to improve the lives of rural individuals facilitate the flow of capital along networked lines. Far from being wholly predetermined or wide open, networks emerge along multiple lines and network flows are captured by a variety of expert and non-expert, state and non-state agents. These include various agents and individuals who fill overlapping roles. Development agents mediate relations between development agencies and the target population and mediate knowledge and state power (in this case the instructors and technicians employed at each project). Development brokers, those that sit between institutions and target populations, on the one hand, and “aid” and “target populations” on the other (in our case, the administrators of the projects), facilitate the movement of resources, providing the evaluative and budgetary justification and crafting stories of development that (if they are successful) loosen development funds. Additionally included are rural politicians, business interests, and, of course, the designated “targets” of the projects.

**Development as an Object of Analysis**

“Development” constitutes a durable focus of anthropology, where it tracks to anthropological concerns with social change and global inequality (Barth 1967; Trouillot 2003; Escobar 1991). Most influential has been a set of work, embodied in the scholarship of Escobar (1988; 1995) and Ferguson (1990), that examines the discourses of development as they are mobilized and deployed at the relatively abstract levels above the state or within it. This work has viewed development as a space for
the exercise and assurance of hegemonic power, particularly the hegemonic power of western capitalist (and formerly colonial) powers and the state. A second strain, largely built against this first, is concerned with paying attention to the micro-level interactions that development facilitates. Here, micro-level power drives development’s continuation and is reproduced and expanded through the processes undertaken within development interventions. The research presented in this thesis is an attempt to reconcile these two viewpoints, seeing development as, at once, about capitalist hegemony, the continuing creation of the metropole as an economic, political, and epistemological center, the reproduction of the state, and the capture and distribution of political, economic and social resources among the individual parties involved.

In viewing development as a space where resources are set loose along various networked pathways and situating my study along the clustered connections that constitute individual development projects, I am purposefully avoiding certain questions about development’s more instrumental purposes. I do not ask whether development works or does not work, or what we can do to fix it. Rather, I seek to understand how development is propelled forward and put to work across global networks of power that stretch from local governments to nation-states, to INGOs and beyond. Anyone looking for answers to global poverty or new formulas for developmental success will not find what they are looking for in these pages. Instead, they will find a detailed sketch of the politics of development – a politics I think is necessary to answering these more practical queries. It is this politics that sits behind anthropology’s most stringent critiques of the ideologies and practices of development, and it is this critical anthropology that I situate my research within.
Escobar (1988; 1995) views “development” as a phenomenon born at the juncture of the capitalist world economy, “disciplinary and normalizing mechanisms” of power, and a “system of ideology” (438) which he traces to the end of the 18th century and the colonial system. Scholars examining these relations view development as intimately tied to the economies of colonialism and, particularly, to the efforts of colonial powers to quell resistance and retain power over their colonies (Cooper 2002, 2005; Cooper and Packard 1997; Mitchell 2002; Moore 1999). In this perspective, development is integral to the West’s construction of itself vis-à-vis the non-West. In the same way that the pre-colonial Europeans decried the savage mind and missionaries sought to save the heathen – based on the idea that they lacked something, be it intellect, god, or civilization (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997) – colonial administrators and post-WWII experts sought to develop the “underdeveloped” (Escobar 1995). These works call attention to the very important role that power plays in development, and call attention to the way that narratives about development are “constituted and reproduced within a set of material relationships, activities and powers – social, cultural and geopolitical,” that renders power “diffuse, fragmented and reciprocal” (Crush 1995: 6-7).

These power dynamics are masked by the supposedly apolitical and scientific nature of development (Packard in Cooper and Packard 1997). Ferguson (1990) describes the way development expertise and scientific objectivity act to obscure the expansion of bureaucratic and state power. In this way development discourse enables state power over citizens as well as the continued hierarchy of “North” over “South” (see also Bose in Cooper and Packard 1997). Anthropologists were crucial in crafting this distinction and their work fed into a teleological narrative of progress that saw the west
as the high point of cultural and technological evolution (Ferguson in Cooper and Packard 1997; Ferguson 1999; Moore and Vaughan 1994).

These perspectives have been criticized for: overly focusing on / deconstructing development discourse; promoting an idea of a monolithic development or a monolithic state; envisioning the state in too limited a role; rendering colonialism a caricature while, to paraphrase, 'exuding political correctness'; erasing the agency of individual actors; and, overall, ignoring the “incoherences, uncertainty and contradictions… structurally inscribed in development institutions” (Sardan 2005: 5; Green 2003; Lewis and Moss 2006; Mosse 2005; Blundo 2006). In the place of these issues, this group of scholars have sought to redirect the gaze of anthropology through development, drawing it away from discourse, the state, and colonialism and focusing on the actors that mediate development’s relations and “the relationships between local power and development” (including decentralization; Sardan 2005: 14).

Like Sardan (2005), I find the shift in focus compelling. I agree that the state needs to be seen “as a political entity whose legitimacy is derived from the creation of identity for its citizenship and accountability toward them” (Blundo 2006: 801), that agency should be a focus of analysis, and that we should realign our sights on the space between the state and global regimes of power, on the one hand, and the targets of development, on the other.

Unlike Sardan (2005), I do not believe that this change in focus “stands in stark opposition to most ‘discourse of development studies’” (14). “Discourse” rationalizes and legitimizes power – but it does not exist apart or above development’s agents and targets. These are the actors that replicate and reiterate narratives of development –
their agency is implicated in the creation of development’s attendant discourses. They must be drawn into the analysis. Moreover, the power that enables, and is enabled by, these development discourses remains important at multiple scales. These levels, I would suggest, are mutually constitutive, and therefore necessary to understanding what development does and for whom. To ignore these realities or to assume that the intellectual work is done – the field harvested, to put it pastorally – is akin to throwing the proverbial baby out with the bathwater.

The approach I take here attempts to avoid these pitfalls while bringing these objects of analysis together. Rebeginnings offer me a loose frame in which to imagine how these multiple processes – the production and reproduction of state and geopolitical power, and more micro-level brokerage – articulate as multiple actors negotiate the flow of social and economic capital through the networks opened by development.

**Development’s Rebeginnings**

Rebeginnings speak to the lifestyles that development makes possible, not only for its targets, but also for its agents. Petrol vouchers for university administrators, cars for development projects, computers, cash, land, labor – they are all up for grabs within development, propelled through the network with the potential be translated into state and individual power. These flows are neither openly accessible nor regularly available, but “uneven, discontinuous, and contested” (Walley 2004: 12).

It is tempting to see these flows, and the ways they are directed as corruption or what Sardan (2005) and others characterize as the rent of development brokers (Lewis and Moss 2006; Moss 2005). I find this analytic problematic as it so easily slips into
familiar narratives of Africa as ungovernable, violent, and generally “bad”\(^5\) that reify the very power differentials that Escobar (correctly) indict.s\(^6\) Green (2000) artfully avoids the pitfalls of “rents” negative connotations, suggesting that “… economic, political, and institutional constraints… render individual agency insufficient to achieve development, as it is locally defined,” while “forcing people to depend on access to the kinds of development goods associated with localized interventions as an essential means of bypassing extra local constraints” (68-69). While I find the idea of “forcing people” to err towards overstatement, this concept begins to get us away from the problems of concepts of “corruption,” “clientelism,” and the like.

I suggest that it would be more fruitful and less dangerous to understand these relationships as more symbiotic than “clientelistic.” There are winners and losers, to be sure – but there’s also potential and flux. That is to say, these relations are complex and a single actor might slip between status positions multiple times within ongoing struggles over development in its discursive and material forms. It is akin to what Chalfin (2008) describes, in speaking of customs officers and travelers, as “a spectrum of subject positions and a spectrum of agencies” (520).

In Madagascar, struggles ensued over the types of subjects that would be produced by the programs I studied. While participants’ goals matched the projects’ general objectives, the way that rural participants articulated and attempted to enact

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\(^5\) Scholars engaging in these terminologies are quick to point out the slippage, but continue to engage the terminology (e.g. Sardan 2005: 76). Chalfin (2008) does an excellent job of analyzing similar processes without reinforcing these concepts, centering her analysis on the fluidity and multiplicity of encounters between citizen-sovereigns and sovereign-citizens in Ghanian Customs.

\(^6\) The option opposite avoiding these terms is popularizing them so that discourses of corruption about western nations, the supposed seat of good governance, are taken seriously rather than marginalized as outliers that legitimize the status quo.
these benefits often fell outside of the projects’ purview and expectations. Participant farmers and project directors disagreed over the relative mobility that should inhere in rural agricultural production, the level and types of technology that were worth including in the curriculum, and the types of agricultural practices that made sense for local populations.

These disagreements resulted, in part, in the repeated reorientation of project goals and the more material results of project practices that followed and preceded them. The projects were in a constant state of tinkering that rendered them always new, always in the present. In their most attenuated forms, these changes are dramatic. Yet they rarely show up in official project narratives and when they do they are marginalized as the sorts of “lessons learned” that accompany the legitimizing work of evaluation within development. The projects themselves, then, are in an almost constant state of rebeginning.

Rebeginning refers to two movements at once – each filled with different components and suspended in different relations, but at the same time linked. First is the allure of development which speaks to the transformations that are promised and potentially occur through development. Rebeginnings are thus about the agents and actors involved in development as individuals – re-crafting, rebranding, and re-envisioning themselves, often in ways that signal and emerge from their situation within the network. These are bolstered by the circulation of multiple forms of capital that is facilitated by the networks of development.

Struggles over the movement of this capital – over who gets it and who does not – helped to shape the ways the projects evolved, forcing micro- (and sometimes macro-)
adjustments to the objectives that the projects would pursue. These objectives were erased as project documents deployed a “perpetual present” (Lewis 2009) that envisioned the project as always in the now and obscured the struggles and negotiations engendered by development. These changes constitute a second rebeginning – the institutional, and discursive rebeginning that takes place through development. Failures were edited out of official documents, dropped from contracts, or sidelined to lessons learned or peasant caricatures that envisioned problems as a lack of “managerialism” (Shore and Wright 2000) and “knowledge” and ultimately reinforced the value of the project going forward (Cooper and Packard 1997). Techniques of evaluation and audit facilitated these moves, acting as the productive force behind the networks opened by development (see Strathern 2000, Elyachar 2005, 2006, Castles 1996).

What appeared were projects in a constant state of rebeginning. Deeply embedded in the theatrics of state legitimacy, rebeginnings illustrate the will to develop (see Li 2007) in an area in which most rural farmers, as well as elite agents, are abandoned by the state. Development projects are key in the erasure of these failures and in the state’s illustration of its continued effort to renew the state as well as the lives of its citizens. Furthermore, the networks opened through development projects create new pathways for state power facilitating its general reach and reinforcing the power it already commands. Put another way, development is about rebeginning the state. This work is, then, a rebeginning of the Ferguson’s (1990) “anti-politics machine” that suggests that part of development’s longevity is its ability to be both highly political and highly apolitical – to piggy-back on its earlier forms (cannibalizing them), while
deploying a narrative that excoriates their effectiveness. In the process, the state’s institutional reach is electrified – even if for a moment – and ultimately extended. The social is not dead – it is reanimated in ways that echo and resituate understandings of the productive power of absent states (Chalfin 2010, Masquelier 2001).

**Establishing Madagascar as a Space of Development**

To be labeled a country in need of development – to inhabit the space needed to become subject to the processes I outline - relies upon a positioning structured by scientific approaches to understanding poverty. Countries are subjected to techniques of audit that help to place them in a system of rankings marking out a status and creating groups distinguished by a number of predetermined categories. These categories are created in the space between governmental agencies in the concerned country and international and extra-national governance structures at organizations like the World Bank and the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). These larger organizations sponsor, collect, and combine data culled from the national level in an effort to aid in economic development and good governance (FAOSTAT 2011, World Bank 2011). The numbers themselves go far in determining who deserves and gets development.⁷

These statistical practices - which disaggregate and re-aggregate multiplex phenomenon into cells on a spreadsheet – are a central facet of the development machinery. They illustrate – with cold and seemingly apolitical precision – the “real” needs for development and legitimze intervention while affecting an erasure of the past

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⁷ These practices of ranking are ubiquoutous and constitute a particularly neo-liberal form of “rationalization” and “discipline” (Foucault 1977) that encompasses a vast array of practices. They are important not so much by what they indicate about on the ground realities, but by how they act to order practice.
that takes history out of the equation. They take place at the highest echelons of government, but also at the level of individual NGOs, where audits serve similar functions of garnering aid and tightening the focus of projects. These practices also play an important role in how anthropologists perform ethnographic fieldwork and stake claims on knowledge and translatability – in short, how we make our work speak to a bigger picture and accessible to a larger audience.

The statistics that make up development, then, are a part of an audit culture (Strathern 2000, Shore and Wright 1999, Power 2003) that is both new and neo-liberal and – as the following chapters suggest – old and ordinary. They build upon earlier mobilizations of knowledge to individualize and totalize the human subject (see Hacking 1990). They also take these further, multiplying the responsibility of the individual to be an evaluating entrepreneur of the self, or allowing evaluation to open up new/old potentials for state power. The following section keeps these observations in mind, presenting Madagascar’s contemporary reality as part of these larger narratives and knowledge practices of development and as a central starting point to my own ethnographic treatment of Malagasy development within two projects that aim to address the “real social needs” that are, in large part, produced through the creation and circulation of statistics.

**A Development Baseline**

In 2005, Madagascar ranked 143 of 177 countries in the United Nation’s Development Program’s (UNDP's) Human Development Index (HDI), sandwiched between Nepal and Papua New Guinea near the bottom of a group of countries.

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8 Statistics mask other realities as well, including cultural struggles and state power (Stoilkova 2005; Hacking 1990; Ferguson 1990).
classified as having obtained “medium human development” (UNDP 2007). The HDI is compiled from statistical sources at the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute of Statistics, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and Barro and Lee (2010). The HDI itself runs on a scale from 0 to 1, and is subdivided into quarters – the upper 25% (closest to 1) are classed as Very High Human Development, the 50-75% as High Human Development, 25-50% as Medium Human Development, and the lowest percentile of 0-25% is ranked as Low Human Development.

The numerical ranking stands for little – Madagascar has shifted between 115th and 153rd in the 20 years since the index was devised by Amartya Sen and Mahbub ul Haq (UNDP 2010). Originally an aggregate measure of statistics on life expectancy, educational opportunity, and income, the HDI has been adjusted and updated every year (UNDP 2010: 7). Every iteration of the HDI equation shifts both the prospects of development’s future and the perceptions of its past. Madagascar has consistently ranked on the lowest level of development, except in 2005 (Figure 1.1). Subsequent recalculations have had the effect of smoothing out fluctuations in the measurement. In so doing, they tend to advocate an ever-increasing ideal and, more importantly, temper larger local shifts in the statistics reported.

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9 UNDESA’s statistics are generated through surveys completed by national authorities or information generated from their individual census.

10 UNESCOs statistics come from the survey responses of national authorities (UNESCO 2011)

11 Barro and Lee (2010) compiled statistics on education from UNESCO and the UN Demographic Yearbook, who each get their sources from surveys and the evaluating work of member states.
The point here is neither to negate these statistics, nor critique them in the hopes of a better equation. I mean neither to invalidate these methods nor question their ability to represent, in particular ways, lived reality. Rather, I am attempting a sort of methodological relativism that accepts – and hopefully renders more productive – the slippery relationship between the tools and the objects of analysis (see Holmes and Marcus 2005). I aim to draw attention to the numbers that exist at the apex of the

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12 Inequality was added to equation n 2010, creating a sister index, dubbed the IHDI. The creation of the IHDI bumped Madagascar down almost 30% to 0.308 from 0.435. The trend line shown here for 2010 represents the HDI before the introduction of inequality. The drop here is unrelated to the introduction of inequality.

13 This is best left to economists. Some notable critiques are Sagar and Najam (1998), Morse (2003), and McGillivray (1991).
development industry, which provide the legitimizing thrust behind developmentalist interventions, and their evolution through time and the very similar processes of development on the ground, which make up the bulk of this thesis. Namely, I seek to highlight the processes of smoothing out irregularity by projecting the present backwards that accompany practices of representation and knowledge-making in global and local constructions of development and its targets. Development statistics go on to live in the grand developmentalist plans of individual states – in their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and in Madagascar, the Madagascar Action Plan (Madagascar 2006: 8). These, and other statistical measures, become the impetus and legitimization of international and state intervention – rising in rank becomes the state’s goal.

Madagascar’s placement within the Human Development Index reflects a number of on the ground realities that together situate the nation as “under-developed” but also as “developing.” This ranking – and the numbers behind it – reflects a life expectancy that has increased by some twenty years, from 40 to 60, since 1960 (World Bank 2011). Mortality rates have also dropped substantially, falling from 21.7% to 7.9% between 1975 and 2010 (US Census Bureau 2011). The mortality rate has remained well above those of more developed economies such as the United States and France (see Figure A-15 in the Appendix). Advances in education are less visible; both literacy rates and average time in school remain flat at 70% and just over 5 years (World Bank 2011, UNDP 2011). Educational attendance falls off as students get older, with a little over seventy percent of youth attending primary school, then 30 percent attending secondary

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14 The US Census Bureau obtains its information mainly from the Malagasy state statistics organization INSTAT in partnership with an US consulting group, ORC Macro (ICF Macro since its 2009 acquisition by ICF International (ICF International 2009) and the UN’s statistical databases.

15 World Bank estimates of literacy only contain the years 2000 and 2008, both from UNESCOs Statistics.
school. While primary education is high, the number of students matriculating drops precipitously as educational level advances.


Income remains low with most Malagasy living on just over a dollar a day and meeting, under some estimates, the poverty threshold of $1.25 per day (UNDP 2011: 6, World Bank 2011). Madagascar's economy is largely agricultural and over 80% of Malagasy make a living in agriculture. Recent years have seen an increase in the industrial manufacturing and service sectors. In addition, the percentage of agricultural exports has dropped substantially (from 75% to around 30%), while industrial and manufacturing exports have increased (World Bank 2011; see Figure A-6 in the Appendix). High-Income countries have been the prime market for Malagasy goods, 

Poverty rates differ depending on what “dollar” is being used, etc. Most other estimates are higher, though they lack a full data set. The UNDP's HDI uses more liberal estimates that put income some 600 dollars a year higher than the World Bank Atlas GNI estimates. I am using World Bank Atlas measurements here for two reasons: 1) this method tends to correct for currency fluctuations, and 2) it is the method used by the World Bank to allocate development aid. For this illustration rendered with PPP at current rates of USD and 2008 USD value, see the Appendix.
with these nations receiving between 70 and 80% of the entirety of Malagasy exports over the last half-century (World Bank 2011; for more detailed statistics see Table A-8 and A-9 in the Appendix).

While higher income countries have constituted the bulk of the market for Malagasy goods, Madagascar has decreased its dependency on manufactured goods from high-income countries. Madagascar has reached import parity between high income and developing economies largely through fostering imports from East Asia and the Pacific, and to a lesser degree, Africa and the Middle East. Most imports have been and remain manufactured goods from elsewhere; though food imports have increased slightly over the past thirty years (see Figure A-10 in the Appendix).

While these numbers seem distant from the realities of two rural development projects, they are central to the development of “development” within the projects. The truth claims these numbers have are bolstered by their constant adjustment; it is not so much the atomizing nature of audit that performs this power, but its replication. Their reiterating existence legitimizes the continuation of intervention at the apex of the international development industry.

Additionally, and more pressingly for rural Malagasy, the iterative reality created through statistics legitimates the continued intervention of organizations that sit structurally below the level of international governing bodies (the UN) and development organizations (the World Bank). The state and other forms and levels of governance (local NGOs) are legitimized in their continued intervention in ways that support and extend Mitchell’s (1995) assertion of the role statistics and measures have on the naturalization of political problems and Ferguson’s (1990) assertion that statistics are
molded to fit prepackaged narratives of development. These numbers – and others like them – help to define the paths that development interventions take, inscribing the terms of governance onto individual subjects (both rural farmers and development agents), establishing the centrality of agriculture and thus legitimizing agriculture as a realm of intervention, and perpetuating a system of resource validation, and, to an extent, internationally mediated fetishization.

**Locating Development in Individualized Bodies**

In the atomization of everyday reality into a controllable space to think “development,” the individual is the central unit of measurement. Individualized and collectivized into statistics on life expectancy in calculations such as the Human Development Index, the laboring, reproducing, and consuming individual is the key concern. While Malagasy numbers are scarce,\(^\text{17}\) they illustrate rates of malnutrition through measurements of height and weight that rival other impoverished nations and illustrate a stagnation in which the situation does not appear to get any better.

Madagascar malnutrition rates hover around 55%, when measured by height, and 35% when measured by weight. Issues of malnutrition are key in understanding the development industry in Madagascar, where neoliberal concerns with creating the entrepreneur of the self are often accompanied by state concerns over what can and what must be ingested that are in turn linked to economic indicators. Initially, they link directly with issues of population.

Population increase is considered a major developmental issue facing Madagascar. From 1961 to 2008 the population has increased by some 14.5 million people, from 5.1 million to 19.6 million (World Bank 2011). Most recent statistics peg annual population growth as 2.65 % (in 1990), below its peak of 3.07% in 1995, and its lowest rate of 2.36 % in1960 (see Figure A-14 in the Appendix). Concerns over population growth, and its relation to resources, remain a central impetus behind development projects, many of which are anchored in concerns over human bodies.

Nestled within the image of the body are patterned movements that are ubiquitous yet only subtly present in larger conversations about development. Madagascar’s population is increasingly urban. Whereas only a little over 10% of the population resided in urban areas in the immediate post-independence era, 28% are currently residing in urban areas (World Bank 2011). Conversely, the rural population has fallen from almost 90% of the population to 70% (World Bank 2011; see Figures A-16 to A-19 in the Appendix). Overall, this has meant a wider swath of the rural population is
increasingly expected to create the agricultural goods needed to supply urban and international markets. In other words, the interests of development interventions are in part reflective of interests in creating laboring bodies that can supply a growing market.

Bodies brought into proximity and the propensity for these bodies to create newer versions of themselves lead to concerns with reproduction and health that circle back to agriculture in interesting ways. Madagascar's related malnutrition and population issues spur new (and not so new) governmental forays into the lives of individuals as the nation – and the governing proxies of the development apparatus – seek to meet the desires of international aid agencies and local populations, and craft legitimacy among their population. Concerns over what is put into the Malagasy body, namely food and water, has meant a proliferation of development work by groups like the Office National de la Nutrition (ONN), Care International, Croix Rouge Madagascar, and others that are setting up networks and short term projects across the island that seek to provide clean water and nutritional aid for rural Malagasy families. These and accompanying reforms seek to gain purchase on bodily practices, going beyond the malnourished bodies of children into issues of reproduction and hygiene (Foucault 2003; Foucault et al. 1988).

Concern with the nutrition of Malagasy body, as with concern surrounding other “underdeveloped” bodies, bolsters developmentalist interest in food production. In the cases discussed here, this interest opens pathways for individuals – development entrepreneurs – who gain access to symbolic and material capital through their positioning within projects. The main cure to malnutrition is the creation of correct farming practices and correct knowledge among farmers. These practices are particularly centered on riziculture, the island’s main staple, and this – along with the
idea of creating a farmer as an expert entrepreneur – structures developmental interventions. Organizations that address issues of malnutrition often address issues of agriculture as well, and many offer wages to rural Malagasy for farm improvements like canals and dykes. Individual bodies become the basis for agricultural intervention and for the state’s rationalized yet subtle entrance into rural labor.

**Malnourished Bodies to Inadequate Farms**

The ranking of bodies through standardized measurements of size, and the linkage of these to agricultural practice feed anxiety over the ability to attain, or re-attain, individual self-sufficiency. The key entry point of the global economy in agricultural interventions in Madagascar is the invocation of Madagascar’s loss of a prosperous past and the emergence of an import/export imbalance. Most international agency reports highlight the fact that, "Madagascar had been a net exporter of rice in the 1960s, but became a net importer in 1980" (World Bank 2001).¹⁸

The Food and Agricultural Association (FAO) of the UN is the main interlocutor of agricultural statistics. With numbers provided by Malagasy state agencies, the FAO compiles data on indicators of agricultural development, beginning with measurements of production and land usage. They also carry statistics on the fertilizer and pesticide markets and consumption rates, disaggregating World Bank data (which tends to be more general) into the products main chemical compositions and fostering, through these numbers, the growth of agro-industrial markets. They also include statistics on the nutritional value of foods and their intake.

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¹⁸ Another version – “the country has gone from being a net exporter of rice in the 1960s to a net importer since 1971” (FAO 2000).
These numbers have very real effects on individual development programs which often strive to adopt, for material or ideological reasons, the crops international development experts choose to advocate, even when these may not coincide neatly with local practices. For example, 2008 saw an increase in interest in Sorghum – a crop well suited for arid regions. Organizations like the FAO and Care International were involved in pushing sorghum in certain areas of Madagascar and the government procured a number of seeds to use in the islands arid regions. The narrative pushing the crop was one of loss backed up by the numbers, but the innovation entered projects in tropical climates such as Atsinanana in ways that revealed the power that mobile knowledge – knowledge that has made a global and virtual circuit to the metropole and back again – has over less mobile (and yet still arguably global) ‘local’ knowledge.  

19 I gesture here to the fact that for many of the Malagasy involved in the project, earlier instances of the circulation of these same types of knowledge are now old hat – their knowledge is more a recently stagnated global knowledge than one that is “local.”
This feedback from nationally created, globally mediated, statistics feeds understandings and practices of development. These trickle down into unrelated projects and define the discourses of development in Madagascar. Rural Malagasy lives are circumscribed by these concerns, which come on one side from concerns with the health of individual Malagasy and, on the other, through a vast conservationist industry that reiterates familiar narratives of a lost past.

**Inadequate Farm to Endangered Forest**

Madagascar cannot be mentioned without a nod to the island’s unique flora and fauna. Almost every publication mentions the isolation that led to the island’s singularity, a notion in contrast with the island’s much shorter human history of interconnection (see Raison-Jourde and Randrianja 2002). The island is home to a population of 80% endemic species of flora and fauna, found nowhere else on earth. And while scholars debate the necessity of ecological considerations in the HDI, “development” does not exist within Madagascar without accompanying ideas of conservation.
International agencies are key to disseminating information on the destruction of Malagasy natural resources, chief among them the dwindling patches of forest across the island. While the FAO carries important statistics on the amount of forestry products that are produced by the country, the much more disseminated statistics are those of forest disappearance. The causal chain links deforestation to rural farmers directly through the land management practice of 
tavy, or shifting agriculture, that relies on fire to clear agricultural fields. The practice is still widespread across much of Madagascar, though its detrimental effects are in question (Kull 2004; Jarosz 1993), as are the rates of forest cover that have been projected backwards since colonialism. As a result of international interest and funding for conservation and the eradication of 
tavy practices, conservation has become a mainstay of interventions into agricultural practices in rural Madagascar. The inclusion of conservation as impetus and goal of development is more attenuated in eastern Madagascar, where most current stands of primary forest remain.

Figure 1-7. Malagasy forest degradation, 1990-2008. As a percentage of land area forested. Source: FAOSTAT 2011.
Conservation and the specter of the forest loom large in the development programs I worked with. This occurred not because individuals were practicing *tavy* (though they did) or because they were destroying extant forests (which they did not), but because the narrative of destruction and the return to a status quo anterior (a forested Madagascar) could be made to align easily with existing (and aspired) contours of inequality between urban/rural, elite/non-elite, and good/bad. Statistics on land loss were easily put to work in these processes, and easily put to work as a contrast to the failures of projects themselves.

**International Aid since Independence**

Development aid has entered Madagascar from a number of different sources over the years. Unfortunately, the World Bank and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) do not give statistics on Soviet aid during the island’s socialist period (1972-1993). Figure 1-8 illustrates the five top donors over the past half century. The biggest single country donors are France and the United States, followed by Japan. The notable dips in aid coincide, in most cases, with shifts in political leadership that tended to restructure the island’s relations with foreign donors, either through risk aversion, or improved relations. Notable peaks often occur after presidential elections, or, as in 1999, drop during periods of crisis.
Foreign aid is important to Madagascar, making up an average of 13% of the nation’s GNI over the period 1998-2008 (World Bank 2011). Approximately 20% of Madagascar’s aid came from France in 2008. The issue of who gives aid is significant. While donor involvement varies across Africa, the particular relations of aid in Madagascar reflect the continuing relationship of the country with its former colonizer. France holds the space at the top of the donor apex, supporting development on the island to the tune of almost 500 Million USD in 2003. Shifts often reflect the way leaders of the receiving country have used donors, and outside interests, strategically to further their personal and political desires. The same can be said of donor countries, who play out long-standing rivalries in Madagascar’s public and private realms (see Chapter 2).

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For example, levels given to former colonies do not seem to show a strict correlation with funds from the former colonizer. In addition, where these funds are made available through former colonizing powers, there is no simple correlation between former colonization and level of involvement.
These strategies are not altogether different from earlier global relations of commerce, and are evident in the continuing trade relationship between Madagascar and France, where France represents the island’s biggest export market. Conversely, France is in the third space after Thailand and China in terms of share of the island’s import market. Moreover, the reality of donor aid across Africa, though variable, is still remarkably similar, with many of the same players donating to the same African nations and the same trends seen across multiple countries.21

In addition to aid by individual countries, Madagascar benefits from directed aid from a series of subsidiary organizations of the United Nations. These organizations help to fund various development programs that flow into the local projects administered by a community of development experts and technicians. The programs and organizations sponsored by individual nations and UN organizations enter directly into projects like the Village MAP, which utilizes the clout of the state to harness the developmental productions these organizations perform. This form of international aid also flows indirectly into projects such as the Campus Ambanivohitra, which take advantage of a the pairing of an economically undependable bureaucracy and the intellectual capital created by a proliferation of development expertise to enact its own technicians’ and leader’s middle class development, and, to a lesser extent, that of rural farmers.

21 This is an important point because it illustrates the existence of a network of aid that circuits through Africa and is suggestive of the types of connections that might emerge at more localized levels.
Situating Regional Development in Atsinanana

The statistics that feed the development industry are aggregated in ways that disappear regional difference. This does not occur because of any overt desire to negate in-country differences – though it privileges the nation-state as the level and unit of development – but rather to keep statistics wieldy and actionable, and to fit them into a global political system still dominated by the nation-state. But much falls out of national statistics, particularly in terms of ethno-regional inequality and uneven development. In order to understand the micro-level interactions of development agents

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22 International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS); United Nations Development Program (UNDP); United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR); United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF); (UNRWA); United Nations Transitional Authority (UNTA); United Nations World Food Program (WFP)
and development targets in Atsinanana, it is necessary to come down another notch in the vertical hierarchy.

The Institut National de la Statistique (INSTAT) the government’s statistical office tied to the Malagasy Ministère de l’Économie, des Finances et du Budget\(^2\) (INSTAT 2004), provides much of the information used at the level of the World Bank. Locally, and with the financial and logistical backing of organizations such as the World Bank and USAID, INSTAT carries out surveys and compiles data that is deeply involved in legitimizing state action and international intervention. The knowledge they generate is fraught with potential as it coincides with and lends credence to conceptions of regional and ethnic inequality, even while it eschews mention of any markers outside of geography.

Of the rural populations of each region of Madagascar, the eastern region of Atsinanana, situated on the island’s east coast, is the poorest with 86% of rural individuals living under the poverty line (INSTAT 2004). In the region’s urban areas, by contrast, 45% of individuals are living below the poverty line. This statistical reality adds impetus to development efforts in the region. But in many ways it is what the statistics do not reveal that helps to structure the pathways of development in the area – namely the political importance of the region as a locus of political opposition in the nation.

The key to understanding the region’s urban/rural discrepancy is the fact that it is home to the island’s largest east coast city and main port. It has also been a politically privileged region—located in the home province of the nation’s former president, Didier

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Ratsiraka, it was the prime locus of governmental opposition during the crisis that followed the 2002 election, and remains one of the island's most politically volatile regions. The region of Atsinanana has a population of over a million inhabitants. Where the national average of individuals working in agriculture is 83%, the figure is 96% for Atsinanana.

As the Malagasy state, under its first (and now second) Merina president, tries to quell concerns over ethnoregional inequality, Atsinanana remains a central theater for the performance of legitimacy. If statistics aid in the creation of the anti-politics machine (Ferguson 1990), naturalize the political (Mitchell 1988, 2002; Mitchell in Crush 1995), and render populations legible and thus controllable (Rose 1996), they also necessitate the proliferation of expert statuses that wield this power without appearing powerful. My research is, in part, an attempt to understand how these different forms of power are negotiated within Madagascar’s agricultural development industry.

Engaging Development: Politics and Uncomfortable Ethnographic Encounters

The research presented here is based on multi-sited and multi-scalar ethnographic research on two agricultural development programs in eastern Madagascar. Over nine months from 2008 to 2009, I conducted research in the port city of Tamatave and in smaller cities and villages across Atsinanana. I conducted interviews and participant observation among various groups including: politicians, government officials, project administrators, technicians, farmers and development project’s rural staffs.

Within Atsinanana, my research focused on two rural development projects. The first was the Campus Ambanivohitra, which began in 2004 as the pet project of the then president of the University of Toamasina. The second was the Campus Fanantenana, which began in 2008 as the pet project of the senator of Atsinanana. The projects were
similar to others in the region and relied on state and international partners to provide support for interventions that attempted to transform the lives of rural farmers through education.

While my research was originally centered on the Campus Ambanivohitra, I was given the opportunity to study the Campus Fanantenana in August of 2008. The senator of the region – who in 2005 was the Research Director of the Campus Ambanivohitra and the Vice-President for Financial Affairs at the University of Toamasina - broke with the former university president who directed the Campus Ambanivohitra and went into state politics. He proposed that I study the Campus Fanantenana because it would serve “real” peasants, the implication being that the Campus Ambanivohitra had failed to address the concerns of the rural poor. The tension between the two projects was evident in the way their respective directors framed them, and in the competitions that ensued over the rural sites that the projects would rely on. In part because of the tension and in part because of a curiosity about their respective shifts in positions of power, I chose to expand my study to incorporate this new program.

Shortly thereafter, the Campus Fanantenana was appropriated into presidential politics, thrusting the village into the national spotlight and implicating it in state propaganda and new levels of state intervention. In this way, the political positioning of the men behind these two projects offered me the opportunity to observe two interventions – with variable geographical scope, political status, and access to international and national development organizations – as they were themselves locked
in a process of transformation that I later came to understand through a process I have called rebeginning.

Research focused on the array of actors involved in rural agricultural development within Atsinanana. The formal parameters of the study included populations involved in the two programs I studied, including participant farmers, non-participant farmers, project administrators, project staff, and the representatives of the partner organizations that underwrote the projects. Over a hundred individuals were formally interviewed. In addition, participant observation was conducted among all groups and included a variety of activities: agricultural labor, ancestral ceremonies, sensibilisation or consciousness-raising meetings with the local community, press events promoting the projects or Malagasy development in general, project training, and meetings to discuss curriculum, methods of evaluation, project problems, etc. In addition, I gathered textual data on these and other development programs in Atsinanana, including the neighboring Sherritt mining project and its social programs, and tracked issues related to development in the realms of politics, agriculture, and education in the local news.

The populations I chose to study reflected a concern with understanding development elites and the subjects of development in interaction with each other. This diverges from classical, village-based anthropology in rural areas, which tends to reinforce notions of culture as a bounded and discrete entity in a way that erases the very real and deep interconnections between rural/urban, educated/uneducated, and powerful/powerless. It also diverges from the work of anthropologists who “study-up,” focusing on elite cultures (Nader 1972, Forsythe 1999). Working with these groups
presents a number of dilemmas for anthropologists studying “modern” institutions such as the state or development.

Despite the struggles involved, the classical village study, with its iconic status in ethnographic writing, is a domain in which the experiences of fieldwork are widely known and discussed. Through the proliferation of the “arrival story” and personal narratives of culture shock the struggles of fieldwork have evolved into an “expected” rite of passage for anthropologists (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Ferguson and Gupta 1997, Rabinow 2007). At the same time, the rural fieldwork encounter reproduces the same divisions that anthropologists are known for critiquing: the “modern” and “traditional,” the “self” and “other”. These divisions speak to the enduring power differential between anthropologists (as scholars and scientists) and their subjects. These differentials can be seen in the alienation of the ethnographic subject from the products of ethnography – where rural subjects often lack the ability to access or speak back against the representations proffered in ethnographic texts.

This alienation of ethnographic subject in classical ethnography creates a dilemma for anthropologists who see their authority strengthened and are thus implicated in the erasure of the voices of subalterns. This dynamic has spurred the creation of critical ethnography as a way of attenuating the power inherent in the scientific authority of anthropologists. Within this schema the anthropologist generates the “moral economy” of ethnography that gives shape to “sympathy with some subordinated, often silenced, subject” (Holmes and Marcus 2005: 249). Instead of simply speaking about ethnographic subjects, anthropologists also attempt – often self-consciously – to speak for them (Scheper-Hughes 1995; Hale 2006).
Politically, the gulf between ethnographic subject and ethnography can offer a measure of anonymity for rural subjects whose lives are laid bare before an audience of academics and foreign students. One rural village in Atsinanana may seem interchangeable with another, and those attempting to exploit the knowledge contained in ethnography for political purposes might find it difficult to locate and identify such a small-scale community. In this way, rural ethnography frees anthropologists to speak about and for individuals with some protection against the our ethnographic subjects becoming political targets for those individuals who read our texts.

The attraction of the advocacy role of anthropology was present in Madagascar, where the failures of the projects I studied to fulfill their objectives or visibly improve the lives of participants pulled my alliances towards the rural populations I had worked with, and rendered me at times overly critical of the projects I studied and their staff. I became an (often ineffective) advocate for rural populations. This was a situation that rural farmers encouraged because I was present and because I was foreign, a factor that led them to believe I was someone who project directors and politicians would listen to.

I accepted this role as the 2009 political crisis drew governmental attention away from the Campus Fanantenana. The failures of the project resulted in a community on the verge of a localized famine. Villagers participating in the project attempted a number of channels before asking if I could intervene to get the government to provide food aid. I found out about government rice stores being held in Tamatave (presumably to sell cheap when the crisis caused the inevitable inflation of food prices). I persuaded the acting director of the project to convince the Chef de Région to set aside some few
bags for the community. They called me and informed me of when they would be going out to deliver the aid, but when they arrived they had no rice. Instead they came with a new plan for wage labor in the area (something that in a climate of crisis seemed dubious – who would pay the wages with the government indisposed? More importantly, when?). In this instance, the local population’s perceptions about the power of my status proved wrong. While I could get the state to show up, to change some small practices, I could no more get them to make good on their promises than the local political leadership.

Part of the position I inhabited accrued from my role as an anthropologist examining urban and elite, as well as rural and non-elite cultures. “Studying Up,” or turning the ethnographic lens on elite cultures, troubles the relations of power inherent in the relationship of the anthropologist and their object of study. Where rural ethnography may afford some measure of protection for ethnographic subjects, ethnographies of elites, particularly in the developing world, create new layers of danger. There are only a limited number of development experts in Madagascar, many of whom are accustomed to working with one another, and all of whom inhabit a deeply precarious place where employment is sparse, competition is high, contracts can end, and grants can disappear. Descriptions that attend to cultural patterns among these groups lay bare their identities and necessitate extra layers of protection. Even in the face of pseudonyms and composites, it would be possible for individuals to deduce the elite agents that I studied. The potential erasure of the alienation of ethnographic subject from ethnographic product that exists among more literate and mobile elite cultures increases the possibility that individuals involved with the study might face
negative political and economic consequences for their participation. For this reason, I have altered or omitted the names of my informants and omitted the specific dates of interviews.

In addition to these pressing security problems, anthropologists are pulled into the paradoxical situation of attempting to craft ethnographic authority over individuals who are very much like themselves. This is particularly true among anthropologists who study issues such as development and science. These close working relations induce a sort of seduction in which the anthropologist may slip out of participant observation into the realm of “pure participation” (Holmes and Marcus 2005: 250) – a dynamic that holds the potential to mystify the ethnographic subject and render the anthropologist complicit in the reproduction of the cultural patterns that she/he wishes to study.

Among state agents, my American-ness lent me an air of importance that placed me in the background and, at times, at the center of propaganda efforts and the efforts of elite individuals to advance their political and economic interests. The senator behind the Campus Fanantenana saw me as an important ally and invited me to community events in Tamatave. More important than this, I acted as a signal to President Ravalomanana of the senator’s ability to work with Anglophone experts (the Senator was already quite deft at dealing with French development partners). I was offered an office in the oceanfront Presidential Palace in Tamatave (an overture I respectfully declined), and was told that this was a privilege given because I was American. My privileged – and fraught – position, rather than reflecting any expert status I held,
reflected an alliance with the President’s preferred geopolitical linkages, and allowed the senator to differentiate himself from his colleagues. ²⁴

The senator also asked that I appear periodically on local and national news pieces to talk about the project. I acquiesced to what I considered to be a routine negotiation of fieldwork. I committed to performing this role honestly and without adding credence to the denigrations of rural populations common among development experts or letting slip frustrations with what I sometimes viewed as the criminal indifference of development technicians.

My acquiescence allowed the senator to access an Anglophone face and voice that could be deployed to mean almost anything for a vast swath of the Malagasy population who did not speak English. It also offered an Anglophone voice that could act as a legitimizing force for the state. This legitimizing function was particularly effective among an expatriate population that included development experts from organizations such as the World Bank and those associated with the burgeoning extractive industries in Tamatave, both of which might pave the way for new forms of funding and partnership.

As the political crisis turned serious in January 2009, I began to wonder if I had not been too quick to comply with the senator’s demand. Being too close to the government in a region known as the center of political opposition (the 2008-9 crisis excluded) might not have been worth it. Yet part of anthropological work is learning how to navigate the political alliances necessary to conduct fieldwork. That means not

²⁴ President Ravalomanana had a long history of privileging Anglophone interests over the interests of the former colonial power. This was in part a response for French support of Ratsiraka during the crisis of 2002, and culminated in the expulsion of the French Ambassador in 2008 and French support for Rajoelina’s 2009 takeover.
supporting, but interacting with and gaining some understanding of diverse individuals in diverse positions of power, even where one may disagree with their policy and practice. In the end, I believe the precarious, and sometimes foolhardy, positions I allowed myself to inhabit, strengthened the material I was able to gather, rather than detracting from it.

These sorts of relationships and the dilemmas they introduced also pulled me into an uncomfortable interstice. I found myself wanting a say in the projects – to argue, incorporating my anthropological “expertise,” for this change or that one. The teleological narrative of progressive development pulled at me, as did an oddly sincere faith that tinkering could somehow fulfill the promises of development – or at least temper the more difficult realities that these projects seemed to create. I felt the urge to proscribe the activities of the technicians of development; to urge them to participate in frequent dialogue (the operative word being dialogue) with local communities, visit people in their homes, discuss their desires, attend to issues of mistrust and try to avoid them. Were I to cross into the realm of pure participation, my driving concern would be to make development projects sustainable not just in ecological terms, but in political and economic ones.

These struggles are not something to be laid aside within ethnographic research. Rather, the tensions of the ethnography and the anthropologist’s status as “foreign” expert (with the power that implies) help to reveal how development articulates with the relationships of power between bureaucrats, experts, and local populations. For this reason, I strive to construct an ethnography that is honest not just about the development projects that I studied, but about my various roles in them.
Chapter Layout

This work is composed of seven chapters that span the history and, in part, the present reality of development in Madagascar. Chapter 2 outlines the connection and relations between state, international, and local agents across time in agricultural development. Beginning with the pre-colonial Malagasy states, it traces the implication of these multiple stakeholders in the evolution of policies that center state power in its ability to control land and labor in rural areas. It then turns to the colonial period, emphasizing the continuities and disjunctures that colonialism wrought and the increasing importance of the island in creating the agricultural expertise of the metropole. The chapter closes by discussing the post-independence period, highlighting the continual interplay of agricultural development and politics as they are refracted through subsequent governmental regimes that attempt to make agricultural policy their own.

The next two chapters center on the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, the rural agricultural project that self-consciously billed itself as space for the creation and dissemination of agricultural and market expertise. Chapter 3 explores the ways that the project created a space for intervention through a reliance on accepted narratives of rural agriculture on the eastern coast that both vilify and idealize rural farmers, redeploying ideas of difference (between highland and coastal, northern and southern) that closely trace the contours of inequality on the island. From here, the chapter looks at what is at stake in these representations, understanding them as being simultaneously implicated in the construction and structuring of French governmental morality, Malagasy state power, and the elite status of the bureaucrats, agents and brokers of development. Overall, the
Chapter is about the rebeginnings that the Campus offered these various agents through the economic, political, and social capital it set into circulation.

Chapter 4 continues the examination of the Campus Ambanivohitra project, but turns to the way the project itself was rebegun. Three instances of the projects evolution are examined. The first centers on an original goal, shelved after its first run, to create development experts through an educational exchange between the University of Toamasina and a French agricultural engineering university. The exchange resulted in the disappearance of 5 of the 6 Malagasy exchange students into France and the subsequent closure of the partnership and reorientation of the project’s goals. Though short-lived, the partnership strengthened the bond between the Campus Ambanivohitra’s Research Director and the leaders of the projects partner region of Haute-Normandie, helping to pave the way for his ascension to the office of Senator.

The second instance of rebeginning consisted of the near constant geographical relocation of the Campus along lines structured by changes in Madagascar’s administrative structure, anticipation of future development partnerships, and rural resistance. The third instance is concerned with the adoption, failure, and reorientation of development objectives, particularly the introduction, failure, and abandonment of a micro-credit component and the subsequent adoption of new contractual relations between participant farmers, the Campus, and rural communities. The failure of micro-credit inserted the Campus as a mediator of debt, allowing them greater access to rural agricultural labor in ways that could be turned – through the redefinition of project strategy – to enhance individual agents’ political, social and economic status. Each transformation represented a negotiation with material and political pressures and
underscored the ways rebeginning works as a strategy for project sustenance (and the continuation of the networked flows of social, economic, and political capital) in the face of these pressures.

Chapters 5 and 6 move to the *Campus Fanantenana*, presented as a partial recreation of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* which is forced to begin again as it is appropriated by the state as a model Malagasy village. Chapter 5 parallels Chapter 3 in investigating the narratives about development that the project advances and the benefits that can potentially accrue to those individuals brought into it. At the same time, the shifted structural alliances of this new project, and its close alliance with the state, make it an important contrast to the *Campus Ambanivohitra*. The project represents “development” with all the (highly visible) power of the state behind it (the project was directly administered by the *Bureau Regionale de la Presidence*, BRP). Like the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, participant farmers are recreated and recast within a narrative that highlights their (traditional) deficiencies. The histories of participants confound these assumptions, belying their forcefully false construction as the state’s forgotten peasant masses. In reality, these agents represent a long history of agricultural knowledge and power – most land owners being retired or contemporary state agents in the expert organizations sidelined by recent neoliberal reforms. These individuals complicate development narratives about the peasantry and speak to the force of development to bend individuals to its predetermined will rather than being bent to the will of individuals. Yet development’s other forces were on full display as bureaucrats and politicians levered the project and the narrative it could promote to increase their status. Development emerges here as an important actor in the stories
the state tells about itself and state agents become intimate producers of state theater as they pursue their own futures through development.

The *Campus Fanantenana* was also subject to the same processes of rebeginning that characterized the *Campus Ambanivohitra*. Chapter 6 examines these rebeginnings as conflicts and competitions over the political, economic, and social capital set loose by the project. Structured separately, and certainly more overtly political and less economical than the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, the *Campus Fanantenana* underwent a number of rebeginnings as its main interlocutors moved up in political and bureaucratic hierarchies, disappeared from the project, or sought to direct the project in ways that could illustrate the success of expertise (but not its failure). The project was shaken up multiple times as administrators disappeared up the political ladder and into the political morass that characterized the 2008-2009 crisis. Several ventures failed, causing rural participants to lose valuable labor and threatening their food security. These failures ushered in more intimate relations between rural individuals and the state.

Chapter 7 returns to the coup that opened this story – an event that shifts in focus throughout the text in the same way that the political focus shifts as we travel between rural and urban and back again. Tracing out some of the events that led up to the 2009 coup that forced the nation into crisis, particularly the relationship between the public face of development on the island and its manipulation for political gain (for example the prospective Daewoo land acquisition and the Sherritt nickel and cobalt mine - both of which were susceptible to political narratives of “selling the island to outsiders” and against which the *Campus Fanantenana* could be (but never would be) a potent symbol. The chapter then outlines some of the ways that Rajoelina has begun the state since
taking office – constantly reinventing his inner circle, disbanding and reorganizing ministries, generally restructuring the state in ways that benefit France (who many believe was behind the coup and who, like Rajoelina, used “development” to assure their geopolitical influence on the island).

The chapter then turns back to the central process and premise of this work: that 1) development is best understood as a promise of rebeginning made to institutions and individuals through the very real political, economic, and social capital that flow through development’s networks; 2) these flows spur competition, making development a site of confrontation and contestation; 3) it is precisely within these points of conflict that the boundaries of diversely and variably weighted individual, expert, and state power are constructed; and 4) that these conflicts are subsequently smoothed out by the sorts of rebeginnings made possible by teleological notions of progress and neoliberal notions of governance; which are then 5) put back to work in the rebeginnings of individuals and institutions (see no. 1).
CHAPTER 2
HISTORICAL CONNECTIONS: AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE REBEGINNINGS OF THE MALAGASY STATE

Starting Over: Development and the Malagasy State

Using Malagasy’s precolonial history as a starting point, this chapter explores the ways that state governance has displayed patterns of rebeginning over time. Here, incremental changes stitched new forms of power onto old ones and were constituted sometimes in opposition, sometimes in (at least discursive) alignment to earlier power formations. These moves were never wholesale. Rather, they partition practices in a way that signals the continuous processes of hybridization that characterize political institutions in connection (Pieterse 1995, Canclini 2000).25 Thus, the structures of earlier formations, such as the fokon’olona, or local governing bodies, utilized by the pre-colonial Kingdom of Imerina, were continued (in modified form) under the French colonial regime and re-cast by the nation’s subsequent post-independence leaders. These rebeginnings offered a way for policy-makers to build on the governing structures that existed temporally or geographically separate from, if adjacent to, the center of power in question, while simultaneously distancing themselves from the politics of earlier regimes, or constructing their governing power against previous - now cast as hegemonic - orders.

“Development” traveled throughout this history, its contents emptied and refilled according to the context. Early missionary accounts are replete descriptions of Madagascar’s “empty” lands and “indolent” behaviors, and how these could be “advanced” through the creation and expansion of modes of governance that act

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25 Rebeginnings are, in a way, a supplement to notions of hybridity that gives some space to understandings of why and how changes wrought by connection are assimilated and normalized.
simultaneously as technologies of power and technologies of self (Foucault et al 1988). In many areas missionaries worked with local authorities to create these systems, with Protestant missionaries from the London Missionary Society (LMS) implicated in expansion of practical state education in the highland Kingdom of Imerina in the 1820s, and Jesuit missionaries on the coasts establishing their own institutional systems. Throughout, missionary understandings of local populations were levered into a need for “development” through colonization.

Missionary conceptions of the transformative properties of “civilization” on the island would continue through the colonial period. The colonial state would become, under pressure from colonizing populations, a main agent in the creation of expertise, and particularly the practical expertise that could be put to work in the “development” of the colonies. These efforts initiated a network of epistemological power that remains – in altered and almost skeletal form – today.

As African states began to agitate for independence after WWII, “development” was given new life as an argument against colonial power in Madagascar (Cooper 2002, Cooper and Packard 1997). Malagasy nationalists took up development as an object necessitating autonomy; an object unattainable under the colonial system. In this way, development played a key role in the emergence of a nationalist discourse, and the creation of post-WWII forms of Malagasy identity. Even so, the forms of subjectivity engendered by these new calls – the types of Malagasy subject imagined – were often layered over these earlier (colonial) discourses of development.

More recently, post-independence leaders have made narratives of development central to the contemporary legitimacy of the state. Political crises, which have
occurred regularly, are often driven by developmental concerns that focus on asymmetries of power even while the practices of subsequent regimes have left these asymmetries largely intact. The final section of this chapter traces these enduring asymmetries in the politics of “development.”

Pre-Colonial Madagascar

Understanding the issues that face the contemporary Malagasy state requires some understanding of the island’s pre-colonial political history. The human history of Madagascar begins early in the current era, with populations from Africa and Indonesia, as well as the Middle East, arriving on the coasts in a steady stream from approximately 400 C.E. (Randrianja and Ellis 2009, Cole 2001). While some came for trade, others made a life for themselves on the island, settling along the coasts and waterways, and eventually moving inland. Over time, these populations created kingdoms that, variously, cooperated, co-opted, and conflicted with one another. These political groupings became the basis on which the multiple ethnic groups that make up the current Malagasy nation-state were formed.

Two of these polities are particularly important for understanding the contemporary political and developmental realities of eastern Madagascar. The first is the Betsimisaraka Kingdom / Confederation (Randrianja and Ellis 2009, Cole 2001). The creation of a métisse “pirate king,” the Betsimisaraka is the polity on which the eastern

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26 Whether the Betsimisaraka is best described as a “confederation” or a “kingdom” is subject to debate among historians and anthropologists (see Cole 2001, Randrianja and Ellis 2009, Rakotondrabe 1993). Clearly the designation has political implications. To claim it as a kingdom is to assume centralization, project a longevity of centralized leadership that never really existed, and negate claims to Betsimisaraka exceptionalism. To claim it as a confederacy is to give it more egalitarianism than it, in fact, displayed, but does offer a potent political symbolism that offers a response that accepts, perhaps wrongheadedly, difference as a starting point. I am pulled both ways here, and so have left both, with the understanding that both understandings play a part in how Malagasy individuals today understand their place within the Malagasy state and its potential futures.
ethnicity of Betsimisaraka was formed. Despite its temporal disconnection from the Kingdom of Imerina, the Betsimisaraka remains a salient political imagining that continues to be deployed as an alternative reality to contemporary social inequality and the increasing centralization of state power.

The second is the highland Kingdom of Madagascar / Imerina (Randrianja and Ellis 2009). Geographically based in the central highlands surrounding the capital city of Antananarivo, the kingdom constitutes a potent symbol of the Malagasy nation – past and present. It is also considered, among coastal ethnicities, to be the base on which ethno-regional inequality is rooted, or among highland ethnicities, to be a baseless manifestation of “tribalism” and a constant existential threat. While the reality is debatable, the perception is palpable, particularly in times of crisis. Imerina, whether it is viewed as a hegemonic force or the purveyor of Madagascar’s initial independence, continues to cast a shadow over Malagasy politics.

**The Betsimisaraka Confederation / Kingdom, 1712-1750**

On the eastern coast the seventeenth century saw the continuation of the trade and concomitant piracy that had helped to populate the island. Coastal populations profited from the slave trade and the weaponry it made available. International trade fueled regional conflict and contributed to the consolidation of power in Kingdoms along the Malagasy coasts. One such Kingdom was the north-western Sakalava Kingdom of

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27 In official documentation the highland kingdom was “Kingdom of Madagascar.” However, a number of English language publications, particularly those written by anthropologists have labeled it the Kingdom of Imerina. The moniker had the effect of differentiating it from other kingdoms, such as the Sakalava, that coexisted with the highland Kingdom and emphasized, to an extent, that the kingdoms powers were limited. However, as Randrianja and Ellis (2009) point out, the use of the term doesn’t align with historical usage and tends towards the equation of the Kingdom with a certain ethnicity. This latter issue tends to ignore the islands very real history of migration. Both monikers leave something to be desired. I use both throughout to denote both the Kingdom and its regional base, to differentiate it from its neighbors, and to aid readers in understanding how salient their power was.
Boina that would come to rule over much of the island northern regions. The Sakalava had begun to move inland, exerting power over the highland kingdoms through tribute.

The King of Boina in the early 18th century, Toakafo, continued the kingdom’s politics of incorporating advisors and adopting military innovations from European pirates. His engagement in global commerce and the relationships he fostered spurred the creation of a number of smaller kingdoms led by pirates on the eastern coast. These, in turn, created a dynasty of zanamalata or, children of the mulattoes (Ellis 2007, 447). It was among this group that the son of an English pirate and a Malagasy princess, Ratsimilaho, was born.

Ratsimilaho would become an advisor to King Toakafo, before returning to the eastern coast in the early 18th century. At the time, tensions among the eastern clans were beginning to surface, with southern ancestries concerned about the monopolization of trading ports by northern ancestries. Eventually, the southern ancestries attacked under the leadership of a man called Ramano. In response, Ratsimilaho created a coalition with northern and southern ancestries to form a federation against southern encroachment. Eventually, Ratsimilaho made a pact with leader of another southern ancestry and defeated Ramano. The polity he created – in part a rebeginning of the Sakalava kingdom – called a kingdom by some and a confederation by others, lasted from 1712-1750, took the name Betsimisaraka or “the many that will not be sundered” (Cole 2001: 38; see also Deschamps 1965).

The polity lasted less than 40 years, but the designation of the Betsimisaraka remained, and became the moniker for a large swath of individuals across the eastern coast. The designation, and the historical memory of Betsimisaraka, has had lasting
effects on the island’s politics. On the eve of colonization, the ethnic designation would come to signify the brutality of the Imerina kingdom in French eyes. During colonialism, it would be reordered by the colonial government’s *politiques des races*, and subsumed under the label *côtier* (coastal) – again set against an oppressive and hegemonic Imerina. After independence, the Betsimisaraka would take up both these mantels, becoming the ethnic origin of President Didier Ratsiraka, who crafted himself, in part, as the leader of the *côtier*, while ideas of Betsimisaraka as political formation fed notions of “federalism” and helped to construct the imagined futures of governance in Madagascar (Rakotondrabe 1993).

**Imerina and the Rise of the Kingdom of Madagascar**

The Imerina kingdom emerged on the highland plateau in the latter part of the 15th century (Deschamps 1965; Ki-Zerbo and Niane 1997, Razafintsalama in Raison-Jourde 1983). Like the island’s other kingdoms, it thrived through interconnection. Imerina rulers adopted technological, governmental, and cultural practices from nearby rulers, as well as empires of global scope, and solidified their position with these other powers through both amity and enmity. Over time, and at intervals, the kingdom expanded both the form and territorial scope of its power.

The Merina Kingdom is important to contemporary understandings of Malagasy ethnicity and politics, and its political ascension is often seen as the root of contemporary manifestations of inequality. Much of this perceived inequality is linked to the kingdom’s extension of governing institutions, and its subsequent entry into the governance of land, labor, and knowledge. Built atop the territory of the part mythical / part real *vazimba* kingdom, successive Merina monarchs consolidated a kingdom that would come to conquer most of the island by the time of colonial conquest (Berg 1977;
Randrianja and Ellis 2009). The most notable among these are credited with the introduction of a number of advances to agriculture and its governance. These included the introduction of iron into the construction of spears, axes, and hoes \(^{28}\) (Andriamanelo, r. 1540-1575), the transformation of highland marshland into irrigated rice fields (Andrianjaka r. 1610-1630), and the construction of dykes and canals throughout the kingdom (Andriasinavalona r. 1675-1710; Brown 2000; Kent 1970; Deschamps 1965, Koerner 1999).

Subsequent leaders split the territory before, over a half-century later, the famed Andrianampoinimerina (r. 1787-1810) would reconnect it. He accomplished this by using the slave trade \(^{29}\) as a source for investment in foreign weapons (Randrianja and Ellis 2009). He turned this weaponry into a consolidation of the surrounding kingdoms of Imerina by 1790, and the subsequent annexation of non-Merina kingdoms through threat of military destruction. Those he could not conquer, he opened diplomatic relations with, making agreements and inviting their advisors and scholars to the seat of governance in Imerina to improve the kingdom. \(^{30}\)

In the agrarian realm, Andrianampoinimerina expanded the highland focus on intensive riziculture through irrigation projects, enabling dual season rice production. These state projects were facilitated by *fanomboana*, an established labor relation that

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\(^{28}\) This technological transformation was introduced before this ruler’s time (Deshamps 1965; Bloch 1986; Randrianja and Ellis 2009).

\(^{29}\) Slavery relied on captives taken through local conflicts, accused of witchcraft, or otherwise on the wrong side of the power equation (Randrianja and Ellis 2009).

\(^{30}\) Most notably, Andrianampoinimerina exchanged gifts with the Kingdom of Sakalava in the northwest in the hope of negotiating some sort of recognition of his authority (Deschamps 1965: 123). He also took advantage of the intellectual capital of neighboring kingdoms, bringing Anakara scholars from the southeastern Kingdom of Antemoro (Antaimoro) to share their knowledge of Arabic script in Imerina (Deschamps 1965, Kent 1969; Kus and Raharijaona 2000, 2008).
obliged lower status and rank Merina (and later, others) into unremunerated labor for those above them (Campbell 2005: 64). Andrianampoinimerina expanded and formalized these obligations, establishing a system wherein local village councils, or *fokon’olona*, would transmit royal decrees extracting labor for public works to the tune of 24 days of labor per year, mainly in the domain of agriculture. These formal obligations, and the canals and dykes they created, had a profound effect on the peasantry, arresting their mobility and facilitating their subjection to taxes and new forms of *corvée* labor (Deschamps 1965: 126; Randrianja and Ellis 2009:118).

In 1810, Andrianampoinimerina died, naming his son Radama I (r. 1810-1828) as successor and proclaiming “the ocean is the limit of my rice field,” gesturing toward the powerful link between riziculture and political power (Deschamps 1965: 127). By now, the French had already made progress on the island’s coasts, setting up governing bodies alongside the missionary presence of the French Jesuits. The British, meanwhile, had established a colony on the nearby island of Mauritius. Radama exploited tensions and competition between Britain and France to convince the British to provide arms and support to the Kingdom. In 1817, he signed a treaty with Mauritius’ Governor Farquhar in which the British would supply arms to the Kingdom in exchange for the abolition of the (foreign) slave trade (Deschamps 1965).

Radama I took full advantage of foreign expertise in ways that echoed the geopolitical strategies of his predecessors, creating a large cadre of European advisors. Their counsel and what infrastructure they had established on the island was put to work in Radama’s expansion and further institutionalization of *fanompoana* labor.

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31 Under Radama I, the army became a realm of permanent *fanompoana*, as opposed to civilian *fanompoana*. 
obligations through institutions such as the army and schools in the early 1920s (Koerner 1999, Campbell 2005). While schools were mainly focused on literacy and mathematics, many had practical aspects, instructing students on tangibly productive capability such as carpentry (Koerner 1999). Radama I also instituted a sort of industrial *fanomoana* that staffed the factories and factory farms led by Europeans and Merina throughout the, by now largely expanded, kingdom (Campbell 2005). These expansions of state power, and the concomitant creation of state infrastructure, was a source of conflict in regions such as Atsinanana, where the influx of Merina or foreign missionary teachers was seen as an effort by the Merina to exert control over independent local populations or to turn non-Merina children into Merina.

King Radama died in 1828 and was succeeded, with the aid of a coup, by Queen Ranavalona I (r. 1828-1861; Deschamps 1965: 164; Randrianja and Ellis 2009). Ranavalona I was subject to new pressures from within, and her rule marked, in large part, the end of an independent monarchy (Randrianja and Ellis 2009). The kingdom’s power rested on the wills of military leaders and traders.

During Ranavalona’s time as queen, the kingdom started over - setting about suppressing and, in part, erasing the changes wrought by Radama I’s reign. She cut ties with the European merchants and technicians that had been welcomed by Radama and closed the 23 state schools he initiated (Koerner 1999). She reacted violently against the incursion of Christianity into the highlands, killing some hundred thousand converts and reportedly burying believers alive, drowning them in boiling water, or driving them off cliffs (Colin and Suau 1895). Despite her isolationist tendencies,
Ranavalona I accepted some foreigners\textsuperscript{32} into her council and kept the lines of communication with European powers open.\textsuperscript{33}

Ranavalona I’s famed brutality offered French missionaries and imperialists an entry point to greater control over the island and they set about exploiting the fears of Merina elites and the leaders of neighboring kingdoms. The French government negotiated with nobles and royalty that fled or were exiled outside of the territory of Imerina, establishing a protectorate among these in 1839 (Deschamps 1965: 171). In 1841, the Kingdom of Bemihisatra-Sakalava in the north-western region of the island submitted to French protection (Sharp 2002: 31).

Meanwhile, Ranavalona’s son, Rakoto, was venturing into territorial politics. In 1855, he signed a deal to hand over a substantial land concession to a group of French businessmen, giving them a “monopoly on mining and extractive industries” in exchange for political support (Randrianja and Ellis 2009: 129). The attempt garnered him ill will among the ruling class that stood behind the monarch and ignited anti-European sentiment.

In 1861 Queen Ranavalona I died, leaving the throne to her son Rakoto, who took the name Radama II (r. 1861-1863; Sharp 2002). Radama II’s reign was in many ways the polar opposite of his mother’s – as the name suggests, Radama II south to in part, return, reclaim, and recast a status quo anterior while adopting what was surely a

\textsuperscript{32} Most notably, the Frenchman Jean Laborde, who was shipwrecked, enslaved, and subsequently pressed into the Queen’s service because of his knowledge of the fabrication of firearms (Oliver 1885, Randrianja and Ellis 2009). Laborde was responsible not only for arms. His work in the capital encompassed all manner of what one might call “development” after the fashion of the earlier English missionaries. Laborde opened a sugar refinement factory, a rum factory, an experimental field for tropical plants, and an agricultural training center (Deschamps 1965).

\textsuperscript{33} Ranavalona recommitted to Radama’s treaty with the England to halt the international slave trade from Madagascar, and offering her willingness to engage in fair trade with France and England (Resident 1847: 68)
naively open policy towards his enemies. He refused to pursue or punish the Merina nobles who opposed his ascension to the throne, freed the Christian converts imprisoned by his mother, welcomed back British and French missionaries, and renounced slave raids and conquests of neighboring kingdoms. His reign abolished *fanompoana* and customs taxes, authorizing, as one missionary said, “every man to become his own salesman; to dispose of his goods on his own terms” (Ellis in Randrianja and Ellis 2009: 129) – a prescient precursor to the neoliberal “entrepreneur of the self” (Rose 1999). Around the same time, Radama II ceded bits of the kingdom's sovereignty, signing treaties with France and England allowing them the right to buy land, assuring their freedom of movement and religion, and the right to be tried by their own consuls rather than by Merina authorities (Deschamps 1965).

Radama II's open policies with Europe compromised the territorial integrity of the kingdom and engendered opposition from his opponents. He was killed in 1863 - just two years after being named king - by his councilor, Raharo (Deschamps 1965: 176). From his assassination until the advent of colonialism in 1896, the monarchy increasingly shifted towards oligarchy built upon a cadre of ambitious nobles who competed to control the kingdom. When Radama’s II’s first successor, his first wife Rasoherina (r. 1863-1868), took the throne, she could no longer make decisions without consulting the nobles under her. Subsequently, treaties with Britain and France were repealed, as was the charter for Lambert’s company introduced by Radama II. Raharo’s rule continued until Rasoherina expelled him and named his brother, Rainilaiarivony, his successor as prime minister in 1864 (Deschamps 1965: 179).
Rainilaiarivony married Rasoherina and the two sought to repair the now worn relations between the Kingdom of Imerina and the British. In 1865 they signed a new treaty with England, again assuring the abolition of the slave trade and foreign property rights on the island.\(^{34}\) The Kingdom signed a similar treaty with the United States in 1867 and the French in 1868. Rainilaiarivony remained in his post until a plot to kill the Queen was carried out by his brother and rival, Raharo. Rainilaiarivony then orchestrated the ascension of another of Radama II’s wives to the throne, Ranavalona II (r. 1868-1883), and married her (Deschamps 1965).

The couple converted to Protestantism, a move that reflected their own histories of missionary contact (and education) and the strength of the LMS in the highlands, as well as a conscious move against French and catholic interests (Deschamps 1965: 181). After their conversion Rainilaiarivony and Queen Ranavalona II embarked on a series of reforms meant to formalize the Kingdom’s power and incorporate protestant values. They also extended the scope of Merina power, sending former soldiers into rural areas as administrators, establishing governors across the island, and relying on governing councils, or fokon’olona, in villages to provide the fanompoana,\(^{35}\) that constituted both a continuation of former state policy and a replacement for now firmly abolished slave labor (Allen 1995: 25; Deschamps 1965; Campbell 2005).

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\(^{34}\) These treaties are open to some interpretation, though they effectively represented the protection racket that would become colonialism, with the French able to “represent” the Kingdom in all external affairs. As far as land usage, they allowed 90 year leases, but not foreign land ownership, a situation that continues to this day (see Oliver 1886 for copies of the Kingdom’s international treaties and Rajaspera 1998 for discussion of misunderstandings and questionable translations of these treaties at the time of their initiation).

\(^{35}\) Fanompoana was firmly established from about the 16\(^{th}\) century, and was key in public works projects such as irrigation dykes (Campbell 1988).
Concomitant with this expansion of state power, the Imerina Kingdom codified its governing regulations, publishing the “Code of 305 Articles” in 1881. These re-formalized the depth of the state’s interconnection with the lives of Malagasy living outside of the capital, ranging from compulsory schooling to currency regulation (Parker 1883). The Codes established government claims on all “empty” and forested lands and established policies, some already codified since Andrianampoinimerina, to control access to forest resources (Kull 2004). They also began a process in which the kingdom attempted to gain further purchase on the mobility of populations, and their relationships with the land. Cole (2001) details the ones that are centrally important to the relatively forested eastern coastal regions:

Article 104: They [Betsimisaraka][36] cannot build houses in the forest without the authorization of the government. If people erect, for the purpose of inhabitation, houses in the forest, they will be punished with a fine of 10 cattle and 10 piasters, and their houses will be destroyed and they must also pay an indemnity of one cow and one piaster for each tree cut.

Article 105: It is forbidden to clear the forest by means of fire with the intention of planting fields of rice, corn, or other crops. Those areas already cleared may be cultivated, but if people clear new land with fire or extend those clearings already in existence they will be mis au fers [put in chains, i.e., imprisoned] for five years.

Article 106: Those trees located next to the ocean can not be cut or damaged unless it is under the express orders of the government. Whoever damages the forest will be punished with a fine of 10 cattle and 10 piastres, and if they cannot pay will be put in prison until they work off the fine. [Cole 2001: 42, citing Esoavelomandroso 1979: 83]

Tavy, or the practice of burning land for shifting agriculture, is described in Article 105. Its codification formalizes already extant discourses of state control over forest

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[36] The law was written generally, though the fact that most of the remaining forest remained, at the time, along the eastern coast, making the laws most pertinent to this area. The bracketed designation here is Cole’s.
resources and ushers in linkages of *tavy* with deforestation on the island, a linkage that remains central to contemporary development schemes.

In the early 1880’s the French began to exert more pressure on the Merina monarchy and tried in earnest to lay claim on Madagascar as a colonial possession. They attacked Merina posts on Madagascar’s western and eastern coasts\(^{37}\) (specifically the cities of Tamatave and Majunga) and delivered an ultimatum to Rainilaiarivony in 1883 just as Ranavalona II was dying. Rainilaiarivony again married the successor to the throne, who was renamed Ranavalona III (r. 1883-1897; Deschamps 1965: 186).

Throughout this two hundred year period the highland Kingdom of Madagascar expanded its territory and extended its sway over rural subjects, staking a claim on the land, and trying to pin it down, for government control of individuals and resources. The codes were just one example of this. Irrigation and dykes likewise brought rural subjects under new forms of state power. *Fanompoana* obligations set rural and urban labor in the hands of a centralized power structure, and the extension of *fokon’olonana* stretched this relation into a vertical power grid and expanded the potential for the surveillance and control of subjects.

This same period saw the Kingdom of Madagascar formed into a lever with which the French could excuse their intervention in the island’s politics and stake a claim on its economic potential. The portrait that emerged of Imerina and its relations with the coasts came to represent the vagaries of “too much order.” Oppression became France’s main critique of the island nation, and it used this critique to affect an imagining of France as a just and right nation. This nest of geopolitical power would

\(^{37}\) Particularly the port cities of Tamatave and Majunga.
remain important for local politics, particularly recently, when anglophone and francophone interests vie for, and get caught up in, power on the island.

**French Imaginings of Hegemony and Indolence**

The attendant discourses of French colonialism in Madagascar relied on several constructions. The most important were centered on the specter of Merina hegemony and the idea of the indolent and unproductive Malagasy. This section briefly outlines these two discourses, which are twisted into the tapestry of modern Malagasy politics.

**Discourses of oppression**

On the eve of colonization (in 1892), Prince Henri Philippe d’Orleans described the Imerina kingdom, carrying out a practice of dehumanization that would carry French interests in the island’s material and human resources forward:

> A government only in name and which isn’t in reality anything but a syndicate of families united to exploit the larger populace. Barbaric princes already guilty of human sacrifice and horrors that it is impossible for me to describe here. A kingdom recognized as the master of an island of which it possesses hardly half… An administration auctioned off and paid by its citizens. Here rape, there robbery, elsewhere piracy. Everywhere the arbitrary, anarchy and following that, insecurity [D’Orleans in Randrianja 2004: 84].

Colonialism was beginning to be constructed as an anti-hegemonic act, not to civilize but to protect the Malagasy from the worst natures of their inhabitants, specifically those inhabitants of the highlands and the now “anarchic” and “arbitrary” Kingdom of Madagascar.

In 1895, speaking of the Merina / Protestant schools established on the eastern coasts, the Catholic missionaries highlighted what they viewed as some of the cruelties of Merina rule:

> The Betsimisaraka people, in the countryside, die of hunger and misery. Two calamities are in the midst of being achieved, which are the militarism
and, a strange thing, the protestant schools. All eligible youth – even children of 14 or 15 years – are taken from the villages and brought to the centers, where Hova officers instruct them. Condemned to idleness, forced to feed themselves, house themselves, clothe themselves, conscripts are forced to borrow. Their officers pressure them to borrow clothes and rice at huge interest, at exorbitant interest. The future harvests of the old parents are also mortgaged in advance. [Colin and Suau 1895: 304]

Their perceptions were colored both by their rivalry with the protestants, who dominated in the highlands, and their convictions of the superiority of the French system and the equality it offered. Ironically, many of the practices the missionaries critiqued would later be revisited upon the Malagasy by the French.

**Crafting Indolence**

If the image of a violent and hegemonic kingdom called forth a French government that was equitable and peaceful, it was accompanied by an (incongruent) image of local indolence and irrational land usage. D’Escamps highlights the presumed inefficiency of the island, stating:

The case which is particular to Madagascar, where a population of only a million inhabitants occupy land that could sustain forty million, leaving the rest of the land in an uncultivated state so that they can live there without work. [1884: xij]

The assertion rallied popular European discourses rooted in the works of European thinkers like the Swiss philosopher, Emer de Vattel’s *Law of Nations*, from 1758:

It is a popular question, to which the discovery of the new world has principally given place. One asks if a nation can legitimately occupy some part of a vast country, in which one finds nothing but errant people, incapable, by their small number, to live everywhere. These peoples cannot give themselves more land than what they need and on which they are not living or cultivating. Their vague habitation in these immense regions cannot pass for a true and legitimate possession and the peoples of Europe, already overpopulated in their realm, finding terrain for which the

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38 Hova is another word for Merina, but carries the connotation of commoner.
savages have no particular need and do not currently use or maintain, could legitimately occupy and establish colonies thereon [in D'Escamps 1884: xij-xiiij].

This viewpoint offered a framework that, coupled with the discourse of Imerina hegemony outlined above, could be used to rationalize the expansion of French involvement from protectorate to colony. Morality hangs heavily here; a lack of cultivation beyond personal subsistence gestured towards a lack of proper morality and a misunderstanding of the world. Private property, in this equation, is a relationship between person and thing that requires constant supervision and nourishment. The relations created between missionaries and local populations, the longstanding state interest in controlling the cultivation of rice in the highlands, the role and multiple failures of earlier attempts to penetrate the island, and the missionary outposts aimed at both educating and “developing’ the native, were deconstructed, debased, and sometimes recast in order to legitimize the colonial endeavor.

**Colonial Power in Madagascar**

By 1890, narratives of Merina disorder abounded and missionaries began to call for French intervention. While these narratives helped to legitimize intervention, an accompanying series of fiscal traps solidified French political relevance in the area. The period was characterized by methods of power that parallel the syndicates of organized crime (see Tilly 1985) – the French offered protection.

The Malagasy owed an indemnity for this “protection.” This thinly veiled extortion saddled the kingdom with a debt of 10 million francs (~2 million USD). The Imerina leadership initially attempted to create a national bank from which it could secure a loan to repay the indemnity - with the help of the British - on the basis of future customs income. The French, however, insisted that the Kingdom borrow only from French
institutions, forcing it to borrow from the *Comptoir National d’Escompte de Paris* (CNEP) at seven percent interest (Campbell 1988b: 283-4).

**Establishing Colonial Authority**

This loan guarantee deprived the Malagasy state of tax revenue and forced the Kingdom to grant Europeans concessions for mineral and timber exploitation (Boahen 1985). Even with these concessions, the Kingdom was unable to meet its financial obligations to the CNEP and subsequently extracted more labor and taxes from the populace to recover the deficit. The customs income, on which it depended, was often lost to local and state corruption, or to the lack of customs taxes at the island’s western ports, which remained independent from Imerina (Campbell 1988a: 287). This dynamic of debt, and the extension of political authority to cover that debt, fed into the already present concerns of non-Merina Malagasy over the kingdom’s legitimacy. It also fed directly into French narratives of Imerina governance as defective, passé, absolutist, and tyrannical. By 1887, the CNEP moved to take over the customs offices themselves, expanding their control over international trade.

This instance signals the centrality of trade through customs and in the creation and expansion of state power. In Madagascar, as on the African continent, control over trade translated into the expansion of the governmental and fiscal capabilities of the state and was a key component of colonial power (see Chalfin 2010). For Madagascar, the border remains an important space for state formation, as well as the formation of non-state and extra-state forms of governance (see also Chalfin 2010, Roitman 2005). It is precisely this centrality that makes the Region of Atsinanana (and formerly the Province of Toamasina) an important site for the reinvention and extension of systems of governance with a decidedly geopolitical and moral twist. Local interest in
development means more than simply development, and the considerations of choosing Atsinanana are not disconnected from this reality.

When the Kingdom of Imerina rejected French overtures to expand their control, France declared war on the Merina, sending in troops and taking control of Antananarivo in September of 1895 (Boahen 1985). Occupying the capital, however, did not end France’s struggle for control of the island. Their actions set off a revolt against the introduction of Christianity and the presumed disappearance of Malagasy culture that came to be known as the *Menalamba*.\(^{39}\) This movement is often identified by scholars as the emergence of nationalism on the island (Ellis 1985). The *Menalamba* revolts lasted until 1898 and sought to restore a mythic Malagasy past before French and Christian encroachment. While Merina nobles, or *andriana*, took up leadership roles within the movement, both the peasantry and nobility were involved and claimed they acted under the order of Queen Ranavalona III (Clayton 1993).

**New Colonial Orders and the Patterns of Power**

The *Menalamba* ended in 1896, when the French sent Colonel Joseph-Simon Gallieni to take over the new and flailing French colony. Gallieni’s efforts reflected French concerns with Merina hegemony. One of his first acts was to rework the monarchy, killing off those who might be a threat. He established in their stead rulers that he imagined would be more amenable to French concerns. Changing course from previous relations between France and the Kingdom, which at least sought to utilize the nobles, Gallieni exiled the Merina royal family in 1897 and annulled the privileges of the aristocracy (Boahen 1985; Clayton 1993). Adding insult to injury, he had his men open

\(^{39}\) Translated as the Red Shawls.
and desecrate the royal tombs – an act that visibly sought to break territorial and historical linkages.

The strategies of conquering the Malagasy were not simply or consistently destructive. Gallieni attempted to harness the power of royal linkage, reinventing the Merina Festival of the Royal Bath, or *Fandroana*, as Bastille Day by incorporating elements of the celebration into Bastille Day festivities on the island (Clayton 1993; Sharp 2002). Gallieni also established *politiques des races* based on French colonial policies in the Sudan and Indochina, which divided the island into ethnic groups and assigned them to territories (Boahen 1985; Clayton 1993). It was an attempt, for Gallieni, to reinstall and rework his experiences elsewhere in the empire while simultaneously exploiting the politics of difference that was linked to competition and confrontation between different kingdoms.

Like the policies set forth by Andrianampoinimerina a century beforehand, this policy allowed the (French) state to control the mobility of the Malagasy people and thus their labor and their commerce. The focus of this arrest on mobility, however, was the Merina. Control over their movement, for the French, was at once an act of vengeance in retaliation for Merina resistance and a containment policy against further troubles. Under this policy, Gallieni forced Merina administrators stationed in coastal areas back to the highlands and appointed local chiefs to replace them (Clayton 1993: 98). In so doing, he also provided a gesture of good faith to the non-Merina peoples that had agreed to French “protection” against the Kingdom of Imerina.

Gallieni’s policies, however, did not represent a break with the power structures instituted by the highland monarchy. Rather, he layered French structures atop
Malagasy forms, transforming the content of both in the process. At the local level, Gallieni extended the *fokon’olona* form of local counseling bodies that had been formalized by the Merina monarchy in their territories to the entire island (Boahen 1985). He also utilized and extended the *fanompoana*, or forced labor that the *fokon’olona* were expected to organize under the Kingdom of Imerina. Gallieni’s interpretation required 50 days a year of labor from Malagasy males between the ages and 16 and 60 (114).

The *fanompoana*, however, did not meet Gallieni’s expectations. By 1901, Gallieni was complaining that both colonists and Malagasy had found a way to game the system and avoid the labor obligations he imposed. Gallieni explained his frustrations to the Chief of the Africa section at the *Union Coloniale*, a group funded by French businesses:

> You immediately see the consequence of this abuse. The natives, instead of becoming used to work, stay idle, happy to pay a modest sum to unscrupulous employers. As for the European colonists, the consequences are even worse concerning serious colonization, the only type I must work to encourage. These individuals do nothing, and having brought no resources with them, limit themselves to living off of this form of rent which is paid to them by the natives [Gallieni 1928: 68]

This idleness, both of Malagasy and of colonists, has detrimental effects on what Gallieni calls the “serious colonists,” who cannot find the labor they need.

The drive to economic productivity was a key principle in the objectives of the *Union Colonial*, who in 1897 defined their goals as:

> To find all means necessary to assure development, prosperity, and the defence [sic] of the diverse branches of agriculture, commerce, and industry in our colonies.

> To unite all organizations and societies with these interests in common.
To examine and present all economic or legislative measures deemed necessary to the public powers and to disseminate them by publicity in newspapers, etc. [Persell 1974: 177]

The *Union* allied itself with the Chambers of Commerce in the colony and metropole to achieve these goals. The development and prosperity they sought necessitated “a land policy dedicated to the development of a *colon*-dominated agriculture…. the establishment of railroads and a drastic alteration of the colonial tariff structure” (179). Agriculture was key, and the *Union* focused their attention on providing training for colonists so that they might establish “modern capitalistic agriculture” (179). Once that task was finished, commerce could be established.

In Madagascar, Gallieni dutifully reported his issues with *prestation*, or *fanompoana*, and suggested a strategy of wage labor to combat the “abuses” it engendered. Gallieni sought to institute a wage labor system in which Malagasy workers who would then pay back into the system through raised taxes and through the spending of these wages with French merchants, thus providing both the labor and a market for the colony (Gallieni 1928: 70). The *Union Coloniale* was concerned about government expenditures and only partially able to influence the direction of government funds and sought to continue the *fanompoana*. Gallieni would later critique the *Union* for encouraging this bad behavior by “already giving too many favors to the colonial cause in order to support even private interests, which really have nothing in common with the prosperity of our colonies and which are in fact contrary to the plan” (81-82).

Gallieni was partially successful in arguing that only a tax would spur the Malagasy to work. He argued, in the face of criticism of the colony’s tax policy in France, for the morality of their work, saying:
We have erased the forced labor and all the other subjugations through which our Malagasy were submitted under the former government, but, in doing this, I declared loudly and to the minister, and to the native protection organizations, and to all those who protested, complained, or asked me for explanations, that, if we don’t submit our subjects thence to a tax, obliging them to productive work, they will all return to their laziness and habitual indolence… the natives themselves are happy to procure just enough resources for food, a little rice each day, a bad *lamba* [piece of cloth] to cover themselves. [Gallieni 1928: 133]

In reality, forced labor was not so much erased as reorganized under new administrative units. Gallieni’s administration created the *Office Central du Travail* in 1900 to recruit natives to work on colonial projects (Boahen 1985: 114). In 1926 the *Service de la Main d’Œuvre pour les Travaux d’Intérêt General* (SMOTIG, Manual Labor Service for Public Works was initiated. This office organized labor on colonial construction, requiring Malagasy men who were conscripted but not pressed into military service to serve for two to three years of manual labor (Boahen 1985).

Education was pressed into the service of these labor and material needs, and practical education, as in the Kingdom of Imerina, proliferated. In 1902 Gallieni spoke optimistically of the goals he hoped to accomplish by 1906, including a railroad, a road network, an agricultural service, and successful plantations on the eastern coast (Gallieni 1928: 102). These initiatives expanded the colonial government’s penetration into the everyday lives of Malagasy people, extracting labor and resources, while at the same time carrying out the discursive work of making colonialism rational and right. Alongside the desire for labor and resources came the construction of the Malagasy as indolent, the French as industrious and good governors, the Merina as obstinate, the land as empty, etc.

Gallieni’s letters to French notables and colonial administrators are worth examining. In 1899, in a letter to the Secretary General of the *Union* Gallieni defends
himself against claims of French brutality, and explains the situation in Madagascar as he sees it:

Here, it was necessary to *franciser* the island, which was English and *hova*[^40] and, for this it was necessary that the governor general, successor of the queen, received in the beginning, the same honors as her. My *modesty*, if it had been otherwise, would have been exploited by the hostile party. Everything I’ve done here: requiring French in schools, taking the principal building of the English to make public buildings under our flag, advantages for our countrymen… has had ensuring this transformation as a goal. [Gallieni 1928: 54]

Gallieni’s expectation that the locals treat him as they would have their monarch illustrates the paradoxical relationship colonialism wrought. The French sought to be both the replacement of and the answer to Merina hegemony and expected loyalty from the Merina, those that had been conquered by the Kingdom of Imerina, and those that had remained independent up until the French annexed the island in 1885 and established the colony in 1896.

The relationship between the French and the Merina remained fraught, and in 1901, in a letter to the director of *l’Union Coloniale*, Gallieni expressed his vision for Madagascar’s central plateau:

> Madagascar is not a settler colony, and its economic, agricultural, mining, and industrial future (forests, distilleries, décotiqueries, etc.) are found in the coastal and intermediary areas (5 to 600 meters in altitude), to the exclusion of the central plateau, where I don’t see a lot to be done… the economic capital or the economic capitals of the island, since Tamatave, Majunga and Diego each have well-determined fields of action, will sooner or later move towards the coasts. Naturally, Tananarive will always stay the military capital and a large commercial center, but true colonization won’t be represented [87].

[^40]: Hova is the name the French often used for the Merina and denoted commoners within the kingdom (Randrianja and Ellis 2009).
Gallieni here lays out a vision that reiterates the goals of the *Union*, but also reflects the views of the metropole vis-à-vis their former adversary. The sentiment was reflected in policy, with the colonial government attempting to set up schools and reorient the administrative centers away from the highlands. Yet the preexisting infrastructure meant that the central plateau remained the Island’s administrative, structural, and intellectual core (Koerner 1999; Randrianja and Ellis 2009).

Madagascar’s previous structures of power, coupled with the intermittent flow of funds from the metropole, meant that in reality what Gallieni was able to accomplish during this early period of colonization was a form of “indirect rule” similar to that imagined in the British colonies (Lugard and Perham 1965). Relying on local leaders and partially appropriating local structures allowed Gallieni to keep the colony afloat. Throughout the colonial period, French administrators oscillated between forms of direct and indirect rule and between policies of assimilation and distinction. These chronic shifts resulted from decisions made in the metropole and practical complications in the colonies. They also accompanied changes in personnel as the government traded administrators among its colonies in Africa and Asia.

The infrastructure of Madagascar improved in fits and starts. Gallieni initiated a series of roads to link the central highlands to the main inland cities and coastal ports. Later governors, using the modified colonial version of *fanompoana, corvée* – a policy that indexed *fanompoana* as well as the labor policies of France’s other colonies – to continue this work. This infrastructural effort was given impetus by World Wars I and II, and postwar plans centered on creating, improving or repairing the infrastructure meant to service the economic needs of the colony (Thompson and Adloff 1965).
The Malagasy colony continued with the taxation policies suggested by Gallieni and thereby created what Randrianja and Ellis (2009: 161) describe as a vicious circle. Here the colonial government sought revenue to pay for its own administration. To gain this revenue they imposed taxes on a number of populations that were only partially linked into the market economy. Extracting resources from these populations decreased their ability to buy imported goods, which then decreased the revenue of the state, which led in turn to an increase on pressure to gain state revenue through taxes. The colonial power, rather than creating the producers and consumers imagined by the *Union Coloniale*, created a bureaucracy that absorbed some 80% of state revenue by 1955 (Randrianja and Ellis 2009: 162). Meanwhile, the population continued to grow, putting ever more pressure on the colonial administration and the already over-taxed state revenue system.

**Colonial Networks of Expertise**

During this period, and particularly through the developmentalist policies of the metropole, Madagascar was pulled tightly into French networks of expertise. While the Kingdom of Imerina was establishing its power base in the highlands, France folded scientific expertise into the work of Empire, partnering with agricultural and medical associations in France and in the country’s new colonies (McClellan and Regourd 2000). By the time Gallieni was brought in to quell resistance, explorers and doctors working on the island had already been influencing knowledge about the tropics in the metropole. These scientific endeavors were formalized and explicitly linked to the governing powers of the colonial regime at the same time that Gallieni took control of the island. They also reflect the emergence of interest in improving the lives of people – though it should be no surprise that the people whose lives they intended to improve
were French colonists and French in the exterior, especially the island of Reunion. It was in this way that the colony supported the creation of the metropole (see also Comaroff and Comaroff 1997). Forays into the economic improvement of the metropole and its subsidiaries relied on the same themes that shape development today and had, to an extent, shaped it in the past: the individual, farm, and the forest.

In 1897, Gallieni’s government established the Institute Bactériologique to address smallpox; in 1900, this expanded in to the Institut Pasteur de Tananarive to incorporate local concerns about rabies. This organization gained a partnership agreement with the Institute Pasteur de Paris in 1927, and it was given its current moniker, the Institut Pasteur de Madagascar (Institut Pasteur de Madagascar 2009).\footnote{Other sources identify the date of inception to 1902 (Sabrié 1996).} Medical technologies were a practical necessity in Madagascar and were a key support in the development goals of the colony, which required a healthy workforce, whether French or Malagasy.

Making that workforce effective, however, fell to a series of organizations that embraced scientific approaches to agriculture. These colonial endeavors followed on previous efforts - namely the installment of a French agricultural official in Antananarivo since 1885 (Thompson and Adloff 1965:342). The following years saw the proliferation of experimental stations at sites that would later become layered zones of development (including the contemporary sites of the Campus Ambanivohitra and Campus Fanantenana).

From the early 1900’s the Union’s goals were seen as intimately tied to the ability to train local growers in ‘modern’ agricultural practices. This goal, in turn, was tightly linked with the institution of research centers on the island. In France, the Musée
national d'histoire naturelle (Museum of Natural History), took the lead in coordinating colonial research, establishing a colonial agronomic training center for colonial agents at Nogent-sur-Marne in 1899 (Bonneuil and Petitjean 1996: 115). By 1901 colonial laboratories were being set up, concerned mainly with fishing and agriculture. By 1905, the eastern coast of Madagascar had set up one such center on the river Ivoloina, some 14 kilometers north of Tamatave, where agricultural specialists experimented with an impressive number of plant species (Madagascar 1905: 669). This site would, a century later, continue to be an oft-recreated zone of development.

These research outposts remained highly specified to their colonial context in Madagascar until French scholars, seeking to reassert the epistemological linkage between the metropole and the periphery, developed the Académie des sciences colonial in 1922 and the Association colonies-sciences in 1926 (Bonneuil and Petitjean 1996: 115). These organizations, constituting a lobby for colonial science as well as a mode of knowledge dissemination, began a process of atomization within the realm of colonial science. This process sought to divide academic labors between the colonies and, subsequently, encouraged their dependence on the metropole, rather than their independence in the periphery. They echoed earlier turns towards the ‘economic development’ of the colonies and emphasized the power of technology and expertise to provide moral legitimacy to the colonial endeavor.

These efforts were often piecemeal, linked to the colonial government but not organized under any centralized office of the government. This situation constituted a problem for the French government. In 1937 Marius Moutet, Minister of the Colonies in France, stated that “Scientific organization in the colonies is an urgent necessity, it’s a
condition for economic development, but it’s also a duty for our colonization, an example to give, a light brought forth to illuminate the path we are on” (Moutet quoted in Sabrié 1996: 224). By 1944, the French government created the *Office de la recherche scientifique et colonial* (ORSC, Office of Scientific and Colonial Research) to reorganize colonial science and began deploying research teams to the colonies (Sabrié 1996).

To pay for these efforts, the French government established the *Fonds d'Investissement pour le Développement Economique et Social* in 1946 (FIDES, Investment Funds for Social and Economic Development; Clauzel 2003:187). Like the indemnity introduced at the colony’s inception, development was to be achieved through interest bearing borrowed funds, secured against future state revenues. Unlike earlier efforts, which were often highly localized, the reorganization of colonial expertise through the ORSC was focused on creating and accumulating the knowledge necessary to create the colony as a self-sustaining, metropole-supporting, entity. In 1949, the colonial administration renamed the ORSC the *Office de la Recherche Scientifique d’Outre-mer* (ORSOM, Overseas Office of Scientific Research; Sabrié 1996), and in 1953, the organization was again renamed. In this latest incarnation, it was the *Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique d’Outre-mer* (ORSTOM, Overseas Office of Scientific and Technical Research), a moniker that illustrated an emphasis on the application of scientific research in the colonies (Sabrié 1996).42

Following this logic, research stations were set up across Madagascar with stated foci on agricultural, energy, and mineral production and exploitation. In this way, and in

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42 In 1982, ORSTOM was renamed the *Institut francais de recherche scientifique pour le développement en coopération*, though the early acronym, ORSTOM, was retained. In 1998, the organization was again renamed, this time as the *Institut de Recherche pour le Développement* (IRD).
partial response to growing colonial concerns about self-determination in both politics and development that followed WWII, France restructured colonial experimental stations, giving them new names and new legitimacy as expert organizations. Three of these organizations were based in Madagascar's eastern district of Atsinanana: the *Institut des Fruits et Agrumes Coloniales* (IFAC), the *Institut de Recherches Agronomiques de Madagascar* (IRAM), and the *Institut Français du Café, du Cacao et autres Plantes Stimulantes* (IFCC)

IFAC was created in 1942. In Madagascar, IFAC set up research stations in Ivoloina, north of the city of Tamatave and near Majunga. In 1966, the IFAC station in Ivoloina employed 92 employees, with 2 being researchers and the rest technicians and staff. In addition, the site boasted a small lab and over 600 acres of experimental land (UNESCO 1964: 141). The program trained farmers to become agricultural technicians, many coming from the capital of Antananarivo, or training for a future in France.43

IRAM was directed by the *Institut de Recherches Agronomiques Tropicales et des Cultures Vivrières* (IRAT, Institute of Tropical Agronomy and Food Crops), based in Paris, and fell under the administration of the Malagasy Ministry of Agriculture and Peasantry (before this Ministry was renamed and restructured). IRAM consisted of three agricultural research stations, one near the capital of Antananarivo, one in the Lac Alaotra region of Toamasina Province, and one that specialized in vanilla at Antalaha in the northeastern province of Antsiranana. In addition, IRAM ran experimental units in each of the six provinces of Madagascar, including one site at Ivoloina, adjacent to the

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43 IFAC became the *Institut de recherches sur les fruits et agrumes* (IRFA) in 1975, and remained under this moniker until 1984, when it was folded into the creation of the *Centre Internationale de la Recherche Agronomique pour la Developpement* (www.cirad.fr 2010).
IFAC. At Ivoloina, IRAM and IFAC offered employment to a large portion of the community and continues to be a shadowy presence for the communities there. While IFAC’s research was concerned with pedology, plant genetics, entomology and chemistry, IRAM was involved in rice, cacao, sugar cane and produce cultivation. In total, these laboratories and experimental stations employed some 31 researchers and technicians by 1964, and a number of other local individuals who performed maintenance duties (UNESCO 1964).44

The IFCC was originally called the Service café, Cacao, The de l’Orstom (Service of Coffee, Cocoa, and Tea, www.cirad.fr 2010). It was renamed in 1942, and by the mid-sixties the IFCC employed over three hundred and fifty individuals spread over the institute’s main station, at Niarovana-Caroline in the region of Atsinanana, and its substations at Kianjavato, in the southeastern province of Fianarantsoa, and Ambanja, in the northeastern province of Antsiranana (UNESCO 1964: 138). Of these, three were employed as researchers and 10 as technicians. The site also boasted a research library, with some 350 books, almost 7000 square feet of lab space, and approximately 2500 acres of experimental fields (138). IFCC was the largest agricultural research station in Madagascar, employing more individuals and controlling more land than any other of the period.

The main site at Niarovana-Caroline, some seven kilometers south of the city of Ilaka Est on the Island’s eastern coast, was a bustling entity. The site consisted of a number of buildings, a large warehouse, main offices, and several other buildings that

44 When IRAM left the area in 1974, FOFIFA took possession of many of their buildings and land. Some of this land was then transferred to the Ministry of Water and Forests. Currently, FOFIFA holds a number of buildings and rice fields at the entrance of the park, and the Ministry of Water and Forests owns the land, while the NGO Madagascar Fauna Group, based in the US, administers a lemur park on the site.
provided housing and work space for staff. The station was remembered fondly by current residents of Niarovana and Ilaka, who described it as a premier source of wage labor and community pride. Though the institute was concerned with all stimulants, the Niarovana site was dedicated to coffee, as had been the colonial concession and exporting facility on which it was built, and which it had, in many ways rebegun.

In establishing these research centers, ORSTOM began to stake a claim on the transformation of rural livelihoods in the French colonies. This was a shift from earlier colonial efforts, which sought taxes to prod rural individuals into labor; ORSTOM began to implicate knowledge as a source of transformation. Thus the first director of ORSTOM, Raul Combes, speaking in 1951, stated:

Human life in tropical regions is threatened by multiple and terrible enemies that are the agents of diverse maladies: direct enemies of man, enemies of his livestock, enemies of the plants from which he takes his subsistence. Their deleterious actions linked to the poverty of the soil, such as deforestation, brush fires, the depletion, by often deplorable traditional techniques, deliver, moreover, the relentless action of erosion… Without the aid of the engineer and the scientist which can conquer new ground or inventory other resources, overpopulation will soon bring a generalized misery… Ultimately, it all comes down to making a better life for indigenous people, to make them able to better care for themselves, better feed themselves and to work under better conditions [Combes, quoted in Sabrié 1996 : 226]

In Madagascar, this meant a focus, already well entrenched in Imerina by the mid-19th century, on the agricultural practices of individuals. Science and technical knowledge became one basis around which the colonial state built its governing apparatus, and agricultural knowledge, particularly the denigration of “traditional” agricultural techniques and the promotion of wage labor on large export-generating plantations, became an

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45 Ironically it was French colonial officers, on the opposite side of the island, who introduced the “enemies of the plants” which destroyed prickly pear cactus at the beginning of the 20th century (Kaufmann 2001).
entry point through which governing bodies could extend their control over rural Malagasy.

**New Knowledge and Old Narratives**

Colonial research stations created expertise that could be – at least theoretically – put to work in creating colonies that could subsidize the metropole. In so doing, knowledge was implicated in the exercise of power over land and labor pursued by the French colonial regime. Tavy and deforestation, the objects of anxieties already associated with hegemonic power, were recast under expert knowledge, and thus appropriated and recast in the larger web of colonial power. The rationale behind the power of the sovereign over the forest shifted, and expert knowledge became the main rationalizing thrust of colonial agricultural authority.

*Tavy,* or the practice of slash and burn agriculture, became one locus through which scientific knowledge linked up with the hegemonic motives of the colonial state. *Tavy* practices in forested areas were forbidden under the Imerina’s 1881 Code of 305 Articles. The colonial government, at its inception, practiced a level of tolerance for the practice, and at times admitted the benefits of field *tavy* (rather than forest; Kull 2004).

As French colonization expanded and took root, accounts increasingly wove narratives in which *tavy* was responsible for low rice yields in the colonies and Madagascar’s general deforestation (see Madagascar 1905). Colonial science, with its focus on tropical soil science, or pedology, lent credence to these claims and a universal ban on *tavy* was instituted in 1913 (Feller et al. 2008; Jarosz 1993). Researchers working at sites across Madagascar enumerated the risks of *tavy*, including desertification (Dommergues 1952), and highlighted the “destructive actions on the vegetation by hatchet and by fire” of the local populations (Segalen 1947: 5).
These narratives ignored the role of other colonial and native practices that contributed to deforestation on the island, including logging, cattle ranching, fuelwood gathering, mining, and other forms of colonial development (Jarosz 1993: 374).

Scholars working on deforestation, or in the soil sciences, fed narratives that rationalized colonial policies focused on creating a sedentary - and thus more controllable - workforce. This workforce could be readily available to provide labor for colonial endeavors through corvée labor - patterned on Imerina fanompoana – or through wage labor at French colonial plantations, where the ability to increase productivity and thus exports were informed by the work carried out in rural research stations and dependent on Malagasy labor. Both endeavors helped to provide the colonial state with revenue, and the continuing practice of tavy after the 1913 ban was seen by the government as a method of tax evasion. For the Malagasy, on the other hand, the banning of tavy was interpreted as a denigration of historical practices, and being forced into wage labor akin to slavery – tavy, within this schema, could be recast as resistance to state power (Jarosz 1993).

The debates over tavy are particularly salient in eastern Madagascar, where current development practice is built through narratives of rural indolence and destructiveness that are rooted in the narratives colonial and pre-colonial periods at the same time as the locate their genesis in the apolitical pursuit of value-less knowledge. These debates echo the concerns of colonial science in other areas, particularly in Asia, where similar discourses circulated about the relationship of forest dwellers to the land (Bruneau 2005). This is not to say that today’s discourses of development – what it means to be a “good” let alone a “modern” farmer – map seamlessly onto these earlier
discursive forms. Rather, current development discourse re-creates its predecessors in piecemeal fashion, creating a *bricolage*, which incorporates both a linkage with former practices even while affecting a discursive erasure of these same practices. This simultaneous action is key in understanding the concept of rebeginnings.

**Madagascar Since 1960**

Since gaining independence from the French in 1960, the Malagasy nation has gone through some seven leaders, and, currently, six constitutions. This section outlines the political changes that the island has been through, and the various rebeginnings of the state they have ushered in. Of particular interest are the ways that government relied upon rural populations as important rhetorical cues, even while policies have more often than not detrimentally affected these populations – particularly policies that have depressed rural crop prices in order to keep urban areas appeased. Throughout, politicians have re-deployed the strategies and plans of their predecessors, even while loudly declaring their political distinction. These policy rebeginnings were sometimes successfully appropriated, morphing to legacies associated with one politician or another, and concomitantly breaking and exploiting their connections to past regimes of power. *Malgachisation* (for Ratsiraka) and the *Madagascar Action Plan* (MAP, for Ravalomanana) represented continuations with earlier policies and political ideas while they could be rebegun and re-cast as the ideological property of their proponents.

**The First Republic, 1960-1972**

The first Malagasy Republic was initiated in 1960. Like other nations in Africa, Madagascar inherited the administrative structures of the French colonial state and, like some, chose association rather than complete independence. France retained a
presence in Madagascar through the pro-French policies of its first president, Philibert Tsiranana (1960-1972; Cooper 2002, Sharp 2002). A Tsimihety côtier\textsuperscript{46} from western Madagascar, Tsiranana’s administration – like those that were to follow – contained a large number of highland Merina elites (Brown 2000).\textsuperscript{47} In addition, the First Republic, as it was known, retained a number of French expatriates in important positions, such as University professors and administrators (Covell 1987; Sharp 2002).

Tsiranana’s development policies were heavily invested in the agricultural sector. Investing in agricultural inputs and rural infrastructure and services, he funded a few large irrigation schemes, and continued agricultural extension services from the colonial period. Tsiranana also intervened in the market in ways reminiscent of French policy (Barrett 1994). His policies tended, overall, to favor the richest agricultural smallholders (Pryor 1990). In this vein, the agricultural Research and Development infrastructure that was set in place under the colonial regime remained. In Atsinanana, the three international research stations - IFAC, IFCC, and IRAM - funded by ORSTOM and the Malagasy government, continued to exist and generate (mainly French) agricultural expertise.

Deforestation continued to constitute a main concern of the state, and in 1962, Tsiranana decreed that:

… all men had to plant 100 seedlings a year or suffer a tax (Tyson in Raik 2007:7). This string of legislation reinforced the state as the only legitimate

\textsuperscript{46} Tsimihity is his ethnicity and côtier is the generic name for the collectivity of ethnic groups that make up the coastal population. Both are problematic: côtier is also a heavily laden term related to colonial strategies that used concerns over highland hegemony to gain traction on the island. Ethnicity, on the other hand, is neither primordial nor universally binding.

\textsuperscript{47} This situation was the result of institutional and structural inequality that followed the uneven infrastructural and administrative development that preceded colonialism on the one hand, and was further entrenched by its desires to colonize on the cheap.
manager of forest resources in Madagascar, and contributed to a repressive relationship between the forest service and local people (Montagne 2004). [Raik 2007: 7].

In April 1971, conflicts over forest and farm came to a head and fire emerged as a sort of protest and defiance of state power in southern Madagascar – and not for the first time. Anne Marie Goguel, a French schoolteacher during the protests described the situation in the rural areas: “For the peasant world the legal means of expression were practically inexistent…. In the country, there was a resurgence of traditional practices forbidden by the authorities, like brush fires” (Goguel 2006: 323). The fires followed on the heels of harsh tax collection and culminated in a group of peasants overtaking administration buildings in the region (Randrianja and Ellis 2009: 184, Sharp 2002: 35). The government reacted swiftly and violently, killing up to 1000 protestors to put down the revolt.

The peasant movement was followed by student movements in urban centers and, mainly, in the capital. The two protests were not wholly separate, and this was not the first time that educated elite would find common cause with the rural “peasantry.” Many of the students who were active during this period would later take up important posts as advocates and entrepreneurs of development.

Tsiranana’s embrace of French policies and partnerships undermined his ability to lead the state, which by now looked to many Malagasy to be a continuation of French colonialism under the auspices of independence. In aligning himself tightly with the politics of the past, Tsiranana sealed his fate. With the rise in protests in the early 70s he was forced out of power.
The First Transition, 1972-1975

In 1972, the First Republic fell and a transitional period was initiated. General Gabriel Ramanantsoa took over the country with a mandate to restore stability. He abolished the parliament and replaced it with the People’s National Development Council, a body of advisors which was composed of future presidents Didier Ratsiraka and Albert Zafy (Randrianja and Ellis 2009: 191).

The Ramanantsoa government transformed some agricultural structures during its short stint in power. Paramount was a slight shift in state intervention that refocused intervention on poorer individuals (Pryor 1990: 31). However, conflict within the army forced him to dissolve his administration, handing it over to Colonel Richard Ratsimandrava – an officer that had been among those who repressed the 1971 rebellion (Rabenirainy 2002; Randrianja and Ellis 2009).

Ratsimandrava’s proclivities in state craft saw an effort to reinstate, in new form, committees called fokonolona – originally perpetuated by the Imerina administrations, in a decentralized power structure (Randrianja and Ellis 2009: 192). The resurrection of this administrative unit was accompanied by developmentalist rhetoric that emphasized that development should be led by the Malagasy – a gesture towards the politics of the previous regime. These policies, while striking a developmentalist tone, worried rural leaders who saw the efforts to instate fokonolona as a threat to their power (Rabenirainy 2002: 87).

The French experimental stations around the island were given over to a new government organization, the Foibe Fikarohana ampiharina amin’ny Fampandrosoana ny eny Ambanivohitra (FOFIFA, National Center for Applied Rural Research). Created in 1974 under an act to nationalize the agricultural research stations peppered across
the island, FOFIFA inherited the concessions and stations of IFAC, IRAM, and the IFCC in Atsinanana (FOFIFA 2010). Malagasy agricultural research – and its outreach and extension components - would start over under a new name, rebeginning as exactly the type of “Malagasy-centered” development called for by the new government.

Ratsimandrava was assassinated in 1975 and while his assassination could be linked to Tsiranana’s regime, there was never any satisfactory resolution. A military directorate was set up to run the country in the immediate aftermath. While brief, the legacy of this governing body was one of balance based on, first, branch of military, and second, regional origin. The body also brought back political players from Ramanantsoa’s government, opening the door for Ratsiraka’s rise to power (Rabenirainy 2002).

The Second Republic, 1975-1993

After four months the military handed power over to Didier Ratsiraka (1975-1993, 1997-2001), who enacted a set of reforms meant to cleanse civil service and private sector positions of remaining French expatriates (Sharp 2002). This reform, known as malgachisation, mirrored similar movements towards “Africanization” on the continent (Mamdani 1996) and continued policy schemes that had been proposed during the period of transition. Concomitant with this move, and again like nations on the African continent, Ratsiraka initiated a socialized form of government, breaking ties (at least rhetorically) with the former colonial power and fomenting linkages with socialist states like the USSR (Cooper 2002; Gow 1997).

48 As in the case of Tanzania Cooper (2002) describes, Madagascar continued to receive western aid during this period (Gow 1997).
Socialism and *malgachisation* combined to create distinct form of isolationism that, while not complete, was pervasive. Malgachisation involved not only removing expatriates but also instituting Malagasy as the language of instruction in primary and secondary schooling (Covell 1987; Sharp 2002). University education, however, remained in French. This move benefited urban and Merina populations who had had a longer history with, and more institutionalization of, the French language. Like Mamdani’s (1996) assertion that colonial and independent African states fostered a bifurcated state in Africa with rural subjects and urban citizens, this reform further entrenched the rural/urban divide. It also reinforced a tradition of highland/Merina dominance that began well before colonialism.

The effects of the socialist period on agriculture and rural populations were significant. The government set up “domestic crop authorities with monopoly powers in collection, transport, processing, storage, distribution, and retail sale of staple commodities,” that also controlled the “importation, production and distribution of agricultural inputs” (Barrett 1994: 451). Farms over 250 acres (just over 100 hectares) were nationalized and the state conscripted private land in the region of Mananjary, on the southern border of Atsinanana. Here, the government redistributed privately held land among almost 1700 families, allotting ten acres to each and grouping them in cooperatives (Mukonoweshuro 1990: 378).

The research institutions now headed by FOFIFA continued, but their funding began to wane, forcing a decrease in the local jobs they created in their rural posts. Ratsiraka’s policies, like others before, tended towards a rhetorical celebration of the peasant but rarely translated into any real gains for this population. The embrace of
radical equality and (rural) socialism was never as real as it seemed in rhetoric.

Investments in industry, spurred by nationalization under Ramanantsoa’s regime tended to outstrip rural improvements (Pryor 1990: 31).

Ratsiraka’s policies had the effect of widening social differentiation in rural areas, privileging richer farmers, and cutting programs that would give the poor access to capital and infrastructure (Pryor 1990). The divide between rural and urban was also strengthened, as policies tended to cater to governmental desires to control a burgeoning urban population by controlling the prices of food. Development would become linked, in purpose, with grand statistics of population growth outstripping agricultural production. A system would emerge in which rural populations were encouraged to go beyond subsistence in order to provide for the urban populations at the same time that their desires to improve their lives would pull them towards urban areas. Like others, rural farmers would relish the opportunity to start over, but Ratsiraka’s revolution seemed, like the interventions that preceded it and those that would follow it, set on keeping rural farmers in place.

Internationally, Ratsiraka’s socialist regime translated into closer relations between Madagascar and Soviet Bloc countries like Russia and North Korea (Covell 1987, Gow 1997, Mukonoweshuro 1990). This alignment created a generation of individuals trained in Soviet Bloc countries, many in economics and agronomy, who currently make up part of the cadre of development leaders within state development organizations. These relations failed to translate into tangible development and relations with France remained central despite rhetorical distancing.⁴⁹

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⁴⁹ Statistics on bilateral aid from the World Bank show no reduction in French aid during this time. Rather, French aid actually saw significant upswings in aid and continued to outstrip aid from other
International relations entered into local politics and were folded into the rhetorical performances of the state. Relations with South Africa, which had existed during Tsiranana’s tenure, but ended during the transition, would remain heated during this period. By 1977, the policies enacted under Ratsiraka’s brand of socialism had begun to erode the state’s budget and seeing discontent on the horizon, the Ratsiraka government began to accuse South Africa of plotting with factions inside the country. The regime began a trend of creating rumors of non-Malagasy communities wreaking havoc on the nation’s integrity, exploiting by now well-worn discourses of difference and authenticity that accompanied nationalism and independence.

**The End of Socialism**

By the early 1980s the failures of Ratsiraka’s socialist experiment were clear. In 1980, the nation was forced to accept the structural adjustment plans of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank (Randrianja and Ellis 2009). The possibility of a new path through structural adjustment – Ratsiraka’s own public rebeginning through the abandonment of socialist rhetoric – helped legitimize his bid for re-election in 2002. By 1986, the GNI of individual Malagasy had decreased further, and the fissures between espousals of socialism and the realities of the devalued Malagasy franc were becoming clear. Adjustments to agricultural markets caused Ratsiraka to lose his urban base, which had been cultivated through policies that worsened the situation of individual Malagasy farmers by keeping the cost of foodstuffs artificially low. Protests followed by violent reprisals became more commonplace in the capital (Gow 1997; Randrianja and Ellis 2009).

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nations such as Japan, the United States, and other European countries. In addition, aid from UN agencies seems as though it was unimpeded through this period (World Bank 2011).
Structural adjustment resulted in a slight uptick in GNI during the 1980s, though it would drop again in 1991. At this time, it hit its lowest point since a peak in 1981 at almost 500 USD per capita (World Bank 2011). Ratsiraka’s policies, coupled with the apparent failures of structural adjustment, continued to foment opposition. By the early 1990s he was on the verge of losing his position as head of state.

**The Third Republic, 1993-1996**

In 1991, Zafy Albert - an opposition leader who had served with Ratsiraka under General Ramanantsoa in the early 70s - took advantage of the growing crisis around Ratsiraka, and set up an oppositional government with a coalition of 16 parties that he called the *Haute Autorité*, eventually driving Ratsiraka to bargain (Randrianja and Ellis 2009, Marcus 2004). Zafy’s leadership would initiate a close linkage between the state and the church. The *Fiombonan'ny Fiangonana Kristianina eto Madagasikara* (FFKM, Fellowship of Christian Churches of Madagascar), a conglomeration of the country’s four major churches, became a major political force after 1991.

Through this positioning, Zafy was able to run in an election against Ratsiraka in 1993, gaining a majority under the banner of the *Union Nationale pour le Démocratie et le Développement* (UNDD, Randrianja and Ellis 2009: 280). Zafy’s policies would further strip money from research organizations like FOFIFA; records of spending from 1991-1996 show a decline in funding of almost 57% during this period (Beye 2001). Policies of malgachisation were abandoned, and technicians from the exterior were brought in to lend their expertise to the restructuring of Ratsiraka’s state.

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50 Rajelina would name his government something similar – the *Haute Autorité de la Transition* – in 2009.

51 This includes the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, the Anglican Church, and the Church of Christ (FJKM).
The Impeachment of Zafy Albert, 1996

Zafy presided over only modest growth, but he accepted economic liberalism whole-heartedly. This trend spurred social changes, themselves infused with an ideology of individualism. Issues of corruption and the lack of fiscal discipline in the Zafy government led to the suspension of donor programs from the World Bank and IMF (Randrianja and Ellis 2009: 204). These moves accompanied the almost complete disappearance of real functionality at the nation’s FOFIFA sites. In 1996, as he attempted to organize a constitutional referendum that would strengthen presidential powers, Zafy was impeached by the parliament. Zafy Albert would stand for reelection in 2001, setting himself as an opposition leader (Randrianja and Ellis 2009: 280). He also emerged again in 2009 during the crisis that ousted President Marc Ravalomanana, where he played the role of political adult – his impeachment recast as a rare instance of a Malagasy leader willingly giving up control of the state.

The Third Republic, 1997-2001

After Zafy’s impeachment, Ratsiraka returned from French exile to stand in the upcoming election. Ratsiraka returned to power and renewed his commitment to liberalism. The economy began to improve and aid flows increased. New programs for development were created that fused different aspects of the development goal. Among these was Surveillance et éducation des écoles et des communautés en matière d’alimentation et de nutrition élargie (SECALINE/SEECALINE, the State Organization for Monitoring and Educating Schools and Communities in Matters of Food and Nutrition (Galibert 2009: 59).
The Fourth Crisis 2001-2002

Madagascar’s political situation seemed to stabilize ahead of the elections in 2001. However, the first round of voting was met with Antananarivo Mayor Marc Ravalomanana asserting a clear victor and declaring himself the outright winner of the Presidency. Ratsiraka opposed his attempt to claim the office, and set up a rival capital in Toamasina province. After a prolonged crisis in which Ratsiraka attempted to choke off the highlands and capital where Ravalomanana and his supporters were centered, Ravalomanana gained the recognition of various western powers and the legitimacy to keep the office (Randrianja 2003).

The Third Republic, 2002-2009

Ravalomanana’s ascension to power was crafted in ways that spoke to powerful sets of individuals interior and exterior to the island, and against the vision of Madagascar tied to his predecessor. Ravalomanana’s image as the consummate self-made man breathed new life into Ratsiraka’s incomplete neoliberal reforms, which had begun amid massive protests against government corruption (Sharp 2002). His regime declared itself new, different, and disconnected from earlier leadership. His Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) – a rewritten version of the paper Ratsiraka wrote for the World Bank – highlights the need to “rebegin” poverty reduction strategies since the crisis. Ravalomanana reoriented the nation’s geopolitics, eschewing ties with the former colonizer in favor of ties to Anglophone allies – an action that signaled his feelings for France in the now while inviting images of the geopolitical strategies of pre-colonial (Merina) Kingdom of Madagascar.

52 Redemarrer, translated to “to reboot,” “to restart” (Katzaros and LaRousse 2002).
At another level, Ravalomanana’s personal story came to dominate his image in the exterior. BBC articles praise him as a perfect rags-to-riches story (Donovan 2002). Educated in Madagascar, then in Sweden, he eschewed further education and:

… started producing home made yogurt which he sold on the streets of Antananarivo off the back of his bicycle… Less than two years later, assisted by the Protestant Church [Fiagonan’i Jesoa Kristy eto Madagasikara, FJKM], of which today he is the vice president, Mr. Ravalomanana managed to secure a loan from the World Bank to purchase his first factory. [Donovan 2002]

This story, so perfectly fitted to neoliberal narratives, would be deployed at the international level – a sort of proof that development directives worked - that merit brought people to the top. At the same time, Ravalomanana’s biography could be cast as a sort of modern day embodiment of the protestant ethic. He turned his World Bank loan into the dairy company Tiko which had become the largest corporation in Madagascar by 2001 (Marcus and Ratsimbaharison 2005).

After being elected mayor of Antananarivo in 1999, Ravalomanana created the party Tiak’o I Madagasikara (“I love Madagascar’ TIM), capitalizing on the ubiquity of his company’s products (which at the time consisted of soda products that rivaled Coca-Cola, Fanta, and of course, dairy products like milk, oil, and, of course, yogurt). Tiko posters adorned shops all over the island (in rural and urban areas), gesturing towards a state/corporate entanglement that would be echoed in Ravalomanana’s political policies (Marcus 2010). This entanglement emerged as an inversion of Ratsiraka’s nationalization of industry under socialism – here the state would be folded into Ravalomanana’s corporate interests. The increasingly cozy relationship between Tiko and the state became a major source of critique ahead of the 2008-2009 crisis.
During his first few years in office, Ravalomanana proved exceedingly successful at marketing the state to international governing bodies. The country was awarded the honor of being the first recipients of the Millennial Challenge Account in 2005 (worth 110 million USD, Millennium Challenge Corporation and USAID 2007). By 2008, Ravalomanana had been through a second contentious election which pitted him against Ratsiraka’s nephew as well as a number of other opposition candidates with weak support. Coming out victorious, he continued to weave the state together with corporate interests.

By 2008, critique was a major preoccupation in the country and a number of Ravalomanana’s policies were under fire. These spurred anti-democratic practices as the state tried to quell the loudest voices of the opposition. Ratsiraka’s nephew, the vocal Mayor of Tamatave, was arrested for embezzlement after the 2006 presidential election (Ploch 2009, Madigasikara-Soa 2007). These practices spurred rumors that ceded Ravalomanana magical and menacing powers, marking the sovereign as supernatural. In Toamasina province, where over 53% of voters cast their ballots for former-President Ratsiraka in 2001 (and only 36% for Ravalomanana; Marcus and Ratsimbaharison 2005), rumors circulated about Ravalomanana’s menacing and sometimes supernatural capabilities. When former members of his government resigned over their opposition to his policies, and then inexplicably died, coastal university students circulated stories of poisoning.

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53 Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) funds are awarded based on statistical indicators on the economic, political and social climate as measured by organizations such as Freedom House, the World Bank, the World Health Organization, UNESCO, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Heritage Foundation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and some smaller research organizations like the Center for International Earth Science Information Network at Columbia and Yale Universities (Millenium Challenge Corporation 2011).
Members of government saw their lives at risk as well. Permanent staff at the presidential palace sniffed out threats of organization against the president, arresting and interrogating dissidents who circulated tracts against Ravalomanana. At the Bureau Régionale de la Présidence (BRP) in Tamatave, a man known simply as the “Colonel” was assigned this task, and, in addition, acted as a body guard for BRP personnel when they travelled across the island. When an American “leadership” expert, a consultant to the president, died unexpectedly in 2008, poison was the first explanation embraced by Tamatave’s BRP.

Development became a central space around which political opposition – and support – was built. Like those before him, Ravalomanana set up visible reminders of his policies of development (see Evers and Spindler 1995 for reference to earlier usage of these tactics as demonstrations of the will to development). Road signs in Madagascar attest a multitude of development projects, some which still exist and others which have long since disappeared. Each carried the current state motto in Malagasy: Repoblikan’i Madagasikara: Tanindrazana – Fahafahana – Fandrosoana (Republic of Madagascar: Homeland – Freedom - Progress). The rest was in French. Many of these signs marked the new construction of schools and hospitals that were, at best, sporadically staffed.

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54 The state motto has changed as each new leader has sought to solidify their position and differentiated their government from those that had come before. Since a referendum in late 2010, changing the total constitution for a fourth time, the motto is “Fitiavana –Tanindrazana – Fandrosoana” (Love, Homeland, Progress, Article 4, Madagascar 2010).
Figure 2-1. Signs of development. Signs along the coastal highway alerting travelers, in French, to projects carried out in southern Atsinanana. The photo on the left refers to a school construction project finished in 2007; the one on the right refers to a Catholic Relief Services projects that had finished around the same time. August 2008.

These quite literal “signs” of development were joined by other improvements, many of which were squarely focused on Tamatave. A new mine was being opened in eastern Madagascar, with a pipeline for nickel and cobalt running from the interior of the island to the port city of Tamatave. Here a refinery would prepare them for exportation. The mine generated an economic boom in Toamasina, which saw an influx of workers from Europe, the Philippines, Canada, South Korea, and South Africa. The Sherritt mine and refinery translated into drastic shifts in Tamatave, which would experience a roar of new construction and an explosion in property values.

The mine was central in negative, as well as positive, narratives of “development.” Malagasy in Tamatave who were shut out of direct employment with the mines complained about the low wages the mines offered and the lack of opportunity it provided for locals (many employees were shipped in from the highlands or from the
Philippines). As the political opposition became more vocal in late 2008 and 2009, the mine became more and more often a symbol of Ravalomanana’s “businessman” proclivities and his desires to sell off the island to his own profit.

It was joined by another deal President Ravalomanana was pursuing. Under an agreement made with the South Korean firm Daewoo – which had some subsidiary stake in the Sherritt Ambatovy Nickel and Cobalt Mine – Madagascar was preparing to lease some 1.3 million hectares (approximately 44% of the countries arable land, based on FAO estimates; FAO Stat 2010) to the firm’s subsidiary Madagascar Futures Enterprise (Madagascar Tribune 2009, Park 2008). The deal called Madagascar into South Korean food security issues and emergent (yet familiar) trends in which more developed countries seek to control land and stake a claim on resources in the south (e.g. in Mali, Ethiopia, and Ghana; Robertson and Pinstrup-Andersen 2010; Cutola et al 2009). As a Daewoo representative explained to the Financial Times in 2008, “it is totally undeveloped land which has been left untouched. And we will provide jobs for them by farming it, which is good for Madagascar” (Jong-a, Oliver and Burgis 2008).

Global flows of information circulated rumors that Daewoo would pay nothing for the lease, turning it into an issue of colonial power and fueling the opposition to Ravalomanana (Jong-a, Oliver and Burgis 2008, Madagascar Tribune 2009, Ryall and Pflanz 2009, Courrier International 2008). In 2008 and 2009, embossed leather Daewoo datebooks circulated among Atsinanana bureaucrats, lending credence to the idea that Ravalomanana was in process of selling Malagasy land to the highest bidder. Had the deal gone through, it would have represented a massive ceding of land to
foreign interests and ushered in new layers of governance on a scale much larger than that undertaken by the mining industry.

These two massive projects – one existing more as potential than reality – constituted a backdrop for the rural agricultural projects I studied. In many ways, these projects were constituted against these other, less savory, forms of development. They could be made to speak to a populism that legitimized governance in ways that could combat concerns about Ravalomanana’s propensity to “sell” Madagascar. At the same time, these corporate entries have reflected and, in ways, re-entrenched the asymmetries of power that characterized relations of land and labor in Madagascar’s past. Concessions have followed upon debt in ways that seem all too familiar.

**Malagasy Development at the Intersection of Power and Peasantry**

Madagascar’s history has been marked by an increasing intimacy between centralized forms of power (the state) and citizens. In large part, the focus of this power was pointed towards the rural peasantry – a group far more complex than its construction within political discourse. Over the past 200 years, Madagascar has seen a number of distinct states that have re-created and re-structured power in ways that have drawn upon and been built against (sometimes simultaneously) their predecessors. This re-creation and re-structuring constitutes one sort of state rebeginning and highlights the important ways that rebeginning ushers increasingly close relationships between sovereign and citizen.

From the adoption of Sakalava political forms in the Betsimisaraka Confederation/Kingdom to the creation of (missionary-mediated) state-schools during Radama’s reign in the Kingdom of Imerina, Madagascar politics reflect a history of cultural borrowing. Much like the “invention of tradition” noted elsewhere (Hobsbawm...
and Ranger 1983), these rebeginnings relied on things that came before them. They also wove in new ideas and purposes, creating hybridized versions that are always under construction (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997). The governing policies, practices, and mythologies of these early kingdoms – the idea of the forest as the property of the sovereign, the idea of the Malagasy confederacy, the structures of forced labor – continued to live on and were woven into the governing forms that followed the advent of colonialism.

Colonial power recreated and reworked Malagasy governance, appropriating and recreating earlier practices of governance even while it relied on these precursors as a useful foil to its power. French colonial leaders exploited concerns over Merina hegemony, casting the Kingdom of Madagascar as hegemonic, violent and oppressive. At the same time fanompoana, or the labor obligation to the monarch that defined the subject / sovereign relationship, was reworked as corvée and the Festival of the Royal Bath was reinvented as Bastille Day. These destructive moves sought to break the symbols of the monarchy even as they engaged in a redefinition of the population – namely the peasantry – that rationalized new forms of control over laboring rural and urban bodies. These moves of practical appropriation and discursive abandonment – simultaneous and seemingly contradictory – are a key facet of the process I call rebeginnings.

At the same time, the colony constituted a field in which the metropole and the empire could be re-fashioned and re-worked. Madagascar was a site for the application of already instituted colonial policy from Indonesia and Africa, even while it was a place for experimentation into the creation of ideal laboring bodies – in the colony and the
metropole – among the Malagasy and the French. Forced labor and taxes intermingled as leaders like Gallieini sought to discipline the unruly and indolent. The colony, as other scholars have noted (see Comaroff and Comaroff 1997), constituted a prime space of political experimentation for the metropole.

Knowledge – and particularly foreign knowledge – played an important role in each of these periods. From the reliance on the London Missionary Society for the design of early state-sponsored education to the creation of a network of expert agricultural outposts designed to help the colonies create value, expertise has been key to the expansion of state power. These alliances of power and knowledge helped to create the underlying structures that guide the contemporary trajectories of Malagasy agricultural development. They constitute one form of what I call shadow presences. In this case the shadow presence is temporal,\(^{55}\) represented by the institutional detritus that signals the failed promises of a better future and that haunt the contemporary development projects I studied. This layering is not new. Chalfin (2010) describes similar circumstances at the Ghanainia border where customs, rather than agricultural development, is the key arbiter of state power. Here the landscape is “marked by a tangible record of agendas that have been officially abandoned or replaced yet continue to claim a presence in the daily routines of border management” (69, see also Li 2007). This presence is no small thing. Colonial and post colonial research stations are now the homes of development’s targets, who pass by and inhabit structures that speak to a better past – a past that promised a better future.

\(^{55}\) In this work I recognize two types of shadow presence, the temporal (and thus historical) and the physical or geographical, represented by adjacent and parallel development projects and partners (discussed further in the chapters that follow).
Post-colonial governance has re-appropriated these spaces, returning the powers of knowledge creation – partially – to the Malagasy. At the same time, however, the hierarchy of knowledge has persisted and, in some ways, deepened. The residents of the areas surrounding these research stations – often technicians and agricultural laborers already familiar with (old) “modern” agricultural practices are increasingly recast as “traditional” and “destructive” in narratives that are eerily familiar. This redefinition of the peasant rationalizes the state’s further foray into rural life and re-entrenches the power of (mainly western and highland) techno-scientific power.

Subsequent Malagasy presidents have helped this process along, even while their policies claim a (rhetorical) break with the past. Thus recent leaders, like Ratsiraka and Ravalomanana (and now Rajoelina) have crafted their power through a careful combination of international prowess, setting them in the midst of important geopolitical competitions in historically familiar ways. In addition and in service to these international alliances (that are political and economic), leaders have simultaneously demonized and celebrated the peasantry in the name of ecological conservation and rural development. What these leaders are engaged in is a complex and dangerous dance that courts internal and external legitimacy in a way that holds asymmetries of power stable. This effort to stabilize asymmetry provides the impetus to the phenomenon of rebeginnings.
CHAPTER 3
STARTING OVER: POWER AND THE PEASANTRY AT THE CAMPUS AMBANIVOHITRA

Imagining Development and Its Futures

It is through representation that development makes its promises of transformation and, in some ways, fulfills them. This chapter explores the representations of the Campus Ambanivohitra, a project focused on rural agriculture and peasant training in eastern Madagascar. First, it illustrates how development narratives and foci reflect and reproduce specific imaginings of the peasant. Second, it looks at how these narratives are crafted and re-crafted to appeal to development partners and stakeholders. Third, it highlights how narratives of development affect the erasure of the lived world of “peasants” while legitimizing state governing bodies in Madagascar and abroad. The chapter then turns to what project representations do not often represent: the partners, administrators, and staff members who run projects and whose imaginings and understandings of the peasantry, along with their desires for better futures, structure the representation as well as the ultimate goals of the project. I argue that the representative work engaged in by development experts and administrators holds the potential to offer distinct forms of social mobility and legitimacy that are supplementary to, and intertwined with, the power of the Malagasy state.

Development Partnership: the Campus Ambanivohitra in Brief

The Campus Ambanivohitra emerged out of the collaboration of a group of elite professors and administrators at the University of Toamasina in 2004. The brainchild of the University President, it was written with an eye to the international policies that were topical in Madagascar at the time, including: the UN Millennial Development Goals
(MDG), and the educational reform known as License-Maitrise-Doctorat (LMD)\textsuperscript{56} implemented by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

Originally, the \textit{Campus Ambanivohitra} had four main components. First, it would train rural farmers in agricultural and market techniques in order to increase their production and entrepreneurial capabilities. Second, it would transform them into local leaders who could set an example and create farming organizations that help to spread this knowledge and, through it, raise the standard of living in their rural communities. After their training, students would (theoretically) be eligible to receive the equivalent of a Licence (bachelor’s degree) or Masters. Third, it would create a cadre of development experts out of university students trained, in part, by farmers, through the project. Fourth, the campus would help to craft a system of rural monitoring and evaluation that would add to knowledge on rural Malagasy communities.

These objectives would be met through a reliance on established support and logistical aid that structured the paths the Campus could take. The relations that sustained the \textit{Campus Ambanivohitra} were fluid and forced to movement by frictions that emerged as different groups competed over the resources it set loose, most of which are discussed in the next chapter. This chapter explores the way the Campus and its partners crafted legitimizing narratives that held the power to unlock

\textsuperscript{56}This system follows the French and European Union shift to the LMD, a system that arose out of competition with United States higher education and the desire to facilitate international mobility for skilled workers. The LMD has stalled in Madagascar, where students and professors saw it as a method of further alienation. Specifically, students espoused beliefs that the LMD would render earlier degrees obsolete, and professors were concerned about the suite of neoliberal reforms that would accompany the degree change and that would negate their positions as functionaries and the job security it offered in favor of contractual teaching positions (Kiel 2006). The reform was also depicted as a way to funnel money into the center and defund the regional university a position easily translated into already available narratives of highland domination and preferential treatment and coastal indolence and resistance to “progress.”
development resources. These resources would, in turn, be put to work in the reproduction of the multilayered contours of inequality, specifically those that inhere between expert and non-expert, urban and rural, elite and non-elite.

Figure 3-1. *Campus Ambanivohitra* partnership structure, 2004-2009.

The project’s most important local partner was the University of Toamasina. As university administrators, the project’s founding members could devote the university’s full support to the project, gaining access to university infrastructure, professors, etc. In addition – and at another level – the *Campus Ambanivohitra* established partnerships with governing bodies in the three regions of Toamasina Province: Alaotra Mangoro, Analanjirofo, and Atsinanana. The regions would, in the original plan, host the project in
turn, and Analanjirofo was chosen for the experimental first run. State restructuring, specifically the abolition of provincial governance, would push the Campus to tighten its regional focus in 2006, reorienting itself to the region of Atsinanana – the region that housed both the University and the urban center of Tamatave. Outside of these state bodies, the Campus partnered with the local Chamber of Commerce. This partnership was dissolved when President Ravalomanana decreed that Agriculture would no longer be a part of the Chambre de Commerce, d’Industrie, d’Artisanat et d’Agriculture de Toamasina, rendering it the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Crafts (changing the acronym from CCIAAT to CCIAT).

To a lesser extent, the Campus was aligned with a number of government organizations that could offer material and logistical support. These were ministerial, falling – like the university – under the Ministère de l’Education Nationale et de la Recherche Scientifique (Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research, MENRS) and the Ministre d’Agriculture, d’Élevage, et de Pêche (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fishing, MAEP). The MENRS, which directed scientific research on the island, was the government administrator of the (mainly French) agricultural research stations that were held by the Fikarohana ampiharina amin’ny Fampandrosoana ny eny Ambanivohitra (National Center for Applied Rural Research, FOFIFA). FOFIFA held property rights over the land the Campus used and their researchers often moonlighted with the project. Other MENRS research organizations, like the Institut Malgache de Vaccins Vétérinaires (Malagasy Institute of Veterinary Vaccines, IMVAVET) provided materials and teaching assistance. The MAEP, on the other hand, was linked to the project through its small scale informal partnerships with its regional technical support
offices, the Direction Régionale de Développement Rurale (Regional Directorate of Rural Development), and a number of small-scale, internationally-supported, rural projects.

Other relationships were more temporary. The participation of the Fiangonan'i Jesoa Kristy eto Madagasikara (Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar, FJKM) – the largest Malagasy protestant church and the church of President Mark Ravalomanana\(^57\) - only lasted one year. The church helped to identify and host students for the trial campus at Maromitety, Analanjirofo. After one cohort went through training there, these functions moved to rural mayors, formalizing the Campus’ linkage with the state. A second partner was the local micro-credit agency of Ombona Tahiry Itampisamborana Vola (OTIV, Savings and Loan Society). This group would come on as a private partner, making micro-credit loans available to participant farmers who could display a mastery of self-audit, market knowledge, and managerialism.

A second set of partners were non-local and mainly based in France. The most important here was the Region of Haute-Normandie, which has been the main foreign backer of the project since its inception. Other regional partners – like the Region of Rhone-Alps, which funds a number of other Atsinanana initiatives - passed on the project.

Beyond the region, the small École Supérieure d’Ingénieurs et de Techniciens Pour l’Agriculture (ESITPA)\(^58\) and its Laboratoire de modélisation statistique et analyse

\(^{57}\) Ravalomanana was very open about his faith, attending prayer breakfasts at the White House and once declaring that Madagascar should be a theocracy, a view that his opponents have taken up since 2005, and was bantied about in 2009 (Hogg 2007, BBC News 2009)

\(^{58}\) ESITPA has under 500 students total. Tightly linked to agribusiness interests, ESITPA boasts a staff composed of 25 research professors and 250 agricultural professionals (ESITPA 2010: 36).
des données (Statistical Modeling and Data Analysis Lab, LAMSAD), would act as a partner in data gathering and analysis and host a number of Malagasy students in 2007. The relationship between the two soured after the exchange, though they remain loosely connected through the ESITPA’s continuing partnership with the University of Toamasina. During the hiatus, the Service de coopération et d’action culturelle (Cooperation and Cultural Action Service, SCAC) a subsection of the French Embassy, helped to fund follow-up evaluations in 2006 and 2007, supplementing and then supplanting the funding role of ESITPA.

The University of Rouen had a previous relationship with the University of Toamasina. It continues this partnership through ongoing exchanges. These exchanges send French students to Madagascar for internships – many of which connect to the Campus Ambanivohitra – and help to generate statistics about rural livelihoods in eastern Madagascar.

In addition, the project relied on informal associations with a number of agricultural and development organizations outside of the project. Thus they pulled teachers from organizations like FOFIFA, IMVAVET and the University of Toamasina, but also local development agencies like the region of Atsinanana’s Direction régionale du développement rural (Regional Directorate of Rural Development, DRDR), the Centre Technique Horticole de Tamatave (Technical Horticultural Center of Tamatave, CTHT) – funded, in part, by the European Union, and falling under the Ministre d’Agriculture, d’Élevage, et de Pêche (MAEP) – and the Maison du Petit Élevage (Small Animal Farming Firm, MPE) – made possible by the Malagasy government and Cooperation Française, and a number of others (see Table 3-2 for more details).
At another level, and often unofficially, the Campus relied on a variety of associations with rural government representatives and stakeholders. Relationships were pursued with rural mayors, who were invited to *sensibilisation* (informational sessions) about the campus, and tasked with encouraging their community members to participate. The geographical location of the Campus did not solely rely on the provision of former agricultural research stations by FOFIFA, but also on agreements with municipal governments, rural businessmen, and rural farmers. Rural mayors mediated these relations, making them central to the project’s continuation.

These varied partnerships provide the resources and support the project needs to carry out its educational mission. They are equally important in the creation and proliferation of the official representations of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* that are dispersed through the internet and across the globe. These representations persist - despite the changing nature of partnerships - and continue to play a role in the legitimizing narratives of those who deploy them. They speak to how the project envisions its primary stake-holders, but, also, how it presents main project protagonists in a way that facilitates the opening of resource flows across the nodes of this institutional network array, facilitating the legitimization of state, international, and individual forms of power, spurring conflict and contestations, and ultimately ushering in, cutting off, or otherwise transforming access to economic and political power.

**Development’s Objects: Defining and Redefining the Peasantry**

All efforts to improve the human condition coalesce, like research projects, around a central problem to be solved – an issue or group that can be made to fit into a defined target space and potentially rendered manageable (Escobar 1988, Ferguson 1990, Rose 1999, Scott 1998, Kothari 2005). For the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, rural farmers
would constitute the main target of intervention, and thus became the subject of both knowledge-making – in terms of the creation of new forms of rural evaluation and monitoring – and the application of knowledge. But in order to approach this population, the Campus needed to hone its understandings and define the contours of the population, first for the funding agencies and logistical partners who would back the program, and second, for the rural politicians who would be key in assuring and choosing local participants.

This section explores the multiple constructions of the peasant and the hierarchical relations they exploit, reproduce, and potentially create. Narrative representations of farmers that are created through project documents are not neat. Rather they are constantly shifting and often contradictory as they navigate different spatial and temporal settings subject to variable fields of power. They represent not only the production and reproduction of ideas of the peasantry (a discursive rebeginning), but also the production and reproduction of ideas of “development,” ideas of “development agents,” ideas of development “partners” and ideas of the “state” that reflect a negotiation of local and global hierarchies of power (see Lewis 2006; Mosse 2005; Sardan 2005; Ferguson 1999, 1990).

**Constructing the Need for Change: The Malagasy Peasant as Moral Object**

The *Campus Ambanivohitra* was centered on creating a “good” farmer that would serve as a model for their neighbors. As such, it relied on a narrative creation of the peasantry that could be achieved through discussions and project documents. The contents of “good” farming were closely related to and dependent upon a number of discursive divisions between center and periphery at two interconnected levels – the local divisions between highland (Merina) and *côtier* (coastal), and the global divisions
between “tradition” and “modernity.” The latter including not only the celebration of “rationality,” the “market” and “science” but also “conservation” and “protection” – which in Madagascar are closely intertwined, and part of a long history of development discourse on the island.

**Imagining the model farmer**

I first heard about the *Campus Ambanivohitra* in 2005. At the time, the then vice-president of the University of Toamasina – an esteemed, French-trained historian of highland ethnicity – described it as a way to get the local populations away from the “traditional” economy and *paresseux* (lazy) agricultural habits. It was to be a place where technology would be brought to bear on these practices, transforming the target populations into agricultural entrepreneurs.

When I interviewed the Campus Research director ahead of the Campus’ initiation ceremony in 2005, he used a rhetorical question to explain the Campus goals, asking me, “What do farmers in the highlands always carry?” “A hoe,” he answered. Then, “What do the farmers on the coasts carry?” “A machete.” It was, put simply, a rhetoric that immediately cast value on agricultural practices and reinforced the hierarchy of the industrious and productive highland Malagasy, namely the Merina ethnicity, and indolent and destructive coastal populations. The rhetorical question tapped (and reinforced) local hierarchies of highland / coastal inequality. But it also made a forceful gesture to a number of other hierarchies, framing coastal farmers as “non-capitalist” and “traditional” against the “capitalist” and “productive” highland ethnicities, and “destructive” farmers next to “non-destructive” highland farmers.

These divisions were not confined to the project, but have long histories that connect to popular understandings and perceptions of pre-colonial Merina state
centralization as constructed atop highland agricultural practices and contemporary inequalities constructed atop pre-colonial Merina hegemony. The linkage of Merina agricultural and the Malagasy state is strikingly presented on the 2000 Ariary note, the only paper currency to depict a farming scene, and one that proudly displays the housing and agricultural styles of the Malagasy highlands (see Figure 3-2).  

![Figure 3-2. 2000 Ariary note featuring highland irrigated rice fields.](image)

Not all depictions of the project relied on the juxtaposition of highland and coastal practices. Others relied solely on ideas of rural monoculture, a reality that, where it existed, was tied to the focus on cash cropping that characterized the colonial period. Here it was recast as “traditional” and was attached to notions of destruction and production:

Degradation in terms of exchange and food security has completely disoriented the Malagasy farmer. And we must emphasize that we cannot speak of conservation until this issue is resolved. In effect, the monoculture

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59 The ariary is itself new (and old). Its status as Malagasy currency is due to Marc Ravalomanana and his desires to sever ties with France that the Malagasy franc (fmg) signified while simultaneously drawing connection to the precolonial Malagasy past. This currency denomination thought to follow the Arabic "designation for the Spanish real" itself following the earlier Arabic "ryal" (Kus and Raharijaona 2008: 152).
which is the traditional technique of Malagasy agriculture is no longer cost-effective… [Internal Document 2007]

The assertion focuses on the idea of the risk accrued through monoculture, but calls forth common discourses of Malagasy environmental degradation.

**Discourses of destruction**

This trope of “good” and “bad” farmers persisted through 2009, with the Director of the Campus centering both entry into the market economy and the eradication of *tavy* as the main goals of the Campus. He suggested the importance of the market, and of production, while redeploying, and reproducing, ideas of value-laden agricultural difference between the highlands and the eastern coast. Using an example I often heard in Tamatave, he told me to look at the market. The sellers and the food came from the highlands, while the land on the coast went to waste, with its inhabitants barely able to sustain themselves and ruining what resources they had through *tavy*. When I countered that the land on the eastern coast was visibly less denuded than the highlands he set as the example, with far less incidence of visible erosion, he responded that the landscape of the coast was itself the product of *tavy*, gesturing towards stands of *ravinala (ravenala madagascariensis)* along the Atsinanana landscape.

*Ravinala* - related to the banana tree but often considered a palm - is endemic to the eastern coast of Madagascar. It occupies a special and paradoxical place in Madagascar culture, politics, and development that bears some exploration. As the Campus director insisted, it is a product of *tavy*, its seeds aided by the actions of brush fires (Feeley-Harnik 2001). As such, its proliferation across the coasts is visible proof of the “destructive” proclivities of “traditional” agriculture.
At the same time the plant constitutes a central symbol of the Malagasy nation, pictured on its currency and, in modified form, on the national seal. It is akin to what Kaplan (in Meyer and Pels 2003) describes as “state familiars” – those symbolic items that are imbued with the weight of state power. As a nationalist symbol, it keeps company with other endemic and memorable flora and fauna, like the baobab and the lemur, that act to link nature and nation in the Malagasy imaginary, and reinforce a global imaginary of Madagascar as a unique ecology under threat from human hands.

Figure 3-3. Ravenala and Baobab pictured on Malagasy currency. The Ravenala is on the 100 Ariary note, the Baobab on the 2000 Ariary note.

On the eastern coast of Madagascar, the Ravenala tree is a central social actor, intimately related to the lives and practices of the rural farmers in Atsinanana. Here the leaves are used to construct durable, and easily replaceable, roofs and flooring for houses. It is, then, a paradoxical plant symbolizing environmental destruction, the unique ecology of an island perceived to be desperately in need of conservation, the construction of a Malagasy national imaginary that links nature and nation, and a central natural resource in the lives of rural Malagasy in eastern Madagascar.

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60 Malagasy currency is well worth examining at length as it strives to represent the whole of the islands and its various economic activities and development goals. Images of Malagasy currency are reproduced in the appendix.
The effects of discourses of destruction were wide ranging, and when I questioned farmers in 2008 and 2009 about global issues such as climate change, they identified the practice of *tavy* as the culprit. The mastery of the *tavy* discourse was an important component of the project. Students in 2008 were given an entrance exam that asked, among other things, that students name two of the detrimental effects of *tavy*. The project itself relied on *tavy* throughout its tenure, using it as a main pillar of its self-representation from inception to the present. Thus 2008’s *sensibilisation* (informational session) lauded the environmental aspects of the project:

… they will… work on environmental protection…. It’s not about traditional agriculture, for example the *tavy* which destroys the environment, rather during the training we teach them how to use mineral and organic fertilizer - they are trained so that the soil will always be fertile.

The statement echoes research narratives that have existed since colonial times that link fire to erosion and soil quality depletion, but ignores interesting contemporary research that suggests that erosion and the movement of fertile soil are one part of an array of agricultural strategies used on the island (Kull 2004: 73-74; Jarosz 1993).

**Remembering Peasantry Past**

Representations of the eastern Malagasy peasant were not wholly negative. The Campus’ original plan centered on an idea of exchange that envisioned knowledge travelling in two directions at once. Specifically, the project would allow rural farmers to exchange their “indigenous knowledge” for the benefit of University of Toamasina students who would be trained through the program. The objective relied on a valorization of local (rather than highland) knowledge, and though it never fully materialized in the project’s practice, and eventually fell out of the project’s official documentation – much of which was written in French and destined primarily for the
eyes of partner organizations – it continued as a main theme in the program’s verbal self-representations to the local government officials who helped to choose the students.

The earliest articulation of “tradition” as a partial palliative to problems of poverty was contained in a document generated by the campus’ Research Director in 2005. A mathematician and – at the time – the University’s Vice President for Fiscal Affairs, he framed the Campus as an opportunity to return to a status quo anterior, when communal labor, institutionalized in practices of tambio and vanin-tanana, was widespread in rural communities (Internal Document 2005). Tambiro and vanin-tanana are highly organized and labor intensive practices in which over 100 individuals work up to six hectares of rice fields per day and are provided with food, particularly zebu, rice, and farming tools by the landowner. As the Campus’ Research Director wrote in a program synopsis:

In our days, the tambiro is more and more rare in the villages. According to the peasants, it is no longer financially viable because of the price of zebu (as an indicator, in Tamatave’s countryside a zebu currently [2005] costs 600 000 Ar or 250 Euros). Certain villages try to replace the ro [zebu meat] with dried beans, but this doesn’t carry the ceremonial attraction and local motivation… [Internal Document c. 2005]

The decline in communal labor was tied back to environmental degradation, linking to discourses generated by the island’s past agricultural research institutes – previously housed on the same physical locations of the Campus Ambanivohitra – that linked tavy to the decline in productivity over time. The project document states, “In reality, the causes of the progressive disappearance of tambiro are: the weakness of rice

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61 Tambiro, in Malagasy anthropology, is often associated with the Sakalava ethnicity inhabiting the northwestern section of the island (Jaovelo-Dzao 1996).
productivity (less than 1 ton per hectare) and traditional cultural practices, the consequence of a lack of training and supervision” (Internal Document 2005). Culture has, in this sense, wrought the destruction of culture – a rhetorical move that allows the simultaneous valorization and demonization of rural agricultural practices. This, in turn, rationalizes the spread of supervision and monitoring techniques through agricultural trainers and experts, who are suspended in a hierarchy that places them above rural farmers.

This initial inclusion of cultural valorization would feed into representations of the Campus elsewhere as a palliative to cultural loss, the related idea of cultural infiltration, and concerns over elite/lowland status. The Campus would be framed as a celebration of “rurality” and a response to ivory tower intellectualism at the university. This engagement of a type of peasant populism reflected the ways that project administrators – as elite actors at the University of Toamasina - envisioned their own role in Malagasy development as well as that of the rural peasantry. These expressions of the complex nature of traditional practices embrace populist development models that were often echoed in state discourse (Sardan 2005, Cooper and Packard 1997). The idea of populism helped to shield the ways that practices within the Campus reproduced preceding power relations (by relying on local networks of political power) and increased the visibility and legitimacy of state power.

**Peasant Populism**

The valorization of the peasantry was integral to the project’s public relations; newspaper articles spoke glowingly of how the project invited the participation of farmers as equals. *L’Express* ran a story on the project in 2005, highlighting its novelty and gesturing towards its potential to trouble accepted educational hierarchies:
Some real farmers on the faculty! One doesn’t come across that often, but this year the University of Toamasina has some in its ranks thanks to the *Campus Ambanivohitra* located in Ambonivato fokontany of the rural Ivoloina district. [Saholiarisoa 2005]

This piece marked the inauguration of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s first official campus, attended by notables such as the Malagasy Minister of Education.

These discourses travelled into public relations documents, where the Campus was represented as a way to collapse social distinctions between the educated elite and rural Malagasy farmers. Consciousness raising efforts of the Campus focused on this same form of exchange, and sought to centralize the *Campus Ambanivohitra* as being the only project truly of and for the Malagasy farmers of rural Atsinanana. As such, it relied on the same ideas of cultural loss and infiltration that drove the projects initial representations.

In 2008, *sensibilisation* meetings held by the Campus were performed to reinforce and extend the project’s relations with the rural community, rhetorically breaking the hierarchies of knowledge that inhere in these educational practices (Rossi 2006). Carried out in the meeting rooms and staff offices of regional and commune capitals, these programs involved the presentation of projects to rural mayors who would in turn, at least theoretically, repeat the presentation in their own communities. At one such meeting, held in the Brickaville municipal center, the largest venue of the three districts we visited for the 2008 trip, project administrators sat down at a long table facing five rural mayors and one assistant mayor.

Here, training rural farmers was envisioned as a way to collapse, in part, the difference that inhered between development agencies and their stakeholders:

... development is a hard task, and what we think is: How can one have experts who can be in the commune? Why, because normally, the
technicians who work here in your communes, they come from elsewhere. Even the people who work for with PSDR, PPRR, for whatever development, they come from the exterior of your communes. The reality is that they… aren’t concerned with the success of the project. It’s for this reason that we think we have common concerns. You’ve sent some students to be trained in agricultural and husbandry techniques, that presumes that you want to change. If the training objectives are achieved, I think that we won’t need other people working on development for your communes, they can do it themselves.

The Director’s words singled out two of the larger development organizations that work in the region – the *Programme de Promotion des Revenues Ruraux* (Program for the Promotion of Rural Revenue, PPRR), a program funded by the Malagasy government and the International Fund for Agricultural Development and meant to aid farmers in coordinating their efforts with product distributors, exporters, and access micro-credit, and the *Projet de Soutien au Développement Rural* (PSDR), a project funded by the World Bank which helps to support regional organizations such as the DRDR. The idea of development from below, in this instance, is also infused with a healthy dose of competition between development organizations. This competition was more attenuated at these meetings, as the Director sought to dispel rumors about the *Campus Fanantenana* – the rival farmer training program that was emerging under the leadership of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s (former) Research Director in 2008 (see chapters 5 and 6).

In addition, the Campus chose this opportunity to draw an important distinction between itself and its main competitors, with the technical director telling rural mayors, “The *Campus Ambanivohitra* doesn’t train students who are going to become bureaucrats, that’s not its objective.” Rather, they were to be leaders of another area – and given new forms of power over their neighbors. The next sentence confirmed this
point, stating “The goal is to train student leaders in agriculture and animal husbandry, who are going to manage the people from their area.”

Narratives that promised to democratize development – and development expertise - by putting it into the hands of rural farmers ignored three important facets of the Campus. First, the project’s structure was such that participants were selected based on their relation to local political leaders – themselves dependent upon their own networked connections. Second, technicians from these “outsider” organizations were regularly hired to teach Campus courses, a fact which strengthened the reach of the state and supported its power among the elite by providing a source of supplementary income within a context of unsure institutions. Third, the project’s initial incarnation, obscured here, was based on the very creation of development expertise at two levels: among the rural, on the one hand, and among university students and campus instructors and administrators who the project would send to the exterior “in order to increase their managerial capacity” (Internal Document 2008). The linkage eventually fell away, with this aspect of the project decoupled from its main activities and resituated under the Presidential Office in Toamasina (See Chapter 5 for a more detailed account of the politics behind the switch).

**Candidacy: Ideals and Functional Realities**

Participating peasants were not expected to display the characteristics described above. Rather, to participate in the project, they needed to be – already – exceptional. Initially, rural mayors were asked to choose farmers from their communes who were remarkable, highly motivated, and met the following criteria:

… age, level of education… Baccalauréat [secondary degree] preferred), ready to leave their village for at least two months, passion for the land, ownership of agricultural land (at least 300 ares riziculture [3 hectares]),
agreement to furnish travel expenses to get to the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, readiness to apply new agricultural technologies, and agreement to participate in a rural organization and to transmit the acquired knowledge [Internal Document 2005]

These requirements are revealing of the way project administrators represented their ideal students: rural, docile, dynamic and social. At the same time, the project’s success was predicated on peasant mobility (in order to attend classes), peasant status (ability – at some future point – to manage others), and most importantly, access to no small amount of land. These requirements together ensured that participants would be – relatively – well off.

In reality, however, these requirements were not often met. Of the students I interviewed (approximately a quarter of the students accepted and half of those that matriculated), only 10 had advanced past primary education (roughly 1/4), and of those, only four had made it to the Malagasy equivalent of high school. It would be difficult, in an area where educational participation drops off precipitously after primary school (World Bank 2002), for a project such as the *Campus Ambanivohitra* to locate suitable candidates who held a high school diploma and remained in rural areas. Advancing in educational level requires leaving rural areas, as very few can offer education past primary school. Of those that had some secondary education, only two travelled to attend secondary school, often at distances in excess of 50 miles. The rest came from towns that offered both primary and secondary education.

Rural mayors, then, had some flexibility in who they could choose to put up for consideration. Each year, after their annual invitations to *sensibilisation* sessions in the district capitals, they were expected to do the same in their communities. However, the power and prestige associated with development projects, along with the promises of
materials and access to financial expertise made by project administrators during their informational meetings (things like farming implements, access to agricultural machinery, and micro-credit, the latter discussed further in chapter 4), meant that most often the mayors offered the opportunity to specific individuals before communicating it publicly. Chosen participants were often the children, in-laws, or close friends or colleagues of local mayors and other politicians. Thus in 2008 both the mayor of Ranomafana Est and the mayor of Befotaka sent their sons to the Campus. In addition the secretary of the Niarovana-Caroline mayor’s office, though much older than the typical student or the project’s age limit suggested, attended the program in 2007 along with a number of other local notables.

It was a point of pride for participant farmers to be chosen. Those I spoke with explained how they were chosen and why – often mentioning their exceptionalism in their home area and their willingness to try new things. But these were not the only qualities that the Campus desired to see in potential candidates.

In 2008, the Campus began administering exams to potential students. Linked in part to the project’s efforts to legitimize its program in the eyes of local and international partners – like the University of Toamasina and the Region of Haute-Normandie, both relationships which had been strained in the previous years – the project added an exam to the application process. Students were expected to travel to the district capital to take part in these written tests – a requirement that again speaks to the mobility that was expected of participants. Subsequent relocations would, for the most part, be reimbursed by the Campus, but this first trip illustrated an investment on the part of prospective students.
The exam consisted of three written sections and one oral section. The first written section was on mathematics, and asked students to answer six questions based on addition, subtraction, multiplication, and ratios. It was an important section in its ability to gauge students’ abilities to work with numbers – a central practice for the entrepreneurial accounting the project would require of them.

The second written section was on general knowledge and asked students to answer questions in subject areas of history, geography, civics, and French. The difficulty of these questions depended on connection. To answer the questions correctly, students would have to be connected through public education, but also through other media, both radio and print, through physical mobility and through civic participation. All of these pieces of information would be more available to those who interacted often with government agents and agencies, and to those who travelled extensively throughout their region.

Table 3-1. *Campus Ambanivohita* entrance exam subjects, 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History</th>
<th>Geography</th>
<th>Civics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Identify former Malagasy Presidents</td>
<td>- Identify the number of communes in the district</td>
<td>- Identify the legal voting age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Identify the ethnic identity of the Pirate King Rasimilao [aka Ratsimilaho]</td>
<td>- Identify the furthest commune from their home in the district and how many kilometers separate them</td>
<td>- Identify the meaning of the acronym MAP</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Name the three districts of Atsinanana</td>
<td>- Identify the events of April 4, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Name the districts they would pass on their way to Tamatave</td>
<td>- Identify the number of regions in Madagascar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Identify the number of regions in Toamasina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Name two regions in Toamasina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Identify whether or not HIV/AIDS is contagious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Identify what the BCG vaccine protects against(^{63})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Name two detrimental effects of burning brush</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{62}\) This was the passage date of the constitutional referendum that abolished the autonomous provinces.

\(^{63}\) Tuberculosis.
The final sections of the exam were meant to measure the students’ capabilities in French – requesting that students listen to a French dictation and then respond, in French, to a series of questions about it. The final section of the exam was oral, asking prospective students to describe their experiences, motivation, expectations, and anything else they would like to discuss. Administrators would judge these responses, deeming students as serious or not serious, and treating their applications accordingly.

The exams added a veneer of respectability to the project’s process – though the results on the general questions were not kept on record. Rather, the most important section was the oral one – whose designations of “serious” or “not serious” would make it into some campus documents. The exam acted as an evaluation that could communicate the apolitical nature of the project’s choice of beneficiaries, even while the questions themselves speak to the privileging of rural individuals with “connections.”

**Constructing Entrepreneurs and Experts**

The *Campus Ambanivohitra* sought to educate Malagasy university students as technicians, capable of both observing rural practices and formulating development plans to address their cultural and economic needs. Students, for their part, looked forward to reaping the benefits of the knowledge that the Campus promised to deliver, though it was not always new knowledge. Many were chosen precisely because they were already considered skilled farmers. Others had previously pursued training programs with little result. What the Campus did offer was knowledge with certification, and a mastery of expert techniques that promised to open the door to social mobility and new forms of rural affluence. The project promised to turn participants into entrepreneurs of the self (Rose 1999) and experts of the market. As the Campus put it:
... the international market is based above all on the law of supply and
demand, the solution is to adapt oneself to policulture, which means to
cultivate parallel products, stock and / or process them, and, finally, sell
them at the most opportune time [Internal Document 2007]

Coursework was meant to enable self-monitored flexible labor (Ong 1991, 1999b),
where individual farmers were expected to follow market trends and have the expertise
necessary to switch quickly between several agricultural activities.

The curriculum at the Campus reflected this interest in a diversified entrepreneurial
expertise. Technicians and professors were brought in to teach a number of different
modules. In their first term, students were given a baseline of knowledge on diverse
forms of rural cultivation. In the second term, students would build on this knowledge,
revisiting the same agricultural themes but adding a significant amount of
managerialism, or a focus on agriculture as business that anticipated the power of
participant farmers over the labor of others and echoed the practices of the Campus
Ambanivohitra administration and the wider administrative practices of development
(Kothari 2005).

This managerialism was fed by the expectation that individuals become leaders in
the fikambanana, or associations, they were expected to create after mastering campus’
techniques. Fikambanana would act to spread participants’ technical knowledge,
pulling them into (deeper) hierarchical relations with their neighbors while at the same
time pulling those same neighbors into connection with new, old, and somewhat
diffused, forms of state and international power. Through participants – “Paysan
leaders” as the Campus liked to call them – the networked reach of state and non-state
development experts would be stretched downward and outward into rural areas that
the state rarely ventured. The “Paysan leader” is a mainstay of development practices
(see Sardan and Bierschenk 1993) and gained new life within the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, which set up a sort of leadership pyramid that set its administration as the main interlocutor of development’s power.

Table 3-2. Courses offered at the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, years 1 and 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1 Subject</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Year 2 Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intensive and Improved Riziculture</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Mastering Information Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable Protection</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Development and Optimization of Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation and Management of Nurseries</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Functioning and Organization of Agricultural Exploitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Farming</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Diversification and Drivers of Market Crops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aromatics and Essential Oils</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Social Management of Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Animal Husbandry</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Agricultural Machines: Mechanics and Tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Animal Husbandry in Agricultural Exploitation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Financial Management and Accounting in Agricultural Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aviculture</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Financial Systems of Rural and Agricultural Milieus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apiculture</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Area Organization and Contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pisciculture and Rizipisciculture</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Professional Agricultural Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamics and Management of Soils to Scale</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Editing Micro-Credit and Finance Applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Chemical Fertilizer</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Techniques of Vegetable Propagation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life and Land Sciences</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Communication</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Socio-Economy</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Technology</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microfinance Projects</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the weight of these responsibilities, farmers were expected to be disciplined subjects, and cohorts of farmers would first experience the campus as a strict organization of their labor. The students were divided into groups of six, and one group would tend to a number of diverse activities that surrounded the upkeep of the campus, taking care of project livestock and provisions while their fellow students were in class or working experimental fields. The day was divided into six, with individuals expected to participate in courses and work from 6 am to 6 pm with an hour for lunch. When the scheduled day was over, they were expected to continue to work in groups and subgroups – perfecting micro-credit projects or meeting informally.
The disciplining of time at the campus would only be reiterated by expectations of temporal discipline at home. Students, who after several weeks of study would return to their homes to engage in practical application, were expected to adhere to strict schedules that would be evaluated by Campus administrators. Success relied on the management of the time and labor intensive practices so closely linked to modern agriculture and, more generally, to techniques of governance whose genesis was in classical liberal governance (Thompson 1967, Jarosz 1994, Munn 1992, Rose 1999).

Both the curriculum and the schedule encouraged self-evaluation and self-discipline, proliferating, among rural agriculturalists, a culture of audit and evaluation (Strathern 2000) that was mirrored by the project’s own methods of stock-taking and self-evaluation. The mastery of techniques of self-evaluation culminated in the completion of a series of micro-credit proposals that would be presented to the savings and loan organization, OTIV.

The Campus Ambanivohitra’s accountant provided a course on micro-credit, and set up a template for participant farmers. Micro-credit applicants copied the parameters into their notebooks, filling them out and returning them to the project where they would be digitized. The project would then deliver these to their partner, OTIV – though loans were not guaranteed.

OTIV loans required that students open themselves up – personally and professionally – to the project. Templates provided farmer’s fields to declare their marital status, fill in their national identity card number and list their economic and social activities. The applications would advance much like a research proposal, with a justification for the project, then general and specific objectives. Documents then turned
to accounting tables that invited participants to be actuaries, estimating gains (such as eggs and milk) and losses due to death, consumption, and sale; then the cost of materials, medications, seeds, animals, etc. The documents moved on to issues of time management, having individual farmers divide the project into phases, with detailed descriptions of the work to be done during each period. Finally, micro-project proposals offered predictions on other labor needed, offering funds that would facilitate participant farmers’ management over others. These accounting tables could display understandings of market and risk, but demonstrated, above all, an ability to account for these understandings – to translate them into auditing tables and to then translate those fields – rather than agricultural ones - into money. Audit, as a mechanism of governance, has been tied to “the creation of new kinds of subjectivity: self-managing individuals who render themselves auditable” (Shore and Wright 2000: 57). At the Campus Ambanivohitra, the governing role of audit was doubled: the project rendered participant farmers as auditors of the self at the same time that it subjected them to layers of audit from OTIV and the Campus Ambanivohitra. The project never delivered on all of its micro-credit promises and the audit practices it encouraged came to threaten a number of participants, who were exposed to some of the more threatening aspects of audit (see Chapter 4).

Four years after the project was conceived, discussion of conferring advanced degrees of License and Masters were shelved. In 2008, only two out of three stages of training had been completed, though two promotions had matriculated (with a rate of retention of approximately 60%). The problems that precipitated this shift illustrate tugs on the network, calling the benefits of “development” in several directions. Thus, for a
time, the project was subject to frozen funds originating with partners, or a disappearance of students into wage labor opportunities that cross-cut the campus’ scheduling - such as the litchi and clove harvests (Rapport d’Activités 2008: 2). In addition, the Campus opening and closing ceremonies were planned around the availability of local dignitaries, such as the Minister of Education, whose unavailability delayed the graduation of the Stage 2 cohort by a few months at the end of 2008.

These degrees - derided by University personnel as a devaluation of university diplomas - were replaced by certificates that would offer students the cultural capital that should accrue with matriculations. Like micro-credit loans, these certificates promised to open up new opportunities for students. As one student summed up the situation, “I need the certificate, because everything we’re doing depends on that. Because… if we don’t have a certificate, there’s no value – it doesn’t carry any weight.” These offered them legitimacy in the eyes of the state, a situation that would help to put them into rural leadership roles.

The contours of participation and training offered at the campus highlight the importance of connection. Embracing and correctly wielding methods rooted in the practices of accounting and managerialism would open new doors of connection. These would, in turn, offer new forms of access to labor, material resources, and cultural capital.

Networks of Expertise

Connections, of course, emerged out of the practices of the Campus itself. Farmer’s attendance opened up new personal and geographical connections that could be translated into social mobility by students. As one student said, when asked what the advantages are, “… Before joining the Campus Ambanivohitra, we didn’t know a lot
of people, but now we know people in high places, we know many students, many professors. That means a lot for us.”

In coming to the campus, participant farmers encountered other participants from a number of other rural areas. More than simple friendships, making connections within the cohort held the potential to increase mobility in very real ways. The political connectivity that characterized students put them into a web of rural connection – strengthening the web of power that led to the family and friends of local politicians and notables (and, at the same time, the state). In addition, students - many of whom carried cell phones - took the numbers of their fellow students, creating a geographic network of individuals that could offer hospitality and market connections. Students could tap this network to discuss the project, meet up as they travelled to and from the campus, and, later, to warn each other of the very real audits OTIV had begun to carry out in late 2008.

In addition to their fellow students, the project brought them into contact with a large number of instructors tied to many of the biggest agricultural development bodies, both governmental and non-governmental, in Madagascar. During its first year the Campus employed some 10-12 instructors from: the University of Toamasina, including its Gestion des Ressources Naturelles et de l'Environnement program (Natural Resource and Environmental Management, GRENE); the École d'Application des Sciences et Techniques Agricoles (School for the Application of Agricultural Science and Technology EASTA) located just north of Toamasina; FOFIGA; Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (AVSF); the Centre Technique Horticole de Tamatave (CTHT); the Programme de Promotion des Revenues Rurales (PPRR), the Madagascar
Fauna Group, which runs the national park north of Tamatave, the DRDR, Care International, the NGO Tany sy Fampandrosoana (ONG TAFA, literally Land and Development NGO), and the Centre International de Développement Rurale (CIDR).

The network participants were connected to via instructors is illustrated in Figure 3-4.

Figure 3-4. *Campus Ambanivohitra* instructors’ organizational linkages. Bold boxes contain the organization represented within the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s instructional staff. Vertical relations coalesce with the Malagasy state, while horizontal relations represent outside funding and governmental agencies.
From any measure, the project expanded individual participants’ interactions with the state through varied bodies. Many of these linked directly with the state through the government’s ministries, assuring a likewise linkage to the centralized power of the state. Not so much anti-political (Ferguson 1990), the program flaunted its connection – or tried to. To be in the networks of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* was to be connected to political power – a situation that could lead to more and better economic and political benefits (Crush 1995). These connections held the potential to aid students in accessing resources, and some – who no longer wanted to attend the *Campus Ambanivohitra* – used them to locate other programs they might pursue.

High rates of attrition among teachers – a reality that, according to the few former instructors I interviewed, spoke to dissatisfaction, logistical constraints linked to their primary positions, and project curricula - meant that students interacted with new individuals each year, spreading their networks further. While largely unintended, project flux, coupled with expectations of farmer mobility, meant that the state could extend its reach further – in terms of legitimacy and governance - without a concomitant investment in infrastructure.

At the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, the project translated into political and economic benefit for certain stakeholders through practices that were explicitly and implicitly present in project design. The fact that many students were already related to or had been chosen by rural politicians meant that the system was essentially closed to the opposition. In relying on these local politicians, the project lent itself to a subtle one party structure that bristled next to administrators’ claims that the project was not meant to make bureaucrats.
**Legitimate Actors: States and Agents at the Campus Ambanivohitra**

Development, as a general idea, has been largely criticized for spreading and supplementing bureaucratic power and legitimizing the state, all while sitting under a cloak of rational, apolitical intervention (Ferguson 1990, Scott 1998). The *Campus Ambanivohitra*, as discussed here, hints at its abilities to fill these roles superbly. There is no question that the *Campus Ambanivohitra* acted as a way to extend state power at the level of the peasantry. But state power relied upon more than this level for legitimacy.

To accomplish these feats of representation and administration, the state relied on the provision of prestige and material resources that the project could make possible. And to do this, the state needed to partner with a number of different agents of development beyond the peasantry – each embroiled in its own efforts to craft personal and institutional reach and legitimacy. Each of these groups has, in turn, brought their own desires and concerns to the project.

This section explores the ways that these organizations used the Campus to craft images of the good state, the good development agent and the good post-colonial power. These representations link to realms of power that are outside of, but interconnect with, the state – opening doors to new access to and control over social, political and economic resources. Through development, the state gains access to legitimizing narratives that engage the peasant as a symbol of the Malagasy nation and that function among elite Malagasy and international agents as well as peasants. The state, through the project, also accesses a network that supplants the “conduct of conduct” in areas often abandoned by state power (Foucault 1991). The project generated knowledge about rural subjects through surveys and evaluations that
rendered messy realities into manageable figures. These followed a circuit – with raw data generated by the project, processed by French partners, and returned as statistical evidence in the state’s efforts to court material and logistical support from local and global partners.

International powers reiterate state and project narratives of development, shifting foci in ways that speak to these institutions and governments’ own economic and political concerns. In practical terms, international institutions and foreign governments use development to craft their own legitimacy as moral nations, to stake claims on the control of scientific knowledge, and to leverage development roles into economic currency by embracing a support role for the Malagasy government.

Individual agents, finally, seek – and sometimes find – paths that can sustain or improve their personal status by offering them access to new levels of social, political, and economic mobility. These weave into and out of the state, stopping and starting through the linkages that development projects increasingly rely on - and in ways that far exceed the possibilities afforded rural farmers engaged in the project. What results is a nexus where agents and institutions come together, each move they make supporting the others in ways that are incomplete, yet effective.

**Improving the State of the State**

This paper has already outlined the effects of participant recruitment on the political makeup of the student body and the expansion, thereby, of state reach. But the further implications of these moves are worth exploring. This section analyzes these political and administrative connections further, linking them back to the reproduction of state power.
In 2004, when the Campus was conceived, there were several state bodies connected to it. Some were quintessential: the regional and municipal governments and ministry level offices whose participation and support were necessary. Others were slightly removed; another rung down in the organizational hierarchy. Organizations like FOFIFA and DRDR – which were public, but sat at sub-ministerial levels and could thus act as relatively innocuous and apolitical development entities – found new paths to reach the public through the Campus curriculum. Another level of sub-state agencies were a set of public “of private character” organizations that were run as businesses: the Chambre of Commerce, PPRR, CTHT fit this classification. Taking these groups as an arena of exploration, this section examines the ways the project reinforced the power of the state outside of rural agriculture.

The *Campus Ambanivohitra*, like development elsewhere functioned as a support to state power and legitimacy in a number of ways (Ferguson 1990, Kothari 2005, Elyachar 2005). First, the project’s linkages with Malagasy policy objectives and governing bodies made it a central space in which “development” was performed for a wide national and international audience. Second, partnerships with foreign entities were closely guarded and strategically deployed in ways that both obscured and reinforced state power. Third, the access to material and symbolic resources that the project facilitated enabled state agents to strengthen personal, political, and expert networks that could supplement the support provided by increasingly weakened public agencies.

The *Campus Ambanivohitra* provided a central space in which political agents and institutions could craft a public narrative about the state’s “will to improve” (Li 2007).
Following the trajectories set by the 2006 abolition of the autonomous provinces, the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s relations with the state flowed through a number of agents, each linking them back to the state.

Figure 3-5. *Campus Ambanivohitra* government relationships, 2004-2010. Black borders signal the direct partners of the project. Gray borders signify indirect relations.

Under the new regional system, the President would name the *Chef de Région*, through the Ministry of Decentralization, for each of the 22 regions (Marcus 2010). The administrative level below - the district – would lose administrative importance, and the *commune rurale* and *fokontany* would be elevated. *Commune rural* mayors, under this plan, would be elected directly, while *chef fokontany* - the lowest level of official
governance - would be appointed by the *Chef de Région*. In state rhetoric, *commune rurale* mayors and *chef fokontany* were tasked with doing 80% development, 20% administration (Marcus 2010: 124). These expectations made development participation in projects like the Campus important to the political futures of individual leaders from above (at the level of the state) and from below (at the level of their own citizens).

For higher status individuals in the government chain like Ministers and *Chefs de Region* project events offered a way to reach both rural farmers and the more elite and urban development agents and individual citizens. Glowing newspaper articles printed statements from high level appointees on the promise of the Campus and its alignment to state policies. The Campus actively engaged in these linkages, postponing graduation ceremonies in 2008 because the Minister of Education could not attend on the scheduled day and budgeting reimbursements for journalist travel costs.

At a more general level, the *Campus Ambanivohitra* got the state’s policy objectives “seen” by other state agents and international organizations, and to a lesser extent, by other Malagasy. Development went on display at conferences like 2008’s World Nutrition Day in Foulepointe, just north of Tamatave. Here development projects like the *Campus Ambanivohitra* set up display booths as a caravan of dignitaries in keyless entry 4x4s sped up the coastal highway. Once these dignitaries arrived they were entertained by dances put on by local students on the importance of hand washing, and speeches by politicians, before walking a perimeter constructed of development booths. Here, state and international agents could visualize development
through a spectrum of projects that illustrated the political will of the nation to develop (as well as the relative prosperity of different projects).

The display of development – its spectacle – also created an image of development that could then be disseminated through local televisions, reaching the urban areas where the citizens could then visualize the state’s commitment to the social realm and particularly, to the rural peasant who was both iconic and maligned in Malagasy developmental and nationalist narratives. These public performances of development were supplemented by the administrative roles the region was assigned in contracts with the Campus Ambanivohitra. Atsinanana’s obligations, according to the contract, were to “facilitate communication between the Campus Ambanivohitra and existing administrative institutions, as well as the partners,” “facilitate awareness among the rural community,” “preselect the candidates” (a responsibility they left to elected commune mayors), “contribute financially,” “define the policy for the execution of the training project,” and “preside over the pilot committee” (Convention de Collaboration 2006). In other words, their power within the project was substantial and pointed.

The region emerged here as a key player, mediating powerful relations with project donors. In a nation characterized by the disappearance of the state embodied in newly built yet often unmanned schools and hospitals, the Campus Ambanivohitra offered another port of entry into donor relations for the state. Through this role the region had an opportunity for increased state visibility while at the same time obscuring the state’s role behind less tightly state-connected entities. Partners would serve a role as visible foreign - and thus objective - support.
The region put this support on display in the new *Palais de la Region d'Atsinanana* (Regional Palace). Here, notices of development programs with jobs for technicians littered the corkboards outside the entrance. These notices were mirrored in the familiar line of “*Republikan'i Madagasikara*” just above recruitment ads that searched out labor to work on newly (internationally) funded development projects. On the second floor of bright new construction – a part of the state’s material support to the region, was the office known as the “Maison MAP.” A conference room with computer stations along the inside wall used by University of Toamasina students working as interns at the region, was dedicated to development and – specifically – to the President’s Madagascar Action Plan. The room also served as the joint office of the French representative of Haute and Basse Normandie, and the Regional Development Councilor. This connection was documented in the media, illustrating the types of representation generated by development relationships and the centrality of developments networks:

> It’s the beneficiary of the results of effective cooperation between the Region of Atsinanana and that of Rhone-Alpes in France. This large spacious room can receive seminars and working meetings organized by the Region, but equally those of the MAP commissions, if one understands the planning: big screen, round table, internet access and the ability to consult electronic as well as printed documents (seating up a network of MAP commissions in the districts and with the exterior through various links on the Atsinanana website). [Madagascar Tribune December 7, 2007]

Here, meetings about the region’s role in development would be carried out between the respective corners of Haute-Normandie and Atsinanana – ensuring the state’s role as mediator even while the presence of the French representative legitimized the idea of development as “objective.”
This reality of state mediation was very present in the *Campus Ambanivohitra*. Project administrators were more often engaged in face-to-face relations with the Haute-Normandie representative – who acted as a gatekeeper for French funds – than with the regional leaders. Yet each interaction with funders was carried out under the mountainous walls of the Maison MAP and Campus administrators were constantly reminded of their presence and their symbolic power over funding partners.

The Campus facilitated the circulation of material resources that were important to the continuing legitimation of state power. Project administration embarked, then, on a relationship with the region that, when put together, could create material revenue for the state and political capital for the region. Often these joint efforts would follow the contours of individual’s previous connections. Thus when the Campus submitted a proposal to renovate a number of buildings at their third training site at Niarovana-Caroline, informants explained that it was the *Chef de Région* - who had family in the area - that wanted the Campus housed there. In joining the network and pledging its support, the region and its Malagasy counterparts at the University of Toamasina and the Chamber of Commerce gained access to a vast array of development monies (and minimized their necessary contribution). The jobs these funds created – for university students and technicians – afforded political leadership resources that could be put to work in solidifying their base.

The *Campus Ambanivohitra* project was also closely related to a number of public institutions that answer to Ministries but do not - ostensibly – engage in territorial administration. As discussed above, participant farmers were trained largely by technicians from public institutions who were paid a small salary, travel costs, and per
diem for periodic instruction in Campus modules. These organizations were expanded through the project, and the additional support they received supplemented their positions as – often underpaid – functionaries. Like participating farmers, these functionaries were networked into and through the Campus. The central partner of the project, the University of Toamasina, and several secondary partners, FOFIFA, DRDR, etc., sit below Ministries and Regions.

Participation offered these technicians ways to supplement uncertain public incomes that linked them back to the power of the state even while it directed them to income at lower levels of the hierarchy. The project, in this way, became involved in the production of regimes of flexible labor among state technicians – a situation that allowed the rationalized austerity of organizations like FOFIFA and the University of Toamasina while simultaneously supporting the institutional reach of the state.

In addition, the project offered a market for the products of state expertise. According to their contract with the project, FOFIFA, the heir to the French development organization ORSTOM, now funded by the Malagasy MENRS and ORSTOM’s contemporary successor, the Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (Center of International Cooperation in Agronomic Research for Development, CIRAD), would provide “Its research products in vegetal and animal production (fertilization techniques, improved seeds, techniques for the improvement of animal production, technical innovations, etc.” (Internal Document 2006). This addition rendered the Campus an institution that could propagate the fruits

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64 For a section, a technician could earn roughly three dollars an hour, plus the cost of transportation and a daily allowance consisting of about 1 USD per day. Travel costs in 2008 were reimbursed at a range of between 5 and 26 dollars per trip depending on the point of origin.
of internationally (CIRAD) mediated research. This provision enabled the state to get research into new realms. The practice replicated other practices of seed redistribution embarked on by FOFIFA elsewhere (La Gazette August 13, 2010). It also helped to create a market for FOFIFA / CIRAD produced seeds, a plan that was linked to state’s rationalization of the organization by “expanding FOFIFA’s revenue base through sale of seeds and planting materials of improved crop varieties, animal breeds and vaccines, etc.” in a move the FAO labeled an “innovative initiative” in 2002 (FAO 2002). Like farmers, research organizations were expected to submit to market rationalization.

FOFIFA’s involvement with the campus also, and in some ways most importantly, stretched into relationships of land tenure among the population living near the Campus site:

Concerning the land, FOFIFA undertakes to ensure to the University the use and development of the land surrounding the training center, favorable land for the irrigated rice paddy, and/or pluvial without compromising its research projects. [Internal Document 2006]

This land agreement would later prove problematic, with local communities contesting and then reclaiming the land in question at Niarovana-Caroline and a rival project - the Campus Fanantenana - staking a claim at the project’s sometime campus at Ivoloina, just north of Tamatave (see Chapters 4 and 5).

FOFIFA split the site at Niarovana-Caroline with the Toamasina Chamber of Commerce (CCIAT), negotiating with both for usage rights to buildings and to the small staff (2 guardians) that were kept there before Presidential restructuring forced agriculture out of the CCIAT’s purview in 2008. Here the project acted to reinvigorate largely abandoned sites of “development” that had been inhabited by the structures of
large research operations by FOFIFA in the 1970s, and by ORSTOM’s IFCC before that (see chapter 2).

The state’s historical relationship to local land — a facet of each of the project’s three sites from 2004-2009 - meant that the state was silently present in the everyday workings of these sites. The Campus inhabited, quite literally, the shell of these earlier forms, creating student dormitories, professors’ quarters, and classrooms inside buildings that had been given over to a number of different development entities undertaking short-term projects since FOFIFA ceased using them. This inhabitation of previous sites of development — previous signals of a working state and a working economy — are present across Africa, as new programs take up the symbolic and physical space of their predecessors (see Chalfin 2010). But they also exist beyond Africa, in places like Indonesia (Li 2007) or Brazil (Caldeira and Holston 2006). Perhaps the most striking American example of this is the city of Detroit where images of a past prosperity and futures denied have become something of a cottage industry (see for example the glossy photos featured in Dan Austin’s Lost Detroit).

In Madagascar, these sites — part of a group of geographical and temporal shadow presences — stand testament to the contemporary paucity of state funds for development intervention, with FOFIFA sites almost entirely given over to local communities, and formerly substantial research sites falling into disrepair. FOFIFA members interviewed in Tamatave bemoaned the lack of funding, stating that really the work of the Campus Ambanivohitra should be theirs, and that they had been instead relegated to research rather than outreach (see chapter 3).
Figure 3-6. Decaying gas and air pumps at Niarovana-Caroline’s Folbe Fikarohana ampiharina amin’ny Fampandrosoana ny eny Ambanivohitra site.

The Campus – in inhabiting these sites – tapped local memories of better days and an agricultural research and development apparatus that worked. Interest gained them several students from the local communities, including two children of a former IFCC technician. Yet the failure of the Campus to adequately deliver a set of promised and tangible benefits to locals – in terms of wage employment, increased trade, and improved infrastructure – threatened the projects claim to legitimacy and revealed asymmetries of the ways the Campus, FOFIFA, and the local municipal government inhabited their respective spaces of state power (see chapter 4).

Alternate States: French Decentralized Cooperation and the Campus Ambanivohitra

The Campus Ambanivohitra did not solely propel the Malagasy state forward – it fed French intervention into their former colony. French relations of decentralized cooperation brought the French state into – physically and symbolically - governance and university affairs in Madagascar. This insertion facilitated French representations of the moral French state, widening legitimacy through iterations of humanitarianism that pop up in glossy magazines that highlight France’s work in Madagascar. Relationships
of development sustain and create patterns of knowledge production that center epistemological power in the metropole, even while narratives of scientific development promise to collapse asymmetries of power. Narratives of French morality that emerged through French development assistance linked to larger interests in furthering France’s not insubstantial investments on the island.

**Governing bodies in close encounter**

French policies of decentralized cooperation embrace lateral support through interregional partnership. These alliances occur as a sort of international mentorship, in which “established” French governments help to “Step up the role of the Region as overseer and allow the Atsinanana Region to position itself gradually as project supervisor for projects within its territory” (CPMR 2010: 7). French volunteers working within the framework of decentralized cooperation produced and facilitated the spread of a set of evaluative and representational practices that were a part of efforts to “improve the efficacy of aid” (CPMR 2010: 2).

These north-south regional alliances are nested within other administrative relations that establish and sustain linkages between the Region of Atsinanana, the Region of Haute-Normandie, the Region of Basse-Normandie, France, the European Union (EU) and its constituent territorial units. Thus Atsinanana – as a region partnered with Haute-Normandie, Basse-Normandie, and Rhone-Alps – comes in contact with three governing bodies at once. In each of these relationships, the Malagasy state is pulled into a mixture of power wherein French support and French evaluation go together. In addition, decentralized cooperation allowed the French another connection – through appointed Chefs de Region – to a President with a strong and public tendency to prefer anglophone cooperation.
French regions are fairly new governance bodies, emerging out of laws beginning in the early eighties that increased the decision-making power to these lower level political units (Cole 2006, Balme and Bonnet 1995). Decentralization in France was rationalized as a “management of complexity,” that could liberate “the entrepreneurial energies and political capacity of local and regional players” (Cole 2006: 32). This capacity building occurs through lateral attachments with other regions and through associations created to represent their interests. The Region of Haute-Normandie, for example, holds relationships of cooperation within France and among different regions in EU member states (e.g. England, Germany, and Poland; Haute Normandie 2011).65 These new administrative units formed associations that linked them to regions in other European countries and into common interest associations like the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR), formed in 2010. Associations like the CPMR create new iterations of decentralized cooperation – folding north/south cooperation into geographically based interregional alliances that constitute interest blocks within supranational governance organizations like the EU. In so doing, cooperation becomes integral to the reproduction and redirection of relations of governance that coexist at the same time that they help to define moralities of rule. Atsinanana – here, becomes integral to the legitimation and reproduction of various scales and spaces of governance outside of the island.

65 The region received 600 million euros worth of EU funding between 2007 and 2010.
Decentralized cooperation has been *de rigueur* in francophone development for at least twenty years, becoming a conditionality for aid in the mid-nineties (Sardan 1998, Bierschenk and Sardan 2003) and is based in a set of narratives that suggest decentralization as a panacea for democratization and development. Yet in very real ways, decentralization opens up new pathways for the simultaneous diffusion and centralization of power. Decentralization has the effect of layering governance rather than devolving it – in effect rebeginning and redirecting power along often parallel pathways.

Figure 3-7. Campus Ambanivohitra’s relation to French Governing Structures, 2006-2010.
Decentralized moralities

Cooperation was folded into narrative representations of the state produced by the Region of Haute-Normandie – the only French region that ended up supporting the Campus. Haute-Normandie frames cooperation as “international solidarity” that supports “the least privileged countries by allowing them access to development, while respecting their autonomy, their lifestyles, and their environment” (Haute-Normandie 2011). Alongside stirring photos of Malagasy children, Haute-Normandie’s website describes its numerous development programs. These representations are replicated out and iterated in glossy magazines like Ma Region or downloadable reports on the economic impact of solidarité international.

In Madagascar, the region of Haute-Normandie mentions five areas of support. The first consists of micro-projects strictly open to organizations based in Haute-Normandie, and prioritized decentralized cooperation partners in Wilaya de Bejaia in Algeria and the region of Atsinanana. The program requires that applicants assure three years of operation and that all decisions be made through Haute-Normandie headquarters (Haute Normandie 2010). The second is in economic development and achieved through accepting agents of the CCIAAT into France for training in the Region’s administrative offices. The third area is higher education, with the project emphasizing partnerships between the University of Rouen and the ESITPA with the University of Toamasina and the exchange they facilitated. Fourth was forestry, which funded the Centre Culturel et Social de Tamatave et le Pôle bois d’Envermeu (Social and Cultural Center of Tamatave and the Forestry Hub of Envermeu – a coastal commune in Haute-Normandie). Finally, was the Campus Ambanivohitra - a
partnership whose Haute-Normandie description was a familiar iteration of official project descriptions (Haute-Normandie 2010).66

Since 2005, Haute-Normandie has funded the establishment of the campus, a 2007 Post-Doctoral position for the project’s Research director, student transportation, and simple agricultural kits for students – a form of gift giving that backs up power (Li 2007; Mbembe 2001) as they matriculate through the project. In 2007, Haute-Normandie began to fund student training (taken over from the University), the cost of student nutrition (taken over from the Chamber of Commerce), and some of the cost of Campus Ambanivohitra micro-projects which were meant to introduce students to micro-credit.

**Moralities of knowledge and exchange**

Issues of knowledge were of particular importance in the region’s representation of its international solidarity. Partnerships were valued within regional narratives for the knowledge exchanges they made possible. These exchanges aligned with the contours of power in a way that secured the continuing – at least geographical – situation of scientific knowledge in the metropole (Weingart 2006). Madagascar would act as a training ground for French students – a place that rounded out their moral and accounting (and accountable) as well as their academic education (Stoler 1995; Strathern 2000; Harper 2000). These agents - however minor a role their knowledge creation played in the on-the-ground experiences of the Campus’ participant farmers - acted as important interlocutors for the moral and hierarchical positioning of development agents (in directing the labor of participant farmers) and the inculcation of

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66 A couple of the descriptions from early documents have been reiterated multiple times, almost verbatim, across partner-generated descriptions.
specific moralities of the laboring body on the project’s participants. These contours of exchanges are not new, but restructured - culled from the networks that they are layered over. In this case, the layering involved the covering over of FOFIFA’s past interventions with the Campus Ambanivohitra’s contemporary ones – these past interventions, in turn, covered over their colonial and postcolonial predecessors. This dynamic is neither relegated to Madagascar nor wholesale, but widespread and partial (Chalfin 2010; Li 2007). It is emblematic of the colonial endeavor and indicative of the continuance – in altered form – of the mutual constitution of north and south (Cooper and Stoler 1997; Comaroff and Comaroff 1997).

Institutional partnerships were key in crafting the mobility of French students in ways that reinforced the moral legitimacy of France through the production (and reproduction) of a young, knowledge-mediating, moral citizenry. For the University of Rouen – which was partnered with the University of Toamasina – this often translated into an exchange of business students who would be set up as interns in Malagasy offices and then return home to write short analyses which would, in turn, garner them the equivalent of M.B.A.s. ESITPA students, on the other hand, have written a series of agronomy papers based on “deforestation,” “nursery feasibility,” the litchi market, essential oil feasibility, and most recently ginger feasibility (Haute-Normandie 2011). All of these students are featured in media that highlight the cooperation in Madagascar, and the moral behavior of French students in Madagascar (Resoesitpa 2006).

Programs facilitated the gathering of data in Madagascar, submitting rural Atsinanana to the techniques of audit that translate into FAO data and then circulate
back into development project design.\textsuperscript{67} The \textit{Campus Ambanivohitra} was predicated on large scale studies carried out by university students whose salaries were paid by the Region of Haute-Normandie. Data gathering activities and “interviews conducted with trained farmers,” would enable the Campus to “complete a precise database on the peasantry in the region of Atsinanana” (Internal Document 2010).

Once data was gathered, however, it would be transferred to the French \textit{Laboratoire de modélisation statistique et analyse des données} (Statistical Modeling and Data Analysis Lab, LAMSAD) lab at ESITPA. According to ESITPA’s contract with the \textit{Campus Ambanivohitra}: “Results from the field will be sent directly to LAMSAD-ESITPA, who will analyze the results” (Internal Document 2006: 3). To underscore the importance of this aspect of the study, the agreement stated that if the results did not arrive, ESITPA would refuse to release the final 25\% of financial support. Through this relationship, ESITPA essentially took control of data gathered in the field, presumably to be used in future studies, and would theoretically provide analysis for the Campus, though as of 2008, most of the staff claimed to never have seen the results.

Between 2008 and 2010, ESITPA completely disappeared from project’s stock-taking documentation.\textsuperscript{68} This occurred, mainly, because the only educational exchange that the project undertook wherein it would welcome Malagasy students – with 6 going to France to study agronomy– ended in what can be described, from ESITPA’s

\textsuperscript{67} The most recent group of ESITPA students to work gathering information of the Campus used FAO questionnaires as a guideline.

\textsuperscript{68} The Cooperation and Cultural Action Service (Service de coopération et d’action culturelle, SCAC), a subsection of the French Embassy, helped to fund some of the follow-up evaluations in 2006 and 2007, supplementing and then supplanting the funding role of ESITPA.
perspective, as “failure.” Of the six, only one returned to Madagascar to work with the project. The others disappeared into France (see Chapter 4).

The ESITPA, despite this pulling away, remains a present agent in/of the Campus Ambanivohitra on obsolete web pages and, at times, in the official publications of the Campus Ambanivohitra. Trapped in a cyber-limbo, the ESITPA site still hosts pages from 2005 on the Campus Ambanivohitra and its relation to the LAMSAD laboratory.

The relationship is frozen in time as a representative of north/south relations that testify to the universities moral engagement and its efforts to create moral (French) citizens through knowledge generation in the global south. Thus, on a page reinvented from project documents, the Campus Ambanivohitra describes its appeal to ESITPA:

For … [the] director of ESITPA, it is meant to “make the University of Tamatave a tool for sustainable development, while teaching Malagasy the most advanced technologies, to produce more while protecting the environment.” [ESITPA 2005]

Knowledge is centered in the metropole. The practices that French regions depict as epistemological largesse reenact the same hierarchies of knowledge and expertise and re-center the metropole while legitimizing governance at home by reference to aid in the postcolony that also traces out the contours of responsible French citizenship.

**Bureaucratic cosmopolitanism**

In addition to the relations of agronomic knowledge-production, decentralized cooperation offered France trajectories for French citizens interested in serving both “development” and the “state.” Aspiring bureaucrats (like the Rhone-Alps representative) or well-meaning global citizens (like the Representative of Haute and Basse Normandie) were pulled into Malagasy development by the volunteer organizations run through the French state and the Volontariat de solidarité
Volunteers worked at multiple levels, with NGO’s themselves, or with regions, for periods of up to two years. French volunteers often described the program as “like the Peace Corps” – though in reality, while Peace Corps volunteers are shunted to rural villages to learn the language in their first year, French volunteers arrived in positions of power despite their youth and relative inexperience. The representative of Haute and Basse Normandie, for example, was on his second year of volunteering (his first had been in Niger) and working to, as he described it to me, make sure that the Campus Ambanivohitra wrote proposals, budgets, etc. in ways that would work for the Region. His main task at the Regional Palace, then, was powerful, managerial, and centered on works of translation (Lewis and Moss 2006; Sardan 2005). This situation put him in the middle of conflicts within the administrative hierarchy of the Campus Ambanivohitra, where employees viewed him as the “bailleur de fonds” that could address grievances and force change.

**Connection and the political and economic reproduction of the state**

The moral calculus of “development” in the south is not disconnected from “development” in the North, and Haute-Normandie makes clear on its website that at least one part of its goal in partnership is linked to ports and the market connections they offer, “The choice is based primarily on the many maritime relations between the three ports of Le Havre, Rouen and Tamatave (80% of maritime traffic between France and the Indian Ocean)” (Haute-Normandie 2011). With the largest port in Madagascar, Toamasina is a central gateway for goods coming into and going out of the nation. The balance of trade with France is substantial and regional cooperation agreements – while not directly touching on these concerns – connect to French interest on the island for more than humanitarianism or the production of symbolic capital. Development then,
acts as one of many sites where control and influence over border areas – and the concomitant reproduction of state and global power – are negotiated (see Chalfin 2011).

France’s participation in the *Campus Ambanivohitra* – through intermediaries at the regional level – was engaged in its own state reproduction in terms that are at once economic and ideological. The *Campus Ambanivohitra* – like other projects sponsored through decentralized cooperation – acted to legitimize French state power in both France and Madagascar. At another level, it acted as a support of the region’s place in both the French state and the European Union through which European regions connect to each other. It also drew the contours of French citizenship around a mastery of managerialism and, at the same time, helped to reproduce asymmetries of epistemological power.

**Careers of Connection: Development and Power**

The state does not exist in a vacuum and a number of scholars have critiqued efforts to understand “development” through its effects on bureaucratic and state power that fail to shift focus to the agents and brokers who mediate development interventions and monies (Sardan 2005; Mosse and Lewis 2005; Mosse 2005; Green 2003). The point is a useful one, and one to which we should add the idea that bureaucrats are much more complex than simple state agents, an idea that is at once tied to efforts to dislodge scholarly presumptions of a monolithic state and account for the circulation and interconnection of personal and bureaucratic power (Chalfin 2008, Evans, Reuschemeyer and Skocpol 1985; Herzfeld 1992). The *Campus Ambanivohitra* offers a way of understanding these two points – taking a look at the ways that the Campus (and the state) intersect with the political and economic interests and trajectories of individual agents apart from the rural farmers targeted by the project.
Four main groups of individuals made up the Campus: Instructors and Technicians, Administrators, University Students, and French citizens abroad. In varying degrees, the Campus offered each group new forms of connection and relative affluence. It enabled development lifestyles – characterized by physical and virtual mobility and access to technology, but also access to land and labor. The project also enabled social mobility through the networks it propagated through its curriculum and dependence on other development bodies. Finally, the project enabled political mobility through its reliance on state administrative structures.

At a general level, the Campus tied individuals’ expertise to their love of country and their academic passions. In addition to the representations of the peasantry mobilized through these constructions are imaginings of self-worth and expert morality. The project was created as a way to escape academic ivory towers – a place where the Director’s Economy Ph.D. and the Research Director’s Math Ph.D. – could be brought to bear on real life problems. Faith in science and economy as palliatives to rural poverty were sincere and heartfelt. Expertise was the defining characteristic of Campus staff in their relations with rural farmers. Hierarchies built of presumed asymmetries of knowledge travelled with them – development was, for them, existential.

**Developmental benefits: the generation of lifestyle and labor**

But alongside the narratives people created about who they were lay the very real material and political relations that the project made possible. Partnerships engaged in by the University of Toamasina and the *Campus Ambanivohitra* made things move. Project budget proposals called for office furniture mattresses, dressers, desks, tables, chairs, refrigerators, natural gas, computers, books and articles on tropical agriculture,
as well as plows, harrows, cultivators, weeders, seeders, spades, watering cans, sickles, sprayers, and nursery equipment (Internal Document 2006).

Proposals only represented imagined potentials and in reality the project would only get some of these items. The project received computers, funds to pay for phone and internet credit, petrol, mattresses, the *kits agricoles* that accompanied matriculation ceremonies (usually Campus T-Shirts, hoes, and rotary tillers), and indemnities for participant farmers and rural mayors who travelled to meet Campus’ administrators for *sensibilisation* meetings. It also funded six students to go to France to study at ESITPA, the cost of large-scale surveys, and the cost of the creation of the budgets, follow-up evaluations and a variety of other internal documents that were necessary to sustain the project administratively. The funding for these aspects of the project travelled downward, enabling project leaders to inhabit certain lifestyles and produce and expand personal political networks that grew knotted, flowing in and out of state power (see Sardan 2005).

On the receiving end of these financial flows, administrators and staff were sustained in a world that seemed wholly apart from the students they meant to address. Younger administrators rode to work on scooters, sported dual cell phones (one for each of the top two carriers), and went to lunch at restaurants for meals that cost more than the average Malagasy would make in a day. To be clear, for many administrators this was not richesse. Rather – it was respectable and middle class – though more so in urban than in rural areas, where CP staff could easily surpass most elite entrepreneurs.
Higher level administrators, on the other hand, gained somewhat more from the project. The University of Toamasina provided a car and, periodically, a driver, for the Director (the University President at the Campus’ inception). Funding – as a complement to his university salary - was being put into a massive three story home he had begun to build just before the Campus project began.

His ability to command Campus resources made him especially important in rural regions – where he commanded a bed at the homes of rural mayors and other state agents. His history in the area, particularly his family connections, were further cultivated in this post, and he patronized restaurants near the Campus site owned by members of his extended family and hired family members into the project. His reputation as a scholar earned him respect in these rural arenas, as did his former post, and rural villagers as well as the Campus Ambanivohitra staff continued to call him ‘Monsieur le President’ even after he had lost that post. At the Campus site he demanded increased attention from the local cook he had hired for the project, having her walk over a kilometer carrying food to him. He controlled electricity at the Campus site (only turned on periodically), took the best bedroom at the teachers dormitory (others would sleep in a bathroom, an office, or, another bedroom whose wooden floor sank under the weight of each footstep). It was a position that contrasted greatly with his relations with Haute-Normandie, where he would be made to wait for responses and project funds as they were almost incessantly tied up, not yet released, or otherwise unavailable. Audit here emerges as part of the practice of power as the partners, in wielding the ability to hold out funds, could direct project labor towards specific ends.
In addition to the rural networks engendered by the Campus and the enactments of middle and upper class Malagasy, the project enabled the spread of the urban and international networks of the educated elite. It was thus also a player in both the creation of the elite, and the creation of a highly differentiated sort of elite culture, or, more specifically, a culture of expertise (Mitchell 2002; Meyer 1997; Strathern 2000; Rose 1996). Access to funds for sending Malagasy students to France was important in facilitating the cooperation and further support of the Region of Atsinanana, and linked the Director of the Campus into a higher level governmental body. Funds for university students were spread among underemployed students and facilitated their future mobility as they were sent out into the Campus’ web of relations to interview participating and non-participating farmers. The project also provisioned jobs for underemployed technicians and instructors trained by other Malagasy programs. The ability to control these provisions translated into a vast political support network that was personal as well as state-based.

Contingent mobilities: the politics of development and education at the Campus Ambanivohitra

The Director’s connection to political and state power were well entrenched before his stint as university president. University students suggested that he had been brought from the University of Antananarivo to the University of Toamasina precisely because of his linkage to state power. According to this assertion, it was his Betsimisaraka ethnic identity, and his tenure in Antananarivo, that made him an ideal candidate to replace the university Rector. The Rector was active in the national Assembly for the Andry sy Riana Enit-Manavotra an’i Madagasikara (AREMA, Association for a Malagasy Renaissance) party and a vocal supporter of former
President Didier Ratsiraka, who contested the 2001 election results and effectively split the island during a prolonged political crisis. In 2002, the rectorate was transformed into a university presidency, and the future Director of the Campus Ambanivohitra won its first election.

As university president, he travelled widely across the island, attending conferences and ministerial level meetings. The Campus, would, in part, grow out of the networks and relations he created during this time. His close cadre of administrators in the university presidency would come with him to the Campus Ambanivohitra, taking up leading roles in its administration; his former Administrator and Financial Director, who described himself as being “with the president since the beginning,” and his former Vice-President for Fiscal Affairs at the university, who acted as the main contact for relations with French universities, took up the top administrative positions at the Campus Ambanivohitra. Other administrators came from other university development and accounting programs and from the Director’s extended family. Instructors were culled from the various development organizations around the island. Local staff – like the Niarovana campus cook – were politically connected (her husband was the secretary to the Commune Mayor) or inherited from earlier projects (like the Chamber of Commerce’s Guardian, whose father had worked for FOFIFA and who continued to work for the state for unsure pay) and were thus a key, if unspoken, link in the director’s ability to keep the project in place through the legitimacy of, however small, job creation.

These connections made the staff fiercely loyal (for a time), but also rendered the Director an individual who could direct redistribution in ways that could extend his
personal political power. This was important, because the structure of the Campus put it in charge of land and labor in ways that could (and did) spur controversy and required the participation and approval of local politicians.

These strategies helped to keep the Campus going through the rising tensions and abject failures that would come to characterize its efforts over the first few years of operation (see Chapter 4). The production and reproduction of personal power (in addition to state power) would also act as a palliative that would keep the Campus together and legitimate, while its temporary rival, the *Campus Fanantenana* (openly and boisterously related to the state) would, at least formally, fold under the weight of 2009’s *coup d’état*.

The Director’s actions at the helm of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* worked (for him) mainly as a way to extend his status into local areas, continue relations with foreign funders, and produce the evaluative products needed to sustain the system while improving his situation in material and symbolic ways. So strong were his connections – and his confidence of them – that he once demanded that a local development project director provide training for his students on one weeks’ notice… free of charge. She was obliged to allow it. The move illustrated just how deftly he could use his political weight to command the labor of even the most established NGO’s.

The main interlocutor for foreign relations, before Haute-Normandie sent their representative, was the Campus Research Director. Capitalizing on a position he had crafted as director of student exchanges with France while in the University of Toamasina administration, he turned the rural access the Campus afforded into political success. University students at the time suggested that the then President of the
University had been grooming his second to take over for him during the next university administration. Later, however, he changed his mind, deciding he would indeed run. They both ran and lost to a third candidate. In 2008, the Research Director was elected Senator of Atsinanana, a position no doubt helped by the Campus’ close relations with rural commune mayors who – under the reigning governing system of the moment, selected regional Senators. In early 2009 he was named Minister of Decentralization. Figure 3-6 illustrates the ways that the two translated the connections made possible by the *Campus Ambanivohitra*.

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Figure 3-8. Political mobility of project leaders, 2005-2009.
While the *Campus Ambanivohitra* Director’s network of political contacts shifted downwards to the level of commune rural mayors, it did not necessarily contract. Whereas he was previously part of a network of powerful university presidents meeting with ministerial level functionaries on a regular basis, the Campus gave him a more localized network that consisted of functionaries at regional, district, and commune levels. He built upon the ones he was already familiar with, and cultivated others.

These networks of political power, facilitated by the movement of resources through the campus, were supplemented by other networks that promised increased economic mobility. While instructors offered students important networks, technicians and instructors were afforded a less attenuated exposure. In brief encounters as one module ended and another began, through interaction with the Campus participants and administration itself, the Campus offered a network through which to find new jobs.

**Webs of Development**

Instructors and young administrators’ histories speak to the interconnection of the campus and longstanding development careers. For instructors, working at large state development organizations with little room for advancement, the *Campus Ambanivohitra* became one network through which to search out new economic opportunities even as it was itself an opportunity to access supplemental income. Administrators had histories with major state agencies like the National Parks Association, *Association Nationale pour la Gestion des Aires Protégées* (National Association for Protected Area Management, ANGAP) and the University’s department of *Gestion des Ressources Naturelles et de l’Environnement* (Natural Resource and Environmental Management, GRENE), and a short term IRD / ORSTOM research project. The two members of the administrative staff who did leave the project went on to work for the same “Green”
sustainable organization for what one described as more money, satisfaction, and security.

**Conclusions**

The *Campus Ambanivohitra* emerged through relationships with a multitude of Malagasy and French partners, most of which were governmental. These partnerships helped to shape the trajectory of the projects interventions as it strove to meet the developmentalist goals of Madagascar and France. The project’s developmental promise consisted of a personal rebeginning that would transform rural farmers into ideal agricultural entrepreneurs who could flex with the market. At the same time – and in order to reach this goal – the project reinvented the peasantry to appeal to the donors, agents and participants whose support it relied on. Consequent to this developmentalist objective, the project affected a number of other rebeginnings, including a re-working of state and international relations, and individual status positions.

The rebeginning of the peasantry at the Campus Ambanivohitra consisted of a construction of change as a necessity. In order to create ideal agricultural entrepreneurs, the project set about constructing the peasant as a series of deficiencies. In this construction, coastal peasants were pitted against those in the central periphery who were viewed as agricultural entrepreneurs *par excellence*. The project relied upon and reinforced already existing hierarchies between center and periphery, highland and coastal. Coastal peasants, by virtue of their “traditions” – namely *tavy* – were cast as destructive to Madagascar’s natural, and unique, resources – a bane on the conservationist efforts so socially desirable among international development organizations. The assertion of peasant destruction pushed to the fore in
project documents and discussions, and stood uneasily next to assertions of Merina productivity, which themselves involved the destruction of large swathes of forest.

Yet the construction of the coastal peasant at the Campus Ambanivohitra was not exclusively negative. The project relied on narratives of loss to call participants and communities into the project, presenting it to rural mayors as a path to return to a prior state. In so doing, it pitted modern labor practices against the communal labor practice of tambiro. In addition, the project held out agricultural training as an alternative to the epistemic hegemony of outsiders like the technicians employed by the state and contracted by the project.

These four images of the peasant, while contradictory, were fused together within the project in ways that ensured the financial and physical participation of partners, participants and communities. These images of destructive, communal, and traditional peasants were far from the realities of the actual participants in the project, who came largely from politically well-connected families. Participant screening, rather, relied on the ability to inhabit certain status positions vis à vis the state, to move, to command the labor of others, and to know the correct answers to questions mediated by state and international developmental interests.

Once chosen, participants would be (ideally) molded into ideal agricultural entrepreneurs, with the ability to move deftly alongside shifts in the market. The curriculum sought to instill the value of evaluation. It sought to turn rural farmers into experts in their own right, teaching them to subject themselves to the sorts of managerial techniques that would begin on one’s own body before being empowered by the project to exact these methods on others. The project, then, sought to instill the
value of audit so ubiquitous in current ideas of good governance and neoliberalism (see Shore and Wright 1999; Strathern 2000; Rose 1999).

While many of its goals to increase the productivity and profitability of rural agriculture appeared to fail, the *Campus Ambanivohitra* offered transformative paths for rural individuals through the networks it offered access to. Participants in the project gained access to key governmental and international agencies and agents through the training. In the main, this access expanded the interactions of rural participants with the Malagasy state. It also tightened their extant political connections, elevating their place in rural communities.

The transformative capabilities of development were not confined to the participant farmers that enrolled in the *Campus Ambanivohitra*. The states (Madagascar and France) involved in the project found in it a way to reinvigorate their legitimacy. In addition, development agents found their fortunes sustained and expanded through the project, which offered income, employment, and mobility to underemployed Malagasy bureaucrats.

In the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, the Malagasy state found a space to craft legitimacy along a number of lines. Most apparent, the project illustrated the state’s will to development to rural and urban inhabitants and took over a number of functions that normally would be carried out by directly connected state agencies (rather than the indirect linkages of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*). At a more general level, the project signaled this will to development to outside agents and governments, where it could be put to work in securing further development and private investment. Less apparent,
however, are the ways that the project crafted legitimacy by its provision of additional income to underemployed state functionaries.

The project also helped to extend Malagasy state power in ways that were subsidized by outsiders. The region of Haute-Normandie funded surveys and farmer evaluations that would then be fed back into the state and then funneled into international agencies. The project’s provision of access to networked resources, such as land and micro-credit brought rural commune mayors more intimately into state plans, assuring their legitimacy in the eyes of the president, but also increasing their assurance of community compliance with state directives. Both of these actions spread state power out, letting it reach just a bit deeper into the lives of rural and seemingly disconnected Malagasy.

For international agents and agencies, the Campus Ambanivohitra and other similar projects were key to the presentation of a moral state. This was particularly true in France, where well-built websites boast the humanitarian concerns of the region of Haute-Normandie. These partnerships also reinforce asymmetries of knowledge, allowing French purchase on the ways knowledge moves and to what purposes it is put.

For individual agents, the Campus Ambanivohitra was a place where individual aspirations could begin to unfold – or unravel. The project offered precious employment to the under-employed functionaries of the University of Toamasina and other state agencies. Entry into the network also meant access to material, political, and social capital in ways that had very real effects – the construction of a three story house, the almost meteoric ascension of a public figure, and the provision of employment to family.
Development matters in very important ways; it affects transformation in very important ways. Yet the transformations affected do not often align with the stated objectives and goals of the project. These obscured transformations, these rebeginnings - so tightly linked to the flow of political, economic, and social capital through development’s networks – do not go uncontested. It is precisely the contestation of personal and political transformation – the contestation of the process of rebeginnings first movement – that forces the transformation of development. The next chapter explores this second movement of rebeginning, exploring how conflict and contestation have propelled the project forward, threatened to cut off the flow of resources, and ultimately forced the Campus Ambanivohitra to start itself over.
CHAPTER 4
DURABLE INSTABILITY: NAVIGATING NETWORKS AND REBEGINNING AT THE CAMPUS AMBANIVOHITRA

Connection and Conflict at the Campus Ambanivohitra

The opportunity and legitimacy offered by the Campus Ambanivohitra to the parties involved made it centrally important to its main agents in Madagascar and France. Consequently, throughout the project’s short tenure the articulations of these variable desires have pushed its transformation. Sitting behind its public face and its multiple potentials, the inner workings of the project transformed its exterior – shifting the project’s public image from one objective to another in ways that were barely visible to the outside.

These transformations, what I characterize as the project’s rebeginnings, worked. They functioned in ways that propelled the campus forward, affecting the erasure of the failures and missteps of its immediate past and assuring the continual flow of project resources. The network connections that the project sutured together changed (or did not) according to the shifting strategies of its stakeholders as they navigated and negotiated the social, political, and economic assets available. Administrators cultivated certain connections, used them to strengthen others, and then jettisoned them. International representatives sussed out questionable practices and levered these into extended control over the program, including creating a position for the French volunteer program so important in crafting the image of the savvy moral French citizen abroad. Participant farmers received micro-credit, and then disappeared with the funds. Villagers surrounding the project offered rizicultural land with expectations of the infrastructural improvement and concomitant wage labor opportunities it promised, then took it back after these failed to materialize. Put another way, the capital flows
facilitated by the project were uneven and unevenly accessible; they reflected power differentials between different status – expert / broker / community – but also among them. They reflect how these uneven flows are contested and redirected as individuals try to maintain and/or advance their status. These struggles ultimately shifted the network in ways that are structured and enabled by contemporary modalities of governance, specifically accounting and law, and development’s pasts – those shadow presences that stand testament to the future that never was. These networks in turn enable individuals and groups to tap labor in ways that are deeply intertwined with the state.

In this chapter, I track three stories of partnership and connection that went awry in ways that reflect multi-scalar and multi-sited struggles over various forms of capital. The first centers on the short stint the Campus served as a space for the creation of elite development expertise through University student exchanges with ESITPA. Concerns over disappearing funds coincided with mobile and disappearing bodies as the project’s exchange component was twisted into a political tool that could gain the support of local government leaders. The second is the project’s physical relocation several times over the course of a few years. Written vaguely into the project’s objectives, the shifts reflected continuing struggles over land and resources within the project that reflect the structured agency of the communities it relied on for support, as well as its competition with similar programs. The third story is the project’s micro-credit component. Micro-credit opened financial flows, but never fully, and eventually had to be abandoned. They would be replaced by vitrines, or showcase farms, that would
generate new extensions of power over land, labor, and finances for participant farmers as well as for the project itself.

**Part 1: Knowledge, Labor, and the Politics of International Exchange**

In 2006, the *Campus Ambanivohitra* opened a partnership with the French agricultural university ESITPA that was adjacent, structurally, and linked, ideologically, with existing partnerships between the University of Toamasina and the University of Rouen, and between the Region of Haute-Normandie and the Region of Atsinanana (Figure 4-1). This partnership facilitated the exchange of six students from the University of Toamasina to the ESITPA campus in Val-de-Reuil, just south of the city of Rouen. In exchange, the ESITPA would send two agronomy students to help teach participant farmers at the *Campus Ambanivohitra*. According to the project, Malagasy students would train in “modern” agricultural and business techniques and constitute a hierarchical parallel to the Campus’ own relation with its rural subjects. These students would be exchanged with two French agronomic volunteers helping to institute “modern” agricultural models in Madagascar (Internal Document 2005).

Project documents described the university students to be sent to France as “young graduates, ready and able to invest themselves in the rural domain” (L’express September 7, 2006). They would, thus, be transformed into expert subjects capable of transforming others in turn – and with the promise of transforming Madagascar through their development expertise. They would – in the process – become individuals who could control labor, in a way that was imperfectly parallel to the Campus’ plans for its rural participants and future “Paysan leaders.”

The way the exchange unfolded, while certainly affecting a number of transformations, did not accord with the project’s initial objectives. After the completion
of the exchange, five of the seven Malagasy working at ESITPA “disappeared” – staying and creating lives in France, only one of which was related to agriculture. The partnership with the *Campus Ambanivohitra* transformed, leaving the two institutions only loosely connected through the University of Toamasina. With this re-structuring of partnership, the nature of exchange shifted, heralding the disappearance of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s objective of creating agricultural expertise among university students, and reorienting the trajectories that knowledge would travel within the program.

![Figure 4-1. Directionality of knowledge-based exchange. Gray lines represent the political and administrative relationships that stand behind these exchanges.](image)

The following sections explore the ostensible failure of this partnership, examining how the network connections made possible through partnership were put to work in the reproduction of varied and sometimes contradictory inequalities, and how politics and power were implicated in choices about who could access expertise, and – sometimes
more importantly – the exterior. Struggles over the social, economic and symbolic capital opened by these partnerships forced the closure of this formal relationship, but, interestingly, expertise and power continued to travel along the network pathways of exchange that were opened in the original partnership, though now diverted through the University itself, signaling the effects of the political fortunes of the CP Director. At the same time, “exchanges” began to travel with the former Research Director (later Senator), who accompanied Malagasy students to ESITPA and took a Post Doc there, signaling his mastery of the network.

**The Powers of Knowledge**

The relationships that ESITPA entered into were formalized with the *Campus Ambanivohitra* around two goals. The first, discussed in the previous chapter, was the creation of a rural observatory, or a monitoring system, for the region of Atsinanana. The second was the aforementioned exchange of six Malagasy students and two French students who would teach modules during the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s second year. The plan promised transformation – ostensibly giving Malagasy students the chance to access the transformative powers of knowledge and then bring them back to affect a similar transformation on rural farmers. At the same time, volunteer French agronomists would set to work transforming rural farmers into flexible agricultural experts. The Malagasy university students held the potential to become “world citizens,” the French agronomists already inhabited this status (Boli, Loya and Loftin 1999). These plans, however, did not quite follow the paths that were set out for them, and both sides of the exchange would be transformed in ways that ran counter to the stated goals of the program. At the same time, these relationships would usher in new
relations of labor and new international connections that carried their own, supplemental, value.

By 2009, the French agronomists had moved on, working with other decentralized cooperation projects in Toamasina. Together they reflected a theme of exchange that situated knowledge and epistemological power in western institutions and western experience. Madagascar, in this equation, could collect data but not analyze it, and knowledge would be put into the hands of a series of French trained statisticians and agronomists, who would control its analytic manipulation.

The one student who returned, and took the post of Technical Director in 2008, implicated these exchanges in local politics, drawing attention to the connections behind choices. Originally trained as a historian, he was pulled into environmental science by its superior funding and post-graduate prospects. While history and social sciences research went underfunded, students in environmental science could expect at least some support – preceding their likely incorporation into a development industry providing a comfortable – and comparatively stable – urban lifestyle.

The Necessity of Connection

The Campus Ambanivohitra’s Technical Director, who we will call Elijah, earned his place in France through his ability to navigate educational networks to political and economic advantage. It was through connection that he got his name on the roster of students sent to ESITPA, despite the fact that he had never worked with the Campus

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69 The first Technical Director left over a disagreement with the Director, and when on to work at an American-owned Bamboo flooring manufacturer, linking rural bamboo suppliers with the offices headquarters in Tamatave.

70 In 2008, he continued to harbor the desire for a Ph.D. in history, but at the age of forty his advisor told me that he was too old for anyone to support him.
Ambanivohitra. This section traces the importance of connection for the Malagasy students that attended ESITPA, and how these connections held the potential to feed benefits back to the Campus Ambanivohitra.

Elijah completed a master’s degree in Environmental Science with the support of the National Parks Association, Association Nationale pour la Gestion des Aires Protégées (ANGAP). Later, he would take a position as an accountant in one of the University of Thomasine’s administrative offices before being chosen to go to ESITPA under the auspices of the Campus Ambanivohitra in 2007. His story illustrates a political flexibility and network mastery that enabled him the opportunity to affect rebeginnings in status and self well before he went to the exterior. Yet his attempts to replicate these successes proved problematic in the exterior, where his attempts to master the networks of the ESITPA threatened the development networks carefully cultivated by the Campus Ambanivohitra.

During his early studies, Elijah aligned himself to a number of powerful interlocutors in the university administration. Befriending the Rector Elijah took a position in one of the Rector’s pet projects – a college radio station. The Rector made a name for himself as a partisan during the 2002 crisis that broke the island in two and threatened to throw the country into ethnic violence. Once the Rector had been replaced with the new University President, Elijah saw his opportunities obstructed. The University President’s inner circle rallied against Elijah—identifying him as the “the Rector’s” and implicating him in a political alliance that no longer had traction. With the

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71 The University’s administrative organization changed in 2002 from a Rectorat to a Presidency, a move that constituted a rebeginning of the system under Ravalomanana.
help of University professors just below the newly formed University Presidency, he was put forward as a candidate for the *Campus Ambanivohitra* in 2006.

He explained that the students who were chosen were sent because of their connections to Campus partners in Madagascar. Elijah described the circumstances surrounding their selection, beginning with the advantages partners had in naming students to be sent to ESITPA:

The *Campus Ambanivohitra* was the University, the Region, and the Chamber of Commerce. So, generally speaking, it’s two for the University of Tamatave, two from the Region, two from the *Chambre de Commerce*. You know? You understand? But the region took the 4 [places] to the detriment of the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce was angry from that day until now, because it should have had two students. You see - you understand it? The region, the Chamber of Commerce, the University - 2, 2, 2 - 6, that's it….

Elijah’s narrative exposes the ways institutional networks acted as circuits for the flow of political and economic advantage and how these flows could be manipulated in ways that threatened some linkages while strengthening or opening others.

Elijah signaled the further distribution of access to mobility and the powerful networks offered by the exchange program – and its more clientelistic and affinal facets:

So there were 6 of us. 2 that were chosen by the university - me, and the other was Benjamin, he was from Tulear. We were chosen by the Director [the then University President], we were a bit like his body guards [laughter]. And four were from families who… who knew someone in the Regional Government’s office at the time. But the person isn't there anymore. He’s at Dynatech now.\(^{72}\) He was the DDR [Director of Regional Development] for the Region of Atsinanana.

So he had chosen his family members to go to France - an opportunity you can't pass up. You have to do the... you know... send your family to

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\(^{72}\) Dynatech was the company that initiated the nickel and cobalt mine and refinery in the Region of Atsinanana. The company that currently runs it is Sherritt (see Chapter 3).
France. So the four were Alfred… Alfred and, Amanda, a woman, and Martin, and then - and then I've forgotten the name… because he's now married to a French woman… he did an internship there and married the daughter of his internship manager, Jean, it was Jean. He had a Malagasy girlfriend, but he abandoned her and married a Frenchwoman.

Overall, this narrative reflects the political contestations that emerged within the networked relations of the Campus partnerships – but also echo narratives that travel – counter-discourses and dangerous practices that threatened to expose and undermine the project's networked partnerships.

That the opportunity to go the exterior was political - that one did not get the chance to go without having already served the political interests of the President of the University, or without being connected – was a common complaint among graduate students who struggled to finish their studies at the University of Toamasina. They suggested that those who made it to the exterior were those who willingly informed on the political activities of numerous factions on campus. It is true that the university campus was regularly a site for political conflict, with students staging protests alternately against the administration – the result of a weak state – and rumors of impending violence and real – though mainly minor – skirmishes between student groups. Student protests can be interpreted as deconstructions of the state that have significance beyond their stated purposes (be they tuition, stipends, etc.; Cruise O'Brien

73 While the economic and political reasoning behind this need not be explained, it is worth mentioning that the son of one of the highest ranking professors at the University of Tamatave made more in a month than his father working part-time at a supermarket in France.

74 This relationship is an inverse of the norm of Malagasy women in Madagascar seeking out vazaha men who become lovers and sometimes husbands. While these relations are key in the circulation of the material and cultural resources (Cole 2010; see also the case of Brazil in Goldstein 2003), they are structured by gender and socio-economic status. While often impoverished Malagasy women seek out relationships with vazaha, young rural men struggle to seek out similar relations. On the other hand, Malagasy men who are successful in establishing relationships with vazaha women are most often from the highest echelons of the elite Malagasy social status.
The rumors of exterior trips as returns on “information,” whether true or not, were bolstered by the fact that many students sent to the exterior did not return. More importantly, these rumors acted to “dialogically engag[e] official narratives and explor[e] other epistemological and political possibilities provide sites for exploring strategies for survival” (Briggs 2004: 182; Kroeger 2003). In an arena where the exterior holds material and political benefits, as well as symbolic and cultural ones (see Cole 2010), the ability to form connections and turn those connections into benefits had important effects on the legitimacy of the University administration, and by extension, the state. At the same time, and as the circulation of these rumors attest, these trips could act as potent examples of the corruption and favoritism of the administration, and thus the state.

In our interviews, Elijah interspersed stories of the allure of France with anecdotes of jealousy and racism. Like most Malagasy, he knew the opportunity was once in a lifetime. The allure of the exterior is, of course, very real. At roughly .2% GDP (UNDP 2007), remittances do not seem like a lot but they touch many people through a number of social networks and emerge as part of the fabric of urban and rural lifestyles. Stories of connection circulated, calling attention to the value of the exterior in creating lives at home as well as the ironies that attend the global economy. It is not uncommon to encounter cattle sacrifices funded from the exterior (see Cole 2010); be pointed out the newly built homes of people living abroad, often performing labor below their status but earning well beyond what they might in their field in Madagascar and exposing one of the many ironies that attend the heterogeneous connections of globalization.
There were approximately 150,000 Malagasy living in the exterior in 2006 (Ratha and Xu 2007). In 2008, the World Bank reported that 36 percent of college-educated Malagasy were emigrating out of the country (Ratha and Xu 2008: 42). In 2005, college educated Malagasy made up 9.1% of all unemployed Malagasy, much better odds than individuals with only primary (~44% of the total unemployment), or secondary (~24%) education (World Bank 2011). In part then, partnership was facilitating the much theorized phenomenon of “brain drain” – a factor that then feeds back into the Malagasy community, spurring the creation of further political networks as well as rationalizing the trajectories of further relations.

In 2006, at the same time that the Campus Ambanivohitra was formalizing relations with ESITPA, the project submitted a proposal to the region for the renovation of the Campus Site of Niarovana-Caroline. The proposal relied on a number of resources that only the region of Atsinanana could provide, specifically the construction of work on building roads, building working toilets, new kitchens, new dormitories, and new administrative offices on FOFIFA’s sprawling site. The choice of this site was knotted together with the regional administration in Atsinanana, and the geographical positioning of the Campus which informants suggested were closely tied with affinal linkages to the village. Niarovana-Caroline, I was told, was chosen specifically because it was the Chef de Région’s region of origin, and could thus constitute a way to introduce money into the local economy by providing jobs to people working on the project. The plan lent credence to the assurances the project made to the Niarovana-Caroline Mayor as the project moved to gain land usage rights – a situation complicated by a reassertion of rights by resident farmers in 2008.
Partnerships offer a new twist on understandings of the intellectual exodus of the global south, linking it to the formal and informal networks of development that precede and facilitate mobility and its role in local political processes. Put another way, the Malagasy diaspora is built, in part, from processes and efforts to build and sustain powerful networks of development. This is in line with – if a slight inversion of – contemporary understandings of diaspora, and their continuing role in development at home (Mohan 2008; Mohan and Zack-Williams 2002).

As a strategy, these relations were carefully tended. This was made clear to me in 2005, when the then Campus Ambanivohitra Research Director confided his troubles with another university exchange in which several French students from the University of Rouen had skipped the country prematurely. The situation created a flurry of activity and concern over the potential of a break in the partnership and made starkly clear where the power was. In France, Elijah’s choices threatened the ESITPA partnership in ways that gesture to the slippery realities of cooperation and network relations.

Navigating French Networks of Exchange

Success in the ESITPA exchange program meant following the rules and laying low. Over the course of four months of study that paralleled the pedagogical organization of the Campus Ambanivohitra (theoretical instruction followed by practical application), students spent time in classes at the ESITPA’s Val-de-Reuil campus before being pushed into the organization’s larger networks of French agriculturalists for applied learning. Elijah’s involvement in these networks proved problematic as he attempted to navigate them on his own, strategizing for better deals and better situations in a way that bristled the Campus Ambanivohitra and the ESITPA. In a context of increasingly anxiety-ridden politics leading up to the 2007 French presidential
election, his actions threatened to break the partnership altogether by exposing an intentionality that ran counter to the stated goals of exchange.

For Elijah, ESITPA’s theoretical instruction was little different from his education in Madagascar. What was striking, for him, was the way that the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s populist rhetoric cast the students as uninformed (and disconnected) and obscured their previous experiences:

They didn't like to speak with us - "they're from the bush." Because even the name of the project that brought us there was "*Campus Ambanivohitra.*" You see that - it hangs in your memory.

So – they thought we were "peasants." "Those are the peasants." And when you ask the professor a question that’s very pertinent, they don't like that. The students - you know the French - when they see someone who is black like this – it's - They come from the bush. They're racist.

The education was, according to Elijah, little different from the education offered in Madagascar, and the material was something he was familiar with from his earlier studies in Madagascar:

And… because I'm a historian. I know the history of agriculture, the history… we did everything concerning international commerce, and bit of rural communication, a bit of land improvement. In fact, it was a bit of everything connected to agriculture. But all the agronomy, we did that since the first year. 1st year, doing agronomy. And in fifth year, because we were in fifth year, in the fifth year to have the engineering degree we started, we did design - issues of international commerce, and of international agriculture - What's risk? Why can't poor countries export their products? - There are customs barriers; there are all the custom tariffs. We studied that. But it wasn't anything new for me, because we had studied that in history. It wasn't new - but they thought that it was new for us, and that we couldn't understand it.

The *Campus Ambanivohitra*, in Madagascar a term that called up images of farmers sharing traditional knowledge in rural settings, was packaged nicely for foreign and

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75 This occurred during the advancement of far right anti-immigrant candidate Jean Marie le Pen to the second round of the French presidential elections.
'development' consumption. It called upon roughly the same imagery in France and affected an erasure of the social and political status that University of Toamasina students had gained through their advanced degrees and socio-economic positions in Madagascar. The potential trade off was worth it – time in the exterior could translate into high status and (relatively) high salaries.

According to Elijah, the students who were chosen to go to ESITPA were never meant to return. He explained, excluding himself from the group:

They told me that it was a way to leave to go to France. So – from the beginning, they were going to stay there. Except me only… Here people have told me their parents had said that “If you come back, you're...” They didn't want them to come back here, because it’s a way for the family to have family in France to help them after… no one called us back, because it wasn't that. Yeah – “Come back. Come back.” - There wasn't any of that. But, I came back anyway.

In this view, students would be tasked with sending remittances back to Madagascar that could support the extended family, and would likely spur diffuse forms of development – such as funding family businesses, political ambitions, etc. – and build up networks of support for themselves or their families. These remittances began well before students were released from their educational obligations, and Elijah told stories of how students organized and communicated wage labor opportunities during both the theoretical and practical components of their education.

Practical components at ESITPA fed into their organizational structure and their status as the only school run through the Assemblée Permanente des Chambres d'Agriculture (Permanent Assembly of Chambers of Agriculture, APCA), the French professional farmers organization. The ESITPA actively reinforced linkages with

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76 The APCA’s president, key in the agreements that dictated the research relations that preceded and followed student exchange, went on to take up the presidency of the FAO’s Executive Council in 2010.
professional farmers in France, both through the incorporation of 270 agricultural professionals as teachers, and the labor/knowledge exchange facilitated by the college’s practical curricula. This hybrid model of education meant that Malagasy studying through the exchange were immediately submerged in labor/knowledge networks – enabling them a relatively direct path to wage labor in Rouen.

During two months of study, students were expected to access the network via the contacts that the ESITPA opened for them through professional agricultural conferences and its own, smaller, organizational network of agricultural research and professional staff. Students would network and gain access to short-term internships at these professionals’ farms. This was where Elijah’s main problems at ESITPA originated.

Elijah located two possible internship managers at a conference in late 2006. His first choice did not respond to the call, and the ESITPA director Elijah worked with left a message before calling Elijah’s second choice. ESITPA established a contract with the second choice. After a few days, Elijah received a call from his first choice, saying he was ready to pick him up. Elijah, eager to please, agreed and left the ESITPA with the farmer and his wife in their car. His fellow students observed this.

According to Elijah, the other Malagasy ESITPA students were already angry at him. Earlier that year he met a fellow Malagasy in a bar and the two became fast

friends. Eventually, Elijah’s new friend offered him a car as he and his family upgraded. This sign of mobility\textsuperscript{77} (Trumper and Tomis 2009) became an initial impetus for jealousy:

That’s getting to the [heart of the] misunderstandings between us… and the jealousy. I had a car… I started to be disliked as soon as I had a car… And… the students said to the school, "Elijah is no longer thinking about the internship. You see he’s already got a car. He wants to stay here. He’s not..."

The car spoke to a potential mobility that could breed stasis – an object that by enabling the physical movement of Elijah’s body, could facilitate its labor, and thus its settlement. Elijah’s potential “automobility” (Conley and McLaren 2009; Urry 2004; Edensor 2004) sparked reports to ESITPA administrators that he did not plan on leaving France.

Elijah’s decision to leave when his (un-contracted) internship manager showed up at the Campus to pick him up sparked more controversy – again surrounding the projected mobility of the car:

He picked me up in a nice car - the other Malagasy, they were still there, they didn't move. They saw me like that - that I had left with a man with a nice car. I started to do my internship. They hadn't started yet, they were staying there. And on Monday, you see, it was Thursday. Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday...

So on Monday, the director asked the students, "Where is Elijah?" "We haven't seen him. [And they answered] We saw him leave with a man and a woman in a nice car."

The situation created issues with the contract Elijah had already signed with the second farmer. Elijah asserted that this was a status issue, telling me that the second farmer was an important contributor to the ESITPA and an active member of French agricultural associations.

\textsuperscript{77} The car remained unused for the duration of his stay because he lacked insurance and so he left it in the ESITPA parking lot, a situation that points to the important, and almost magical powers of papers and contracts (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006; Meyer and Pels 2003).
The ESITPA administration threatened Elijah with the loss of his validation if he did not return immediately. He explained this to his internship manager (the first farmer), and the two went to meet with the internship director at the ESITPA. The farmer, in a bid to illustrate his investment in this Malagasy student, mentioned a desire to hire him, setting off anger at the college:

“You don’t have the right to hire a Malagasy who’s working as an intern. He has to return to Madagascar.”

They didn’t like that word. "No - we don’t accept that. Because, he’s going to go back to be a trainer for a project, but he shouldn't stay here.” That was it - the word "hire," they didn’t like the word ‘hire.’

Framed in terms of racism and jealousy, Elijah’s narrative reveals a desire for right practices, an investment in contracts and controls that formalized the network and kept its directionality, at least on the surface, in check (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006, 2009).

ESITPA leaders accepted the idea of negotiating with the farmer to draw up a second contract (allowing Elijah to return to the same farm) but Elijah intervened – offering, and then insisting, that he honor the initial contract (with the second farmer). The move represented – in Elijah’s telling – a will to acquiesce to the power of the institutional nodes in the Campus Ambanivohitra’s network. From another vantage, it was a second or third effort to stake a claim on and some agency within ESITPAs agricultural network that doubly threatened highly formalized relations.

Elijah’s next internship was sullied by this experience. He accused ESITPA officials of sabotaging him by telling stories that would eventually disintegrate this internship, and he thought, encouraged his second internship manager to work him like “a slave.” After some weeks with the second manager, Elijah was called back to the
ESITPA to deal with a second controversy that called into question the directionality of the financial flows the Campus network set loose.

Stories circulating about the partnership suggested that the students that went to the ESITPA were drawn into convoluted financial flows that kept money tied up, at best, and embezzled, at worst. Money for the students’ airfare and stipend, a part of the exchange agreement that would be paid by the Region of Haute-Normandie, was said to have vanished into Madagascar, being held somewhere at the University of Toamasina. In response, students in France began borrowing money from an ESITPA administrator – incurring a not insubstantial debt that pushed students to seek further employment outside of the stipend they received with their training.

In this conceptualization of the Campus - which was itself a sign of friction over the capture of social, political and economic capital - the disappearance of exchange funds was related to the disappearance of students at the end of the project. In essence, the money sent to the University for the project – some 8,000-10,000 € - was suspected to have been embezzled or diverted into the University administration. This was suspected to be the norm, with University and state politics demanding the provision of gifts for political support, and possibilities of continued linkages and the desires of silence making escape into the exterior all the more important. The program was described as a one way trip.

The disappearance of funds forced Elijah into credit and he borrowed money from ESITPA staff to stay afloat at the beginning of his trip. After he had gone to the second internship, he was called back to ESITPA to return the loan. The trip kept Elijah away from his internship for several hours too long, and upon his return he was
unceremoniously kicked out and sent back to ESITPA. In Elijah’s understanding, these events were related to stories that the program directors circulated about him, which themselves tacked back to the situation with the car. He relayed his conversation with his internship manager:

"I know your story, eh. I know what's happened. You - you're not serious, people have told me that you're not serious. You always leave, you're not serious."

"Excuse me, sir..."

"I don't want your explanation. You're - I heard that you're someone who lies."

And I couldn't get anything to eat... I didn't sleep at all that night, I wanted to cry. But I was flushed, because I was so shocked, because I had done nothing - I didn't do anything.

He returned to ESITPA where he was threatened with expulsion:

"You left the first internship. You didn't go back. Now, you left another one - the second internship. You have to return to Madagascar right now. Tomorrow morning. You must go back. I'm going to do everything I can so that you return to Madagascar. I'm going to use all of my power at the school. Tomorrow, I'm going to the [ESITPA] Director. You must return to Madagascar, because you're someone who's not serious."

Making the exchange more memorable for Elijah, this administrator began to catalogue a list of misdeeds from Madagascar – misdeeds that could have, according to Elijah, only been traced to “political people” in Tamatave. Here, a second set of rumors emerged alongside questions of disappearing money. The circulation of this talk was meant, it seems, to set the network aright, to police it in a way that protected it from fissures Elijah – sometimes unwittingly, sometimes intentionally – created in his efforts to harness it. If the ESITPA and the internship manager succeeded in jettisoning Elijah as a problem student, the partnership could emerge renewed and legitimized.
Elijah tried to rally support from the *Campus Ambanivohitra* Research Director to no avail. Working on a Post-Doc at ESITPA at the time, the Research Director would back whatever decision ESITPA came to. Elijah developed a ruse – a “devious” strategy to continue that relied on personal relationships he had built through the ESITPA network. He called two people – a friend and another farmer he had met at the agricultural conference ahead of the internships. He had the farmer agree to let him complete his (third) internship at his farm. He had the friend agree to intercept a phone call from his university just in case stories of his flighty and unserious nature continued. He then went and spoke to the superior of the administrator who threatened him with expulsion, insisting that he would finish the internship:

"You have an internship?"

"I have an internship."

"No, no you don't have an internship."

"I have an internship."

"You're going to return [to Madagascar]."

"No, I have an internship."

"You're going to return."

"No - I don't want to return. Excuse me, but I don't want to return. I want to finish everything, because I don't want to be hurt by this decision.” When I returned I wouldn't have... Madagascar at 11,000 km from France. I don't want to return, not without having something in hand."

Determined not to lose the benefits of time in the exterior, he gave the administrator the number of his friend, having her confirm the details of the internship. The plan worked, and he explained this saying, “So, when it's French/French, it's ok. If it was me and a French [person], it's not ok.” A new contract was made and Elijah busied himself building fences and taking care of chickens at yet another farm. The moment at which
Elijah turned, in his description, “devious” offers insight into the informal practices that are deployed and reproduced within the system as individuals struggle to draw on the resources set loose by the development’s networks. These practices are not new or disconnected, but old and intimately connected to the ways that network connections work.

Elijah finished this third internship, and – coupling it with odd jobs – saved enough to buy a ticket back to Madagascar. Back home he found himself out of work and in debt. He was not immediately brought into the Campus Ambanivohitra. Rather, he was re-cast as a trouble-maker and cut off from the Director of the Project: “And what did [the Director] say? Here… he said… ‘the Campus Ambanivohitra had problems with ESITPA because of the problems with Elijah.’ ‘No - it's not true.’” It was several months later before he would get a job at the Campus Ambanivohitra, the position at the time held by the Director’s nephew, an environmental sciences major from Tana. Instead, he came home to a layoff notice in October 2007 – he had stopped receiving pay in August. He was hired by the Campus Ambanivohitra in February and was by then in so much debt – debt directly drawn from his account - that he would not touch a paycheck until July of 2009.

Elijah kept himself afloat the same way he had sent himself home from France – searching out multiple methods to supplement his income – many related to networks he came in contact with through the Campus Ambanivohitra and through the exploding Tamatavien economy, linked to the mine and refinery project being implemented there. The Campus Ambanivohitra, like other developmentalist endeavors, was precarious. World Bank and EU projects offered short term expert employment, while at the
Campus Ambanivohitra finances were doubly blocked in France and then in Madagascar. Elijah, like the expert teaching staff at the Campus Ambanivohitra, sought to maximize the value of his expertise by finding short term, expert, piece work on the side.

While Elijah returned to Madagascar, other students remained behind. Later, they would make up, in part, the continuing network for the Project’s former Research Director, who returned to France after the coup. Here he found a research position among the partnerships he had cultivated as a Malagasy development expert and politician.

Elijah’s narrative located his troubles in a number of arenas, but the scenarios he describes are at base about conflicts over the network. The institutional and personal networks opened by the nested and knotted partnerships of the Campus Ambanivohitra became the site of “lumpy” flows of social and economic capital along network linkages (Cooper and Packard 1997). These flows were caught up in the relative importance of different relationships, accepted directionalities and mobile objects and Elijah was in many ways in trouble for his attempts to shift the trajectories of these flows. He attempted to craft his own partnerships, courting preference with different parties, and in the process violated the regulatory systems that these relations rely on – the contracts that formalized legal controls that allow certain informal relations, but not all (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009). Eventually, Elijah was brought back into compliance by threats to take away his access to a degree – a piece of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1996) that is key to development networks.
In addition to the regulatory systems that patrolled formal partnership and were embodied by ESITPA and Campus Ambanivohitra administrators were the judgments of Elijah’s cohort, admonishing the visible networks he was creating. In a sense, his open sociality – his assertion of power in the social field – threatened to bring attention to his fellow students, on the one hand, and disrupt the partnership, on the other.

Elijah’s return coincided with the reigning in and restructuring of the Campus Ambanivohitra’s relationships with ESITPA. ESITPA would shift its partnership up to the University of Toamasina, a move that accompanied the Campus Ambanivohitra Director’s loss of the University Presidency. Thus French exchange students would come under the aegis of the university, with no direct funding relationship to the Campus Ambanivohitra. The two agronomists it sent to work with the Campus Ambanivohitra would take jobs at other internationally funded development organizations.

With the relocation of the center of ESITPA’s partnership to the University of Toamasina, the ESITPA continued to send students to Madagascar, but not to receive them. In the process, the contours of epistemological power – of who could access it and who could not – were redrawn along lines that privileged the containment of (agricultural) epistemological power in French bodies and French bodies of knowledge. These were characterized by the creation of knowledge and credentials for a series of French students in Madagascar. The knowledge these students generate are proudly displayed on the region of Haute-Normandie’s website.

At the same time, the component of the partnership concerned with the creation of Malagasy experts at ESITPA disappeared, and exchange functions turned to “good
governance” and leadership, with the French region hosting Malagasy bureaucrats from the regional government and the Bureau Régionale de La Présidence. This shift has meant a more direct and overt linkage between Haute-Normandie’s “decentralized cooperation” and centralized Malagasy state power, particularly given the linkage between regional bureaucrats and the office of the Presidency. These exchanges travelled with the Research Director, and remained a part of his purview after he began his political ascension. Eventually, the relations he mastered and wove into his career would offer him shelter – a job at the University of Rouen after the coup.

The ESITPA partnership was implicated in a rebeginning that reverberated into other nodes of the network. The *Campus Ambanivohitra* reoriented project goals to largely abandon plans to create young development expertise. ESITPA initiated a higher level partnership with the University administration, adding new dimensions of power (in the administration of the new University President). Meanwhile, the Research Director siphons the benefits of exchange upward into the state itself. The net effect of these transformations in partnership was a tightening state connection in two ways. First, in relocating the expert functions of the partnership into arenas of good governance and leadership, the new exchange electrified state linkages directly, rather than travelling, as they did with the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, through affinal linkages to the state. Second, and at an international level that belies the multiplicity of governance and affinal structures packed into these partnerships, government to government relations of audit and control were given new nodes of interaction between France and Madagascar.
Part 2: Relocating the Campus Ambanivohitra

Like many other state-related development programs, the Campus, was relegated to using land already held by the state, particularly the real estate of ORSTOM’s Malagasy reincarnation, FOFIFA. The decision to locate in one area or another, however, was not simply linked to state networks of land ownership. Rather, the Campus was often pushed off and onto land by shifts in political power and forms of resistance that occurred both at the regional and the local level. Between its conception in 2004 and the end of my research in 2009, the Campus had shifted its location some four times. This section outlines these relocations and examines how struggles over social, economic and political resources forced geographical rebeginnings and opened up new spaces for thinking and legitimizing the project’s future. It illustrates how these types of struggles reflect, reproduce, and reorient inequalities between and among urban and rural, elite and non-elite, and center and periphery.

Laboring In and On the Network

The Campus Ambanivohitra pilot was originally located in Analanjirofo, in the village of Maromitety, some 140 Km north Tamatave. According to the Technical Director who worked with the Campus at the time, the site was chosen because of a large swath of available and “un-exploited” rizicultural land. In this way, it followed the tactics of colonial and state policies that redefined and laid claim to land. These policies, seen elsewhere and seemingly continuous, laid bare the powers of the state and the politics of land ownership (Mitchell 1988, 2002; Li 1999; 2007). Land usage was redirected. Participant farmers were put into the position of laboring bodies in service to the market and thereby, the desires of their urban and metropolitan
counterparts. The failures and resistances that emerged over land reflected struggles over this arrangement within the network of partnerships that the project built up.

FOFIFA was a partner in this endeavor, but relative to later sites, the region had little colonial presence. At Maromitety, and at the project’s second site in Ivoloina, project documents described the situation:

Initiating the first practicum: 38 farmers were chosen from 81 volunteers from the village associations of Analanjirofo. They served as a locally financed pathway test. The training began on two sites separated by 120 km (Maromitety, Ivoloina).

At Maromitety (11 July to 16 August). The principal activity was the practice of short-season riziculture, SRI-SRA [système de riziculture intensive, intensive rizicultural system, système de riziculture amélioré, improved rizicultural system], on the large field of FOFIFA (Malagasy CIRAD) and this, under the backing of the technicians of the Ministry of Agriculture.

The students were housed in the guest rooms of the village, they were motivated, but the rice produced, called vary tambatra (communal rice) was given after seed repayment, toward the second week of the month of December 2004 [sic]. The harvest was gathered in the presence of Monsieur the Minister of National Education and Scientific research. [Internal Document 2006: 7]

The visibility of this first harvest, with the presence of the Minister,\(^{78}\) is worth noting. In reality, the harvest would become a main problem for the Campus Ambanivohitra and its students. The above description, which was constructed for the consumption of (French) foreign donors and thus a marketing tool for the Campus, obscures the realities of this pathway test as they were experienced by staff and farmers.

The Technical Director, responsible for setting the curriculum and ensuring it functioned smoothly, lived at the site of the Campus during its periods at Maromitety and Ivoloina. In his description – but not in project documents – of the 38 farmers

\(^{78}\) This presence was key in the representation of the Campus to the state, international organizations, and other development agents, reminding us of the importance of legitimacy work across the horizontal as well as vertical nodes of the network.
accepted in the training and mentioned in project documents, only 27 matriculated. This first group was chosen, primarily, from among the members of Madagascar’s principal protestant church, the *Fiangonan’i Jesoa Kristy eto Madagasikara* (Church of Jesus Christ of Madagascar, FJKM), which acted as a powerful *shadow presence* in this first networked iteration of the campus. The first group came from as far away as Ivoloina, in the region of Atsinanana, though most others came from Maromitety and the northern part of the then autonomous province of Toamasina. The *Campus Ambanivohitra* negotiated land usage with the mayor of the local *commune rurale* and infrastructural support with the *École Primaire Publique* (Public Primary School, EPP), using their buildings to instruct the *Campus Ambanivohitra* students. Funds from Haute-Normandie were used to prepare the rizicultural fields and repair the canal that served them, while staff salaries were paid by the University of Toamasina.

Utilizing the FJKM – the central association of the protestant churches on the island, and the church of President Marc Ravalomanana – tapped the extant networks of the Director of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, and signaled the layering of religious, developmental, and government structures. The Director of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* played a leadership role in the FJKM. In assigning the religious association the responsibility of selecting students for the Campus, he was aligning it to his own social network, but also to the power and prestige of a state that very explicitly linked religion and governance. The adhesion to these points in the network could be dangerous, but could also serve as the point of access to another powerful network.  

79 Risk is an important issue here as the profitability of the project is contingent on a number of uncertain allegiances and funding, and learning how to hedge – to build multiple allegiances at once – was an important characteristic of development brokers and administrators (an incorporation of risk that echoes that of Ghanaian farmers highlighted by Chalfin 2000). This stands as an uncomfortable parallel to the
Two masters’ students from the University of Toamasina worked with the Technical Director at the Maromitety École Primaire Publique (EPP). Together they managed the Campus Ambanivohitra, going back and forth to Tamatave during 3 months of training. One of these assistants later went on to study at ESITPA and disappeared into France. Their location was adjacent to the rizicultural fields where they would practice SRI, a system created by a French Jesuit Priest / Agronomy Professor / Farmer in Madagascar and now reportedly used in some 50 countries (Hubert 2006, SRI-Rice 2011).

The initial campus was characterized by lack. The Technical Director and students’ experiences speak to the reality that accompanies development, especially in areas where infrastructure is low. The project pilot was close to disastrous:

So, there was almost nothing. There was nothing but a round table. At the university, the project furnished the mattresses for the students, and for us. We were all together in the large classroom. So, there wasn’t any clean water… it was really problematic. We all fell ill because of that. There wasn’t even a toilet, there wasn’t… well there wasn’t electricity…. And there also wasn’t any canteen…. There were some walls and a door, that’s it.

The program’s destitution led to a situation that, coupled with the return of the classes, threatened not only farmers’ ability to labor, but also the project’s ability to continue in the community. The situation created problems for the local director of the EPP who acted as a mediator of the network connection to the state, responsible for their usage of the building:

Luckily, when we were there it was in the month of – it was vacation, so the EPP was free, but we had to leave… at the beginning of September, because it was the beginning of the new semester. So that caused a bit of a problem, because we did a bit of destruction at… the EPP. So, it wasn’t

Lucrative potentials of risk that the project sought to instill in the market sensibilities of participant farmers, and the very material risks that they exposed them to through the training (see below).
very good for the Director of the EPP, there was a bit of uncleanliness as well... So we were very disappointed. For us, to manage some 30 people, without a bathroom, without clean water, it’s very very difficult. So – it’s… we tried. So that was the problem.

The reliance on the buildings of the EPP, and the destruction that occurred there, was one arena in which relations with the local community began to deteriorate.

Another problem, which would recur at every site the Campus entered, was related to disputes over agricultural land. At Maromitety, this was evidenced in tensions over student origins:

The other problem, which was a little serious as well, was that there weren’t but two, at the beginning, two farmers coming from Maromitety.... Among the 27, so 30, the two also, they couldn’t finish the training. We don’t know, until now, I don’t know why...

This theme of land being given away – only faint here - was recurrent in the communities where the Campus located where concerns over outsiders coming in drew the ire of resident farmers. It was of particular concern because these communities’ land usage rights were already circumscribed by the state through FOFIFA. In Madagascar, where land is the central link to the past (see Bloch 1971; Sharp 2002; Cole 2001) as well as an important agricultural resource, the entry of the Campus and the state into land usage rights was particularly pointed. Disputes over land would become a main impetus behind the Campus multiple relocations, though these issues only rarely appeared in official project narratives. Rather, project narratives re-cast mobility as strength and banked on mobility as a support to the replicative powers of agricultural training and market rationality. At the same time, these movements generated additional strains on the project’s technicians, administrators, and participant farmers.
For participant farmers, it was the loss of labor through participation that proved most problematic:

We had kept the farmers for two months, or three months. We started the month of July, August, - It was 2 and a half months or something like that…. So – they were obliged to stay with us, even while they were either the father of the family or the mother of the family, so they missed the agricultural season at their home…. Even though with us, it was training with a small parcel, it wasn’t enough to give the harvest to them. So that, that poses a lot of problems with the student farmers – because they’re responsible in their families, their obliged to stay, following the coursework….

The issue of who claimed ownership of the harvests produced by the practices of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* recurrrd at every location it chose. In this initial incarnation of the Campus, harvests would be put back into the project’s administration:

Ordinarily, in the contract –it’s that the things that are cultivated, that will be planned for the 2nd practicum at Ivoloina, in part – for the Ivoloina canteen, in part. So we said, to share, to distribute with them [the farmers at the 2nd Practicum]. But seeing that the harvest wasn’t received – its wasn’t good, and moreover it wasn’t but a small bit of land – there were lots of problems, there wasn’t all the material that’s necessary for the cultivation – because we did the SRI, the *system de riziculture intensif*, so we didn’t have all the material, its wasn’t well irrigated, we didn’t do a good job with the weeding, taking out the weeds, so… it was mediocre. So there weren’t results, there wasn’t any stock.

That – we had a lot of problems with the farmers because – they asked all the time, “what do we have to take back to,” to their families. So, while the general idea at the beginning was to struggle against this poverty, it was the contrary. We really had a moral debt to the farmers. And we had convinced them, we did the contracts…

At Maromitety, then, the lack of resources created serious problems for farmers, who had lost time and labor at their home farms and now had no harvest to return to or with.

They had suffered a net loss through their participation in the project:

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80 Note again the appearance of contracts as mediating – if sometimes ineffective – forces in the resource flows of the network.
It was them that paid for their own food, who brought their rice, bought their bouillon and all that, so it’s… it’s really expensive. But, seeing that it’s people who must work today in order to have food tomorrow… But then they were stuck with us, and their families. It’s just, it’s really sad.

The accusations, by staff and participants alike, that the project generated rather than alleviated poverty would, like land and labor issues, follow the Campus through its various sites, calling into question the directionality of the financial flows the Campus freed and illustrating quite poignantly the struggles generated by the network form.

The situation of funds at the Campus, tight enough to force students further into debt, related to another issue of money, similar to the disappearing funds from the Malagasy students’ fares to the University of ESITPA:

… I never stopped asking the President of the University at the time, who was the founder [of the Campus Ambanivohitra] – and, now it’s the Senator of the Region of Atsinanana,… he was the intermediary with the University of Haute-Normandie, but – I don’t know if it was true, but at the time people told me that they hadn’t yet released the money coming from Haute-Normandie. “It’s necessary to start the training, its necessary [despite the lack of funds]. So, now – that was posing a lot of problems, the result after – when we were doing the 2nd Practicum, there was around 10%, towards 20%, who no longer wanted to go to Ivoloina. So we went down to 18, there were only the 18 out of the 27 who came to Ivoloina.

This second agricultural site was at Ivoloina, the large river that flows into the Indian Ocean some 7 kilometers north of the city of Tamatave. Here, on land once again owned by FOFIFA - and adjacent to a national park administered by the Ministry of Water and Forests and Madagascar Fauna Group - the Campus guided students through a second level of study. Unlike Maromitety, where there was little infrastructure available for student use, either as dormitories or as classrooms, the partnership with FOFIFA allowed the Campus access to a number of largely abandoned buildings that had played earlier roles in the island’s development.
Re-inhabiting Historical Spaces

The *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s existence was crafted atop the history of the territories it inhabited and the program drew power from this association. In reanimating parts of these seemingly dead spaces of development, the project reasserted state presence, even while its administration was crafted as simultaneously state and non-state – an expert industry in the service of rationalized self-management instead of technologies of power. This is an important distinction and speaks to the ways that techno-politics– or the power-laden nature of an atomized technical expertise (Mitchell 2002) – are now being papered over with new sorts of individualized managerialism (Shore and Wright 1999) that require more flexible forms of expertise.

North of Tamatave, the Ivoloina River crosses the highway marking a developmental intersection flanked by four different projects. To the south, was the *École d’Application des Sciences et Techniques Agricole* (Applied School for Agricultural Science and Technology, EASTA), a project similar to the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, but more established and with more resources. To the west was the Ivoloina Zoological Park, a protected area belonging to the Ministry of Forests and Administered by the US-based Madagascar Fauna Group, which offered training in sustainable agriculture. To the north was the site of the *Campus Fanantenana / Village MAP*, initiated by the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s former Research Director. And, of course, the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, located in some old buildings on the road to the park.

Ivoloina is marked by a number of other industries, closely linked to the construction and real estate boom that the Sherritt project created and the areas direct access to good roads. At the river, sand was collected and loaded on trucks bound for
Tamatave. On the way to the *Parc Ivoloina*, a village was dedicated to breaking up rocks for the quarry that sat adjacent to the protected forest. Elsewhere in the villages surrounding the river, entrepreneurs ran nurseries or poured concrete blocks destined for the city.

These contemporary ties to economic development (productive and extractive) were layered on the remnants of past developments. During and after the colonial period, the Ivoloina site was a main arena for the creation of knowledge of and about tropical agriculture. The larger site, including the northern side of the river, had been a research station for colonial science specializing in fruit trees. Before that, the area was purportedly used as a research and training center for colonial farmers. The area can be characterized as a temporally and geographically thick site of development.

Figure 4-2. Aerial map of *Campus Ambanivohitra* site at Ivoloina.
Staff descriptions of the site and the curriculum it hosted differ widely from the official project documents that repackaged these experiences for foreign donors in 2006:

At Ivoloina (16 August to 12 September). Theory and Practical Courses under the modules: pisciculture, micro-project conception and management, water problems, environment, information technology, French, apiculture [raising bees for honey], leadership. [Internal Document 2006: 7-8]

According to the Campus Ambanivohitra’s former Technical Director, the primary building used during the Campus initial location at Ivoloina was the one that formerly housed the main FOFIFA office. Beyond this small village, where some 4 or 5 families were living, was the Ivoloina Park.81

The former technical director described the continuing problems of the Campus Ambanivohitra at the site:

So it was still the same thing at Ivoloina. Except that we paid the – we gave the bouillon, something like that. But it wasn’t a lot….

It [micro-finance, market farming, and animal husbandry] was in the plan. It was really in the plan. If we read the plan for the Campus Ambanivohitra, it’s really impeccable. But in practice, there were many modules that we went to in order to do the training. But I can tell you that it was… it was above all the SRI, we did a little pisciculture, just a little training, the apiculture for the bees, but it was theory, and… Many modules but it wasn’t well done. Even the teachers weren’t well defined. So there were all sorts of problems…

We finished a lot of farming modules, but not the – 50% wasn’t done. It was a problem of teachers; we didn’t have a lot of teachers… So the farmers, the students, weren’t motivated, weren’t convinced. There were all sorts of disputes every day. I had a hard time managing all that. I mediated between the [student farmers and the administration]. So – always some confrontation with the University, which managed the Campus at the time. We tried even so to calm the students….

81 Parc Ivoloina runs its own training program, offering many of the same modules as the Campus Ambanivohitra and running into, according to its director, many of the same problems of non-compliance that the Campus was concerned with.
The Technical Director’s statements reference the changing relations between the University and the Campus Ambanivohitra after the Director’s loss of the University Presidency in 2006.

Like the Maromitety site, the project’s difficulties at Ivoloina continued to be closely linked to the politics of land tenure:

Ivoloina – we planted nothing, we just had theoretical training – we planted nothing. There was the land of FOFIFA, the rice fields of FOFIFA, but the rice fields were already occupied by the local farmers. That was the big problem at Ivoloina. The greater part of the land at Ivoloina is still a part of FOFIFA for the Minister of Agriculture. But it was the terrain that was already occupied by local peasants for 30 years.

Now – the Director of FOFIFA gave us – “Here’s the land, you can use it” even though there were already people using it. So – it’s not legal but we never had the possibility to have even a portion of the land at Ivoloina to do practical training. It wasn’t possible... So we planted nothing at Ivoloina.

Land relations, mediated by the government’s rural research arm, FOFIFA, again gestured to struggles over resources within the network.

By 2008, the Campus Ambanivohitra had relocated to the southern commune rurale of Niarovana-Caroline. This site, on the countries east coastal highway, was its third home and followed, in part, from the 2006 dissolution of the provincial system that broke the Province of Toamasina into three regions: Mangoro Alaotra, Analanjirofo and Atsinanana. This political and administrative change effectively restructured state-led development initiatives in the area, which were based, for practical reasons, in the provincial capital of Tamatave. With President Marc Ravalomanana’s policy of decentralization, rural development organizations were forced to reconstruct their efforts along these new administrative lines. In effect, this meant that they would move closer to their Tamatavien center and refocus their efforts to prioritize the region of Atsinanana. Moreover, the dissolution of the provinces shifted the governing structures, so that now
the Campus needed to deal squarely with the *Chef de Région*, who was appointed by the President, and the *Commune rurale* Mayors, elected directly, but overwhelmingly from the president’s TIM party.

Tamatave was an important site for the performance of legitimacy through development. It was the strongest regional locus of political opposition to Ravalomanana and a leading economic force in the country – home to the nation’s largest port and the Sherritt nickel and cobalt refinery. The break-up of the provinces also meant a breakup of the larger (coastal) political blocs that opposed the president – their diminution into smaller, more controllable units - and an increasing emphasis on public efforts to demonstrate the will to development in all its guises within the most problematic and profitable of these smaller units. These efforts could also easily be made to fit into international trends and desires for decentralization – but ran counter to the findings that decentralization weakens the state (Geshiere 2009). Rather, it appears that Malagasy decentralization offered the state a venue in which to perform development and good governance for international audiences, and in so doing opened new pathways of development at the same time that it reconnected state power.

The *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s relocation to Niarovana-Caroline coincided with two political movements. The first was the appointment of a new *Chef de Région* in Atsinanana, one whose *tanindrazana*, or ancestral homeland, was in Ilaka Est and who had already established a project of improving the infrastructure in the area. The second was the President of the University of Toamasina’s loss of the 2006 University election, and the subsequent diminution of University support. The movement of the Campus to Niarovana-Carolina was thus indicative of a mutual relationship wherein the Campus
would benefit from any infrastructural improvements that occurred and the region could better argue for the allocation of resources based on the presence of a rural development project in the area.82

Niarovana-Caroline was no stranger to development interventions. During the early 1900s it was a colonial coffee plantation implicated in pulling the local Malagasy farmers into wage labor on plantations owned and operated by French expatriates. Later, the colonial government would stake a claim on the land, a move that signaled their own legitimacy to expatriate plantation owners and French scientists who lobbied the government to create research institutes in the colonies (Petitjean and Waast 1996). This research was celebrated as knowledge-production with the potential to spur the success colonial agricultural endeavors, and culminated in the creation of the Institut Français du cafe, du cacao et autres plantes stimulantes (IFCC; see Figure 4-3 for a view of the ruins of IFCC that make up and sit adjacent to the Campus Ambanivohitra).

By the time Madagascar gained its independence in 1960, the Niarovana-Caroline IFCC was hailed as one of two top coffee research centers in Africa, the other being in Cote d’Ivoire. A policy of cooperation kept it running with French and Malagasy scientists and funds until the Malagasy state expelled the European expatriate population and annulled cooperation during the implementation of malgachisation and Didier Ratsiraka’s “socialist” state in the mid-seventies. At this point the land was transferred to FOFIFA, the National Center for Applied Research and Rural

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82 All of this, of course, closely tied to the exchange program that sent six students to Madagascar in the same year.
Development in Madagascar. Shortly thereafter the state’s interest and financial support receded, as one former IFCC employee put it, "like the thighs of an old woman."\textsuperscript{83}

Over the years, FOFIFA’s projects in the area diminished, and while there is one office still functioning (with monthly visits from the director), the most striking feature at the site are the remnants of the coffee plantation that once stood there. From time to time, the buildings of the \textit{Campus Ambanivohitra} were occupied, as other NGO’s, such as the Catholic Relief Service and USAID’s Landscape Development Initiatives have negotiated the usage of land and buildings in the area, refurbishing two for their use at

\textsuperscript{83} This waning interest coincided with the flood of coffee on the global market and the implementation of trade agreements that lowered the revenue available from coffee exports.
the turn of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century. By 2006, these programs had disappeared, and the buildings transferred to the Chamber of Commerce, though the land, as always, remained under the ownership of the state through FOFIFA.

Niarovana-Caroline offered a potential space to rebegin the project, and to an extent, the movement of the Campus to this site of development was met by an increase in resources – due in large part to the projects state connections:

We tried to catch up at Vatomandry [Niarovana – Caroline] – but that was really a new group. At that time the region of Atsinanana joined, and the Chamber of Commerce joined. So it was better for housing… they had all the beds, the mattresses, electricity, a little bit of everything. They had the rice fields… There was financing for food, and it was well paid.

The Campus, however, ran up against memories of the LDS, FOFIFA, and the IFCC.

In order to gain access to the site from the Mayor of Niarovana-Caroline, the project had promised vast infrastructural improvements, which in turn, would have provided employment opportunities for villagers. These opportunities recalled the areas former prosperity, raising expectations even further. But most never materialized, feeding into questions about the appropriation of land and resources at the site. In other words, the failure of the Campus to deliver on a status quo anterior – represented in the \textit{shadow presence} of FOFIFA and the IFCC – became (further) impetus for local disputes over the resources of the network between, on the one hand, Niarovana-Caroline residents and the Campus, and on the other, Niarovana-Caroline participant farmers and the Campus. At the same time, the networks of state power were extended – if only temporarily – through the projects reanimation of previous spaces of (state mediated) development.
Tenure and Territory

The use of state owned lands is problematic in a number of respects and became a central issue for the Campus Ambanivohitra in 2008 and 2009. Many of the Niarovana villagers have some history with the research stations located in the area, whether FOFIFA or the IFCC before them. While the land “belongs” to FOFIFA, or more specifically the state, local farmers retain usage rights – a situation that was traced to its stint as a colonial plantation, when the land was split between upland coffee and lowland riziculture. In 2007, the commune rurale of Niarovana-Caroline agreed, with FOFIFA who had engaged in a contract with the Campus Ambanivohitra, that the Campus could use the land. Yet over the course of the year, a number of incidents contributed to a third and fourth relocation of the campus.

The first incident involved the harvest from the first semester of classes at the Niarovana Campus, and repeated a similar incident that occurred at the first Campus Ambanivohitra location in Maromitety. As a part of their training, students were engaged on the rizicultural fields that were housed on the FOFIFA parcel. Several came from the local area; others had travelled from further afield - meaning their labor was lost to their own farms. Once the semester had finished and the harvest had been gathered, participant farmers were given a portion, as was the Campus Ambanivohitra. However, the division of the harvest worried several of the participant farmers I spoke with. Rather than dividing the harvest in the fields, they were first moved to a stockroom, where they were measured and divided by the Campus Ambanivohitra staff. The opaque nature of this division – wherein the Campus Ambanivohitra and the farmers would split the harvest equally – led to suspicions that the distribution was far from equal (and thus contrary to informal and formal promises of the Campus Ambanivohitra. As it was
explained to me, “this is not how these things are done,” signaling the director’s
trespass on accepted norms of communal labor and compensation.

Exacerbating these concerns, rumors circulated in Niarovana after residents who
had been to Tamatave and seen the home of the project director reported on his
(relatively) grandiose lifestyle. Indeed, his home, begun some five years earlier, when
he was still the University President, was enormous. At three stories – each of at least
1000 square feet, it was massive even by American standards, and was still unfinished
as of 2009. As this information circulated – spurred, according to the Campus
administration, by the project’s cook - the Niarovana community became suspicious that
the director was exploiting the local population for personal gain. Campus staff told me
later that they planned to fire the cook who allegedly circulated this story (because she
was a “drunk”). Despite these counter accusations, the cook was an important part of
the original plan, her husband a Deputy to the Niarovana-Caroline Mayor who was
central to the project’s continuing rights to the land.

For local participants, who were closely linked to the rural commune mayor, the
situation was becoming more and more volatile. One project participant, who also
worked as an assistant to the Mayor of the Niarovana Commune-Rurale, described the
situation to me in 2008:

Right now the people of Niarovana no longer want to leave the land [to the
Campus]. I’m very disturbed now because I’m one of the town leaders.
People think it was me, as an advisor, who sold the land to the Campus
Ambanivohitra. Everyone is angry at me now. The reality is that it wasn’t me
that gave the land to the Campus Ambanivohitra. We received the order
from the region to put the campus here. We accepted the proposal after a
town meeting. Now people are telling me that I am guilty of having sold this
land to the Campus Ambanivohitra. Some even threatened me.
By the second semester held at the Niarovana site, the majority of fields had been returned to the local population, and the Campus activities were relegated to the area immediately surrounding the two buildings (previously refurbished by the CRS and LDI) that the campus used as a dormitory and a classroom.

To address the loss of the Niarovana land to what project documents called “squatters,” the Campus relocated most of the rizicultural activities to Ambalamangahazo, a town seven kilometers down the road in. During periods of rizicultural training, students would walk every morning from Niarovana to Ambalamangahazo and then return in the evening to their dorms at Niarovana-Caroline.

In order to ensure that the land continued to be cared for during periods when there were no students at the Campus Ambanivohitra, the Director turned the fields into a vitrine, or model, for the community of Ambalamangahazo (for geographical relation to the Niarovona-Caroline site, see Figure 4-4). Local farmers were hired to tend the fields, and the project hired a Technician to lead the project. The landowner, a local businessman, was provided a contract in which he, and the workers he helped the project to hire, would share the harvest with the Campus Ambanivohitra. This innovation – as it would come to appear in project documents – meant that participating farmers attending the Campus Ambanivohitra would have more time to labor on their own fields while simultaneously losing any claim on the products of their labor during their training. It was a precursor to one of the larger strategic transformations that the Campus undertook.
In 2008, the *Campus Ambanivohitra* students and then local farmers set up a number of fields under the direction of the Campus’ Technician, each illustrating different methods of riziculture in order to illustrate to farmers the utility of modern systems. Ambalamangahazo farmers were tasked with over-watering some fields, under-watering others, planting in rows in some areas, broadcasting seeds in others. While the experiment was meant to illustrate the power of intensive agriculture and inculcate a sort of democratized scientific expertise, it was labor intensive and seemed to serve more to prove to farmers – who considered their work as akin to wage labor more than an experiment – the utility of continuing their own, less labor intensive, practices in their own fields.
The issue of wages, or the futility of non-wage labor in the minds of Ambalamangahazo farmers, constituted a serious problem for the Campus Director. In 2008, he formulated a plan to increase the capacity of local rice fields by creating a new canal into the valley. The canal would enable farmers to use intensified rizicultural practices (namely SRI), and thus increase their rice yields. He tried in vain to convince local farmers to volunteer their labor for the project. They insisted on being paid.

As he explained it to me, this was due to their past experiences with other development agencies: “CARE has ruined these people. They’ve told them they should not work without being paid. And now they won’t do something so obviously for their own good.” On the other side of the issue, of course, is the fact that increases in productivity on the farm would increase the revenue of the Campus Ambanivohitra, who would take (at least) a third of the harvest.

Canals offer a central locus for state – and other forms - of power, requiring, as they do, high levels of organization, cooperation, and sheer force (Kelly 1983; Hunt 1988). Yet the conflict over being paid for canals was also a negotiation of where the “social” ended and the individual began within a newly neoliberal state (Rose 1999). Farmers at Ambalamangahazo would be paid for their work on experimental fields through an agreement with the businessman who owned the land – who would in turn receive a greater proportion of the harvest. For the Campus Director, a main purpose of the Campus was to give farmers the knowledge to create their own farms. Labor regimes were a part of this knowledge – a part of teaching the Malagasy to help themselves.
In reality, however, the *vitrine* at Ambalamangahazo would set the Director as one part of a hierarchical structure where labor would be controlled by others. Farmers, who experienced the project as a sort of wage labor akin to the “food for work” programs undertaken by groups like CARE and the state-based *Office Nationale de la Nutrition* (ONN, National Office of Nutrition), saw the Campus as a space wherein they could supplement their subsistence farming practices – which did not necessarily mean that they would implement SRI in their homes.

When I spoke to Ambalamangahazo farmers, they complained about the amount of labor involved, but often said they would try the training nevertheless. Some told me blankly that they would not. Wage labor was less risky in very practical ways. Instead of investing all labor in agricultural endeavors of one’s own that might be destroyed by cyclones, etc. less labor intensive practices freed up villagers’ time for piecework. Wage labor, then, acted as a supplement to farming that reflected the flexible strategies that often keep rural livelihoods afloat.

Wages represented a liberal desire in a neoliberal world that attempted to stake a claim on a future denied – a future anterior closely linked to late colonialism and early independence (see Rose 1999). One parent of participants at the Campus complained bitterly of the way that the project treated students (complaints voiced elsewhere about the lack of food, the loss of labor, etc.). He then turned to the period when the site had housed IFCC – a time when sickness meant medical care, where nurses existed on site and if you were too sick for that, they took you directly to the hospital in the city. His memories spoke to a provision of the social and a powerful proletariat within former
pockets of development and expertise that for a fleeting moment offered a vision of a prosperous future.

By 2009, the Campus had let the Ambalamangahazo technician go and moved back to Ivoloina, where they continued to have land usage issues, this time mainly coming from the Former Campus Ambanivohitra Research Director – at the time Senator of the Region of Atsinanana. His rival project, the Campus Fanantenana (later renamed the Village MAP) had staked a claim on prime real estate at Ivoloina, where they planned on creating many of the same sorts of training as the Campus Ambanivohitra. This, understandably, raised the ire of Campus administrators, who began to pump me for information on what was happening at the site.

Despite these, and other, land usage issues, the Director was determined to return the site to Ivoloina. When I spoke to him about the issue, he said it was necessary because instructors did not want to go to rural campus at Niarovana. They would, however, come to the campus at Ivoloina, which was just a short distance north of the city of Tamatave.

The movements of the Campus signaled the multiple competitions that the project hosted as local communities - who had been sold promises of local development through extensive renovation jobs, road works, etc. – reasserted their claims on the land surrounding the site after a number of the town’s citizens came out on the losing end in agricultural training. The movement of the Campus was not solely about contests over land, but rather, the broken promises of what the Campus would do for participant farmers and the communities surrounding its sites. The project’s territorial rebeginnings were about the struggles and negotiations that occur within development networks over
the resources it sets loose. Movement acted to diminish previous missteps and mistakes at the Campus, enabling it to move on to new populations who wanted “development” at the same time that it could evade some of the more damaging stories that accompanied its implantation in rural communities.

**Part 3: Disappearing Money, Risk, and the Vagaries of Debt**

As the Campus shifted its site southward to Niarovana-Caroline, a number of related financial issues began to surface. These linked back to the personal and political goals of its leadership and the ways that these goals articulated with the ideals of project partners. Some, such as the disappearance of the funds for the university students sent to France, and the appropriation of harvests, have already been touched on. This section consists of two stories centered on the ways that the money moved through the Campus. The first deals with the events leading up to the resignation of the Campus’ first Technical Director – events which offer no closure on the occurrences of the Campus, but are suggestive of the ways that audit documents, seen as a positive accounting of money, can act to shield the ways that money moves. The second explores the emergence of the OTIV problem, a situation in which the prospect of microfinance swiftly shifted to a reality of risk and debt for project participants.

**Audit: Discovering Worst Practices / Generating Best Ones**

In 2006, the technical director of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* resigned. During an interview in 2009 he initially identified the reason as his new family and the lack of a good wage, but later explained it through another event. In early 2007, the Technical Director said that he had received a visit from a Frenchman. The individual arrived in the *Campus Ambanivohitra* office and asked how much money he was earning. According to University partnership documents at the time, the University of Toamasina
was responsible for his salary, and he was surprised that a foreigner was coming to ask him this question:

I was saying, "What is this question?" I wasn't paid by the Campus Ambanivohitra. I received nothing but the salary of a university trainee. He said, "How is that?" And I was surprised. I returned the question, "Do you know something? Should I be getting other money apart from the money coming from the university, as a university trainee?"

He had some papers he was filling out... and after he was really surprised. "How is this - it's not normal," and, "I want to see the director."

He said, "This worries me a lot, it's not correct." “If you are an employee of the Campus Ambanivohitra, it's the University of Tamatave that furnishes the staff.” “Why aren't you taking anything from the Campus Ambanivohitra?”

The Frenchman, presumably a representative performing an audit for the region of Haute-Normandie, never returned. Later, however, the Director came to his nephew:

After the semester, the director brought me the Budget Justification, he convinced me, he tried to convince me to sign the paper.

The Technical Director asked why he would need to sign a paper saying he had received money that he had not, he said, received:

He said, no, "Don't worry, it's coming, you should receive around 4 500 000 Franc a month." and all of the sudden, after two weeks, there was a sort of receipt... that I should sign. And it was marked thereon, 39 500 000 Ariary, no FMG [3,950 USD]. I would have to sign as though I had already received this money. And I did the calculation, this 39 500 000 divided by nine, that give's about 4 500 000 francs [450 USD] per month. But I was never paid.

I looked at it like this, I saw the 39 500 000 fmg. "What is this?"

"No – that - it's marked as your salary."

And I said, "What is this?" They were, well - I have all the respect in the world for him, as president of the university. He was my uncle as well. And I said, "Listen Monsieur [the Director], I'm not going to sign. I’m going to think about it. I don't know what this is." I left and when I returned it was with a letter of resignation.
Because I was really paid 1,100,000 FMG [110 USD], I had married my wife, and with the newborn I rented a house at 650,000 francs, there was almost nothing for me. I had a debt like this.

The Technical Director had no employment contract with the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, so he said, “I couldn't legally ask whether I was supposed to be paid 4,500,000 FMG [450 USD per month].” Again, the contract emerges as the mediator of these relations, one that can assure as well as deny rights (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006).

The story, one memory from a disgruntled employee, is telling on a number of levels. Central here is not corruption, but the complementary modalities of governance of law and accounting (Comaroff and Comaroff 2006; Strathern 2000; Rose 1999). In this story, accounting and audit emerge first – the receipt becoming a necessary precursor to balancing the books. The visit of the mysterious and inquisitive Frenchman was a potent symbol of the surveillance and governance functions of the project’s French regional partner. The visit preceded, by a year, the arrival of the French volunteer who managed the project. An embodiment of supervision – the lack of which Malagasy technicians identified as the key cause for island’s continuing poverty – making sure that the project’s budgets balanced, that their language reflected what the partners wanted to hear, and spoke in a way that would hold the connection together. The French volunteer also ushered new labor relations, as the Campus administration would become subject – in some ways – to his “expert” gaze and governance – a situation that mirrored administrators’ relations with the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s participant farmers.

**Micro-Credit and New Opportunities for Capture**

While money appeared to disappear at the level of the administration, 2007 saw it appearing in the hands of farmers, through *Campus Ambanivohitra* mediated micro-
finance projects. In 2006, the Campus negotiated an agreement with the Malagasy savings and loan outfit, OTIV, to fund the micro-projects that had been planned since its inception, but had not yet been put into action. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Campus Ambanivohitra’s microcredit projects were focused on creating students as expert entrepreneurs that could flex with the market and display a mastery of techniques of evaluation and audit. The proposals were a key module in the Campus curriculum, and were subject to mediation (and translation) by Campus staff before being sent on to OTIV. Here, OTIV would decide, based on complex calculations of risk, subjective evaluations of merit, and assessments about the mastery of the expertise needed to manage money and people. Students that passed OTIV’s evaluation would gain access to both capital and labor – earning small loans to help them pay for these entrepreneurial inputs.

The loan contract, as the Campus originally designed it, would begin with a 25% loan provision by the University of Toamasina and the Campus Ambanivohitra. Then:

The OTIV Union will distribute this fund among the local OTIVs [in the more established cities in the region] according to the number of campusard borrowers and credit needs…

The rate of interest depends upon the duration of credit.

The project spelled out the responsibilities of participant farmers:

12 Months after the release of the first amount of credit, the campusard must reimburse OTIV and the Campus Ambanivohitra and be able to build his own savings. At this time, the Campus Ambanivohitra is no longer responsible for the said account.

The agreement would require that participant farmers be brought into two contractual relationships. The first would be with OTIV, the second with the Campus Ambanivohitra. The total credit made available would amount to approximately 225
The Campus would have direct control over these funds – according to the contract – through follow up evaluation and exams “on the advancement of the project.” OTIV reserved the right to refuse funding, and could dictate the “credit-worthiness” of participants. Both could spring evaluations on the projects. Both shared the risk (50/50) if the projects failed.

Microcredit is a popular contemporary modality of development, and one particularly attached to neoliberal power (Brigg 2006). Not necessarily a new phenomenon, the formalized microcredit within the development industry emerged from Grameen Bank in Bangladesh (Fernando 2006). OTIV – within this institutional genealogy – is a distant, multiply disconnected, spinoff. It is suspended in a network that overlaps that of the Campus Ambanivohitra, becoming another way that this small program is linked back to the World Bank, UNPD, USAID, the Millennial Challenge Account, the Agence Française de Développement, and the Canadian Développement International Desjardins (DID; Madamicrofinance 2011). As an agency brought into the Campus Ambanivohitra’s network of development – one of many it is connected to – OTIV constituted another interested node.

At the Campus Ambanivohitra, the project brought participant farmers into the governmental purview of (at least) two institutions at once—subject to their practices of governance in ways that speak to the layering (and uneven distribution) of sovereignty and states power (Hansen and Stepputat 2006; Ong 2006; Ferguson and Gupta 2002). The campus worked hard to ensure the success of their candidates with OTIV, providing them with detailed templates that allowed students to “fill in the blanks” for their individual projects. The templates themselves mirrored the projects own grant
proposals and partnership agreements, employing the same language, charts, and
logics of the Campus Ambanivohitra. The Campus administration was likewise subject
to a variety of different gazes – that of the Malagasy government, the French
government, the University. There are interesting symmetries in the divisions that emerge in the relations that surround the Campus Ambanivohitra at one level, and its projected beneficiaries, at the other.

Micro-credit was a main selling point for the Campus in 2006, and stories of its success circulated in ways that were specifically linked to the project’s Research Director. In 2007, Madagascar Tribune ran a story on the opening of President Ravalomanana’s Bureau Régionale de la Présidence (BRP) that would watch over the President’s developmentalist interest in the region in a relationship of hierarchical cooperation. The article praised the developmentalist efforts of the new Coordinator, stating:

[as a University administrator in the Office of the University Presidency] he catalyzed the conclusion of regional cooperation agreements between the Region of Atsinanana and two French regions, Haute and Basse Normandie. To cite just a few of the benefits of this cooperation, recall the establishment of the agricultural reference site at Niarovana Caroline (Campus Ambanivohitra), the financing of training modules, and the financing of a mutual fund destined for the campusards with some other partners, which are the University of Toamasina, the OTIV network, the Region of Atsinanana and the Chamber of Commerce. To date, 23 campusards have already benefited from the aforementioned funds. Atsinanana is also indebted to the cooperation agreement for the computer equipment of the Maison MAP. [Madagascar Tribune 2007b]

This piece is indicative of how the ability to work institutional connections could be translated into representations that support the extension of these connections – regardless of ostensible success or failure. The OTIV connection was one among many that the Campus Ambanivohitra research director tapped to generate his political
success. At the lower end of the network, the OTIV connection made similar
transformative promises to the farmers participating in the project.

By 2008 it had become a major problem, appearing in project documents as an
obstacle to student retention and project continuation:

… Despite the effort and motivation of the team, we must still improve the
relationship with micro-credit, which constitutes a blockage to the individual
applications and which drives the demoralization of our students (of 45
applications for financing, only 16 were granted, using 1600000 Ar [800
USD] of the 5000000 Ar [2500 USD] put aside for this endeavor). [Internal
Document 2008].

OTIV was run as a for profit business, and even holding money, however small the
amount, under contracts such as these earns interest (see Elyachar 2005). Among the
35 %\textsuperscript{84} those who received initial loan installments in 2007, only one had successfully
retrieved additional installments. He utilized all the funds from the account and
reimbursed the program fully by the end of 2008. That student was talked about quite a
bit, affecting a sort of economic magic by taking some few chickens and turning them
into two hundred within a year.

It is important to note the importance of this magic, because it is a magic central to
ideas of development. The idea of exponential increase permeates imaginings of
development. This one farmer – out of 43 – to succeed so completely at becoming an
agricultural expert became a symbol of the promise of exponential growth. It could, and
was, used to restore faith in the powers of the project among the farmers and partners
alike. This sort of “modern” magic, with roots firmly entrenched in concerns with

\[84\] Instead of the 23 (51%) that the Madagascar Tribune identified as receiving credit (December 17,
2007).
governance and control, still inspires faith, and through it “conceal[s] the vulnerability and violence of modern forms of power” (Meyer and Pels 2003: 38).

Most other participants did not fare well in the micro-credit scheme, and by the end of 2008, stories of the Campus Ambanivohitra and OTIV were circulating among former Campus Ambanivohitra partners, like the Chamber of Commerce, who had bowed out of the project after 2008.85 I was told that students had come there complaining that they had been told the money would be theirs, and that now OTIV was sending people after them and threatening them with legal action – a situation that echoes Elijah’s experiences of governance and discipline at ESITPA. My experiences illustrated the depth of these concerns, as one student hid from me, telling his uncle he was afraid that I had come to do “control,” despite the fact – I was assured by the project – he had never borrowed any money. Micro-credit, far from a mode of empowerment (Elyachar 2005), emerges here as an oppressive (economic) power that stretches through the network and that appears to link back in interesting ways to power over labor. The students’ fears of control also attest to the continuing reliance of Campus Ambanivohitra farmers on the networks they crafted there to move information such as the appearance of micro-credit control.86

Campus administrators laid the blame for the OTIV problem on the former Research Director, who was by then the Senator of the Region of Atsinanana. They asserted that he had told students they would not have to pay back the money; that it

85 The shift was due to President Ravalomanana’s decoupling of agriculture from the Chamber’s responsibilities.

86 It also brings up interesting points about the governmental – particularly accounting – work that anthropologists engage in when they travel with questionnaires asking intimate questions. I was very much doing “control” in ways that are politically uncomfortable when confronted with the fear these practices instill in others.
would be theirs so that they could go and apply what they had learned at the Campus. The Director said that the region of Haute Normandie had originally proposed this, but that he had insisted that the money be given in loans so that Campus participants would “learn” how loans worked and would have to “work” for their money. Work may have been the operative word. The OTIV project gave the Campus new access to and power over the labor of their participants, a reality that fed into the plan that succeeded micro-credit.

By the end of 2008, the Campus was combining their sensibilisation with rural mayors with quick meetings at the local OTIV offices in order to try to negotiate payment plans or debt forgiveness, and visits to students’ houses to try to find the ones who had not repaid the money. Most were missing – one had disappeared from her home in Mahanoro to the, relatively, big city of Tamatave⁸⁷ where she had started living with her sister. The Director was sure that most had spent the money already, buying VCD (video disc) players and other items that they otherwise would not have been able to afford. The disappearance of rural farmer’s bodies, enabled by the Campus micro-credit component, echoed the mobility of its early exchange with the ESITPA.

While it was obvious that some participant farmers had taken the initial loan payment, using it to relocate or pursue other endeavors, sometimes not related to farming, others had attempted to complete their projects, finding that OTIV was not so forgiving of the risks involved in farming. In 2007, a student from Niarovana-Caroline lost his rice crops to flooding caused by a cyclone, an unfortunately common risk on

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⁸⁷ By way of example, Tamatave was the big city in Atsinanana from vantage of the countryside of Atsinanana. For a World Bank consultant I knew in Antananarivo, Tamatave was jokingly referred to as the “bush.”
Madagascar’s east coast. After the inundation, OTIV refused to release more money to him:

Before they had promised to give 280000 Ar, but the money was frozen at OTIV. As soon as this last saw that we would have a bad harvest, they didn’t give the remainder. Normally, half the money was for the preparation (clearing, cultivation). It was agreed upon that the rest would be given after the harvest. As soon as OTIV saw that we were going to have a bad harvest, they froze the remainder.

Again the issue of lost labor returned:

That’s the general problem of the training. We have our family who we must feed, but there’s nothing else we can do to earn money. And then they freeze the funds that would relieve our familial responsibilities. With zero to start and after 4 months of training, it’s hard.

The most effective thing for us is if as soon as OTIV sees that we have a bad harvest despite everything, they should give us the remainder of the money.

The disjuncture surrounding micro-finance is closely related to ideas of labor and its value. The money, despite its denomination as a loan, was utilized and thought of by students as payment for services rendered. Having already suspected that their harvests were being pillaged by the Campus Director, knowing that through their involvement in the Campus they were losing labor at home, the micro-credit projects became one way that the Campus could pay off. This was particularly true in situations where the risk of costly labor for “modern” techniques meant that a loss meant more than if labor had been conserved by using more “traditional” techniques that then allowed local farmers to save their labor for more lucrative ventures.

As elsewhere, micro-credit served as an extension of coercive power that can be turned to advantage by savvy purveyors of the network (Elyachar 2002, 2005). Elyachar (2005) suggests that microcredit offers a way to reorient and redefine “social networks and cultural practices” under the rubric of the free market (5). Schuster (2010)
suggests that microcredit is generative of continuing “intimate terms” between borrower and lender. According to Roitman (2003) “debt establishes the credits that are new rents for redistribution in the national economy and for the management of internal conflict” (212). Debt, then, is an important and generative aspect of the network, and at the Campus Ambanivohitra, issues of unpaid debt were followed closely by new and deeper relations of power and labor between the project and its participants.

**Vitrines and the New Possibilities of Old Subjectivities**

The financial problems precipitated by the lack of donor funds and the creation of new debt that the Campus had to take some responsibility for, fed new life into the “paysan leader” portion of the original Campus Ambanivohitra plan, and the creation of vitrine or showcase farms. The idea of experimental fields like those at Ambalamangahazo was shelved, as a new and far more (potentially) profitable engagement emerged. The Campus began to negotiate the use of fields for their students, offering a portion of the harvest to the landowner in exchange for the use of the land, a portion to the paysan leader, a portion to the local peasants the paysan leaders would engage on their new fields, and finally a portion to the Campus Ambanivohitra itself.

The idea of the vitrine was not new in 2008. It had been a part of what was expected of Paysan leaders who had matriculated through the program. Students would go home to their own farms, and use them to demonstrate the utility of modern techniques, “…there’s this thing we call the vitrine, we have to do that first. For example, I do agriculture, husbandry, like that everyone sees it. The vitrine becomes a mirror.” But the mirrors were individual, rather than collective, endeavors. In other words, the Campus Ambanivohitra would not be involved.
By late 2008, the vitrine had taken new form. In August, the Campus, after some weeks of coordination with the rural commune mayor in Ranomafana Est, came with a contract to be signed between a rural landowner, the Campus, and the paysan leader. The contract stipulated that the landowner, the Campus Ambanivohitra, and the paysan leader would each receive a third of the harvest from the vitrine. The paysan leader, would in turn, pay others to work the land.

The vitrine project, in addition to providing agricultural training, would help farmers negotiate land and labor in their rural communities. The rationale presented was that project administrators were not satisfied with the project and that they firmly believed that development agents should come from within the commune, not from foreigners. The local cadre of students that the Campus Ambanivohitra had created would become these development agents, embracing a role as farm supervisors and overseeing the labor of their neighbors. The project would, ideally, replicate success exponentially. The Campus would retain the rights to a portion of the harvest, the remainder being split between the supervising farmer, the land-owner and, the laborers. At the meetings, the vitrines were presented as a development from within the Campus itself. Later, the French coordinator for the Regions of Haute and Basse Normandie would tell me that no, in fact, it was the Senator of Atsinanana and the Regions that had pushed for this new plan, not the Director.

In Ranomafana Est, the vitrine would be led by the son of the Commune rurale Mayor, who at the time was already working on his own plot of land. We went to the signing of the contract as a group, but despite earlier indications to the contrary, the rural family involved declined the contract. After hearing the work involved, the building
of a dam and a canal, they had asked about salaries, stating that they would not be able
to do the work without it. The Campus stated that they would handle all of that, and if
they needed to hire someone they would. After the landowner’s family discussed the
situation, they decided to pass, and their representative – the Fokontany President who
accompanied them and at one point stated, “If that’s how it is, we’re not interested.”
When we returned to the Mayor’s home in town, his deputy was dispatched to search
out another potential landowner, and he returned a few hours later with a signed five
year contract in hand.

This innovation in the project, recast as a stage in its evolution, offered the
Campus Ambanivohitra Director the opportunity to insert himself into the new network
relations fostered by the project. By facilitating the negotiation of land usage for the
vitrine project, the Campus Ambanivohitra was cast as mediator in the relations of local
patrons (former students) and local clients (the peasants hired by former students). The
role of facilitator was complicated by the ways the Campus set itself above its students –
supervisors for the supervisors of rural agricultural practice – and staked claim on a
part of the proceeds from the vitrines.

While the original project had focused on creating paysan leaders who would then
act as examples through their own lands and through the creation of local farming
organizations, the Campus began to engage in practices of leasing lands for
participating farmers. In this way, the students would gain access to more land, and
theoretical control over others’ labor, and the Campus, through its role in negotiations
and its continuing role in mediating agricultural expertise, would gain access to multiple
revenue streams, as each contract allocated a portion of the harvest to the Campus
itself, a portion to the “paysan leader” and a portion to the “land owner.” Thus what began as a project of knowledge hybridity and diffusion, became one in which the price of knowledge was labor and rewards were debt.

Conclusions

The Campus Ambanivohitra in 2008 was not unrecognizable from its 2004 version. Rather, this new version was shifted slightly – the product of adjustments to the plan like the ones I have described above: the erasure of the ESITPA partnership, the relocations of the campus site, the shift from micro-credit to vitrines. Each of these adjustments – each expected and unexpected shift in scope, locale, and focus – constituted a response to expected and unexpected political changes, local conflicts, and practical problems. These moments of struggle – what from one vantage appear as failures, from another, opportunities – represent struggles over the flows of social, political and economic capital through the network. The Campus Ambanivohitra’s rebeginnings reflect these struggles and the project’s efforts to mediate and resolve, at least partially, the conflicts involved and keep networked flows active.

The educational exchange between the Campus Ambanivohitra and the French University ESITPA was central to the project’s discursive and material formation. Yet what was (rhetorically) meant to be a simple exchange resulted in the disappearance of five Malagasy students into France. The political connections of chosen students bolstered suspicions that they were meant to stay and signaled the importance of institutional networks for the (often uneven) distribution of the political and economic advantage that often results from time in the exterior, and further entrenches epistemic asymmetries between North and South. Yet the navigation of these networks is neither wide open, nor fully closed. The experiences of the only exchange student who did not
clandestinely immigrate to France reveal several of the perils of the network that accompany the many opportunities it offers.

A second instance of rebeginning at the *Campus Ambanivohitra* is seen through its multiple territorial shifts. Related to large scale governmental changes, like the abolition of the provincial system, as well as small scale resistance, like the reclamation of agricultural land by the residents of Niarovona-Caroline, the Campus’ resituation on the Malagasy landscape signaled struggles over how political, economic and social resources would be distributed. The projects geographic movements also reflected attempts to negotiate the network; the move to Niarovona-Caroline linked to the political connections of Atsinanana’s *chef de region* and the move to Ivoloina a partial response to that individual’s loss of the position in addition to local resistance. The biggest driver in these transformations was the failure of the project to deliver on the promises it made to local communities. But the geographic repositioning of the Campus also speaks to the ways current developmentalist programs are structured by the programs of the past. The site was layered atop and drew rhetorical power from its predecessors, even while the political rhetoric surrounding it eschewed these earlier incarnations of development.

Finally, the disappearance of money, both within the project and between participant farmers and its micro-credit partner, OTIV, pushed the Campus to embrace new plans and objectives. Techniques of audit and evaluation are here explored not as the artifacts of good governance they are so often depicted as, but as tools that can be put to work in negotiating the flows of political, economic and social capital. As these audit artifacts came under question – as books were revealed imbalanced – the governance and oversight functions of partner organizations tightened over the project.
in ways that mirrored the Campus relationship with its participant farmers. Later, the theme of disappearing money reemerged, this time between OTIV and participant farmers. This conflict over economic and material resources ushered in new relations of power as Campus administrators stepped forward, claiming more direct access through rural vitrine farms to the labor of participant farmers and, via them, access to larger swatches of the rural community.

In each of these instances adjustments, or rebeginnings, opened up a productive space that allowed the project to distance itself from areas of struggle (be they physical or financial), while simultaneously building on those missteps. Failure, in this schema, becomes an impetus to rebeginning, and rebeginning acts as a strategy of institutional and political survival. The multiple and variable factors which led from the to the vitrines - the play of different agencies within the programs local incarnations, the role of local resistance, the other potential endings - never appear in the project’s official, and necessarily apolitical – documentation. Rather, what appears is a narrative wherein “paysan leaders” were always meant to be directors of rural labor rather than leaders of fikambanana (associations), where the ESITPA partnership was always about analysis instead of exchange, where the villagers of Niarovana-Caroline were squatters, not rights-holders, and where micro-credit losses constituted important lessons-learned.

In looking at the Campus from the perspective of its rebeginnings, knowledge, land, and labor emerge as central to the networked relations it crafted. Access to the control side of this equation – that is, being in control of knowledge, land, or labor – was structured by and reproductive of multiple variations of inequality that set the French metropole at one end with control over knowledge, the paysan leaders on the other with
(potential) control over land and labor, and the *Campus Ambanivohitra* in the middle, with some level of control over all three.
CHAPTER 5
RENEWAL: PROFESSIONAL POTENTIAL AND THE PERFECTED STATE AT THE
CAMPUS FANANTENANA / VILLAGE MAP

Power and the Re-Creations of Agricultural Intervention

In 2008 a new development project was initiated in the region of Atsinanana. The former Research Director of the Campus Ambanivohitra, now the region’s Senator, told me about the Campus Fanantenana shortly before I arrived to conduct fieldwork in 2008. He described it as a project that would address “real peasants” – an assertion that implied a moral deficit in the way the “peasantry” was addressed by the Campus Ambanivohitra. The name constituted a forceful echo of the “Campus Ambanivohitra” and it would come to represent, for staff at the Campus Ambanivohitra, a strategic threat to their project’s existence.88

At our first meeting, the Senator showed me a set of Campus Fanantenana t-shirts that he had printed. These mimicked similar shirts worn by Campus Ambanivohitra students and served as a visible marker of students. They also increased the visibility of that project, accompanying students in their mobility in ways that rendered them walking billboards representing the government’s goals and actions of rural improvement. The shirts sat in a base cabinet along the left hand wall in the senator’s office in the Bureau Régionale de la Présidence (BRP). They were likely still there when the crisis closed the presidential palace in early 2009. The campus’ name change to the Village MAP – its first, and most telling, transformation - made them redundant before they could be delivered.

88 It would, in fact, constitute a second existential threat for the Campus Ambanivohitra, the first based within the University administration and felt through the diminution of funds for the project discussed earlier.
The *Campus Fanantenana* represents, in many ways, an inversion of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* – or perhaps, more correctly, a new version, rewound back to the moment at which it showed the most promise, the moment when the most political and material support stood behind its leaders, and then scaling this support up exponentially. While this support meant that the promise the project held was initially greater - that its importance and visibility were vastly increased - its fate was exponentially worse than that of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, which, despite its failures and deleterious effects, continues to function. The *Campus Fanantenana*, whose participant farmers were complaining by the end of 2008 that the project had ruined their food security, was extinguished where it stood. It would become one more layer of ultimately failed and forgotten “development” sitting on FOFIFA land in Atsinanana.

This chapter explores how the *Campus Fanantenana* shifted from a very personal and rival project built as a replication of and reaction against the *Campus Ambanivohitra* to one of many development efforts with the potential to solidify the roles of rising stars on the Malagasy political scene - a project that a variety of aspiring bureaucrats and technicians could attach themselves to and curry political favor through. The first section of this chapter deals with how the Campus emerged, exploring 1) the project’s status as a rebeginning of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* and its related suspension in interpersonal and university politics and, 2) the project’s tightening connection to the Malagasy state and President Ravalomanana’s Madagascar Action Plan and the cooptation and re-casting of the *Campus Fanantenana* as the Village MAP. These tales of rebeginning illustrate the way that the personal relationships behind political power at multiple levels come to inhabit “development” as interventions open resource flows to
various levels of elite and non-elite stakeholders. The second section explores institutional and individual stakeholders who became involved as the project took shape: the peasants, the bureaucrats, and the technicians who imagined (and sometimes found) a place within the project from which to rebegin (in part) their lives, political careers, economic prospects, and more. This section begins to untangle how possibilities for rebeginning at a personal level – and the closely related individual desires for the resources set loose through the networks of development – generate erasures and redefinitions at other nodes in the network, and suggests the continuing importance of the shadow presences – the precursor project, the adjacent intervention – that are “there” and “not there” in Malagasy development. As always, the specters of power and inequality stand in the background as development histories and expert identities are submerged or elevated.

**Competition, Cooptation and State Engagement at the Campus Fanantenana**

The Campus Fanantenana was initiated in the village of Andakolosy just to the north of the river Ivoloina some seven kilometers from Madagascar’s main port city of Tamatave. Situated on FOFIFA land across the river from the Campus Ambanivohitra’s (sometime) training site, the Campus Fanantenana emerged as a geographic and financial competitor to the Campus Ambanivohitra. This positioning reflected a growing personal and political rivalry between the Campus Ambanivohitra’s Research Director (by 2008 the Senator of the region of Atsinanana) and its Director (by 2008 the former President of the University of Toamasina). The Campus Fanantenana would come to play a bigger and a smaller role than the Campus Ambanivohitra.

Where the Campus Ambanivohitra was closely related to its founder’s ties to the University of Toamasina and the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research,
the *Campus Fanantenana* was closely related to its main proponent’s ties to the highest levels of Malagasy state power embodied in the Bureau Régionale de la Présidence (BRP) from which he launched the project. These relations meant that the *Campus Fanantenana* was more visible than the *Campus Ambanivohitra* and more able to command resources from a number of different state agencies. Yet its reach would quickly contract from the entire region of Atsinanana to the single village of Andakolosy. The project took on a life of its own as the partnerships and power relations that initiated it ushered in new actors with new agendas that would – in their interaction - reduce the project to a shell whose shiny exterior could be deployed as a projection of the state’s ideal vision of itself to its citizens. These rebeginnings would usher in a representation that could play powerful roles in the potential of individual bureaucrats and politicians for political and economic advancement and that could and would foreground the “peasant” as an area of intervention, even while the agency of these actors to determine their own futures would be set firmly in the background.

**Shifting Positions: Rebeginning the *Campus Ambanivohitra***

The emergence of the *Campus Fanantenana* as a partial rival to the *Campus Ambanivohitra* was explained in interviews and informal conversations with administrators at the *Campus Ambanivohitra* and staff at the University of Toamasina. That something had transpired between the *Campus Ambanivohitra* Director and his former second was clear in the probing questions the Director began to ask me as the *Campus Fanantenana* took shape. This rivalry belied the *Campus Fanantenana* status as an institutional rebeginning where the objectives of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* were re-written by its former second.
After my visits to the proposed site of the Campus Fanantenana, the Campus Ambanivohitra Director quizzed me about their plan. I demurred, giving the general precepts behind the Campus Fanantenana as I understood them, but holding back information that I thought would render me an operational mole, reporting on the supposed secrets of the Director’s former colleague. The precepts behind the project were, at the time, a rough replication of the Campus Ambanivohitra’s engagements – centered on creating farmers who could be experts of field and market, with the addition of infrastructural capacity-building. Each was met with claims by the Campus Ambanivohitra Director that it “simply would not work” and questions about the Senator’s mastery of basic market principles.

The Campus Fanantenana had already begun to make the rounds among rural populations. Media reports sketched a small model village where farmers from around the region would come to be trained. The houses that the project was constructing reimagined the lone and mobile peasant, inviting the farmer as family, rather than as individual, and reformulating the troublesome labor equation that plagued the practices of the Campus Ambanivohitra. This image would never be realized as such, but its existence as a shimmering reflection of the Campus Ambanivohitra was clear. Commune rurale mayors, duly sensibilized by the media, began to ask about the project as we carried out the Campus Ambanivohitra’s sensibilisation meetings in the district capitals in late 2008. The Campus Ambanivohitra Director defended his project, claiming that this other project they were hearing of was something else altogether and calling on the prior relationship between the Campus Ambanivohitra and rural commune mayors as cause for their continued collaboration. He was correct that the project was
quite different, though at the time – with the Campus Fanantenana existing as little more than an idea and a series of potential structures in the mud - he had no way of knowing this.

In calling out these imagined differences, the Campus Ambanivohitra Director critiqued a set of ideas about the Campus Fanantenana; ideas that circulated among the representatives of the Regions of Atsinanana and Haute Normandie with whom he worked and on the local news channels. In very real ways, the Campus Fanantenana offered a potential drain on the resources that the Campus Ambanivohitra tapped – particularly in its visible usage of the main partners of the Campus Ambanivohitra. As the project began to churn out its self-representations in newspapers and on television, the image it projected – which often centered on the most important supporters of the Campus Ambanivohitra: the Atsinanana Chef de Région and the young representative of Haute-Normandie – served as a political and economic threat. This threat tapped the rivalry that was initiated when the Senator and Campus Ambanivohitra Director ran against each other for the University Presidency in 2006. Whatever the intentionality of this gesture, the tensions it raised at the Campus Ambanivohitra were palpable.

As discussed earlier, the Campus Ambanivohitra Director was the former President of the University of Toamasina, and his loss of the University presidency spelled his loss of a number of university supports for a project that was tightly linked to his status in rural and urban areas. How he lost the presidency was a story tied up in his relationship with the future Senator. In 2005, the University President had just broken ground on the newly founded Campus Ambanivohitra. His presidential term was almost up and he was grooming his successor, culled from the loyal staff that accompanied him
from the University administration to the *Campus Ambanivohitra*. According to administrators and former university students, the chosen successor was the project’s Research Director.

As the election neared, the Director reneged on the arrangement, deciding to stand for the University presidency anyway. Meanwhile, his *Campus Ambanivohitra* second refused to step away from the election. And so an economist and a mathematician – both working in the economics department, both spearheading the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, both already members of the University administration – would run against each other and another economics professor on the university faculty.

A former member of the university administration described the race as two Betsimisaraka using their ethnicity as a wedge to win support, while a third non-Betsimisaraka economist managed victory by avoiding a similar instrumentalization of ethnicity. This characterization – by an elite (and Merina) faculty member – reflected the political power that continues to link to ethnic identity and, on the flipside, an intellectualization and reduction of ethno-regional issues to anachronistic emblems of “tribalism” – defined as the use of ethnic identity for political purposes. The politicization of ethnicity was often narratively deployed by highlanders to depict coastal populations. These narratives are powerful counterweights to accusations of ethnic inequality that emerge across the island, but serve equally well in obscuring and ignoring the structural realities that feed these suspicions in Madagascar.89

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89 These structural inequalities are not often politically viable objects of study in Madagascar, where ethnicity has been thoroughly deconstructed (Raison-Jourde and Randrianja 2002, Randrianja 2004). Notable exceptions include Sharp’s (1993,2002) work in western Madagascar, Cole’s (2001) research in the east coast, and the Clignet and Ernst’s (1995) examination of educational inequality which illustrates, without recourse to ethnicity, the regional contours of the islands inequality that siphons most gains towards the highland center. The realities and results of structural inequality were starkly visible in the buses that brought skilled labor from highland Madagascar to the Sherritt Ambatovy project and the
Ethnoregional politics, rising here, was complicated by students at the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s claims that their education was conducted, in the main, by highland experts, or the positionality, somewhat ironically, of both of these Betsimisaraka as supporters of the (first Merina) President and his policies. But these two associations – the first with ethnicity, the second with a centralized power base that was, like it or not, situated squarely in the highlands – sat easily beside one another. Ethnicity and its “dark energy” (Comaroff and Comaroff 2009: 143) – carrying the propensity to foment difference as well as violence – nested in other, “ethnic” and non-“ethnic” fields of power that permeate the development industry.

By 2008, the particular and personal rivalry between the Senator and the *Campus Ambanivohitra* Director was a main concern for the *Campus Ambanivohitra*. Administrators accused the Senator of trying to sabotage the project by staking claims on lands they had planned on using and draining their resources. They implicated the Senator’s politics into the problems of micro-credit at the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, stating that the Senator had promised participant farmers micro-loans with no repayment. Meanwhile, the Senator’s new position of power meant that he had a say in the Region of Haute-Normandie’s relationship with the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, creating a situation in which, as the young Haute-Normandie representative put it, he pulled the strings at the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, suggesting courses of action to the Region of Haute Normandie and the Region of Atsinanana.

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The abundance of highlanders in the upper (and lower) echelons of entrepreneurship in Tamatave, or even, to a lesser extent, in small towns like Niarovana-Caroline. Even more stark were the wide disparities between Malagasy and non-Malagasy – both the long term resident populations from India and the Middle-East, China, the new skilled labor being brought in from the Philippines, and the French, Canadian, and American elites that came to settle in maincured compounds at the Sherritt refinery site and the beachside mansions and mid-level condos and apartments that were spread across the northern border of the city in 2008 and 2009.
Figure 5-1. Status Shifts and Institutional Change at the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, 2006-2008. Gray connectors depict relations of influence inside and outside of the project. Gray boxes indicate institutional relationships that have disappeared or dissipated over time.
Status positions had changed radically (see Figure 5-1), flipped on their heads through newly emergent relations which were neither wholly determined nor wide open. The Campus Ambanivohitra Director lost an important connection in the University Presidency – the Senator strengthened his connections with French agencies, taking a different stance to them from the one he had held as interlocutor to student exchange in Madagascar, and later, as a Post Doc at ESITPA’s LAMSAD. The Region of Haute-Normandie became more important to the Campus Ambanivohitra, as other partnerships faded. In another world, things could have turned out differently. The Senator could have become University President and stopped there – or held off until later. He could have stepped aside and remained at the Campus Ambanivohitra as a Research Director. Yet past connections helped to set future trajectories, and the Senator’s change in status was both vertical and horizontal.

Put another way – and key to anthropological understandings of development, in particular (see Caldeira and Holston 2005), and of society, in general (see Foucault 1977, Rose 1999, etc.) – the rebeginning of the Campus Ambanivohitra in the Campus Fanantenana was a contingent development. It was reliant on a set of emergent realities and relations that were planned and unplanned. The Campus Fanantenana emerged as a reconstitution of a set of practices and desires of development that had slipped away from the Senator’s grasp through his changing relationship with the Campus Ambanivohitra Director. Rebeginnings offer a way to understand how these contingencies are put to order in what can be described as a tactic of sustainability that is equally applicable to the networks, institutions, and individuals implicated in development.
With its TV spots and massive state support, the *Campus Fanantenana* clearly appeared to pick up where the *Campus Ambanivohitra* left off. Its image mimicked closely a set of local enhancements the *Campus Ambanivohitra* proposed for Niarovana-Caroline in 2006 – renovated buildings, roads, and the creation of new infrastructure. It copied the very practices that the *Campus Ambanivohitra* based its legitimacy on with the addition of the state-based clout to achieve actual results. The Senator's propensity to trot out the French representative of Haute-Normandie and the *Chef de Région* for media appearances that acted as a sort of nationwide *sensibilisation* – a widely visible theater of state legitimacy, as it were – was easily translatable into a threat to the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s carefully cultivated funding and partnership relations. At the same time, the *Campus Fanantenana* was rendered a new and different version of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* that could eschew this previous project's mistakes even while it relied on old and familiar connections and alliances.

The skills that the Senator showed in becoming a successful politician – tightly linked to the networks opened by the *Campus Ambanivohitra* as well as his own past – raised the ire of employees in the stifling office of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*. His new found political power was tempered by claims that sought to place responsibility for the *Campus Ambanivohitra*’s problems on the Senator’s by now apparent political objectives. The OTIV problem re-emerged as a promise that the Senator had made to students in *sensibilisation* sessions – a political tool that was effective in getting him where he was. For the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, these assertions absolved the project of responsibility for its role in these former (and former’s) mistakes, which could then be cast as relics of past failures, rather than an indictment of contemporary practices.
Whether the Senator was driven by a desire to destroy the Campus Ambanivohitra is less relevant here than the role that suspicion could play in the Campus Ambanivohitra’s efforts to craft its legitimacy and continue its hold on to the resources made available through the development industry. Development acts here as a space in which the political, economic, and social benefits of development are negotiated by, within and between a number of heterogeneous interest groups (Bierschenk et al 1991). Rebeginnings are one way that this messy reality of competition is molded into order.

The Campus Fanantenana would later fall prey to political machinations from above as the network that it relied on set it in the sites of a state in need of a visible representation of its commitment to rural development. In a context of increasing visible disconnect between the rich and the poor in Tamatave – a realm where entrepreneurial prowess was an incomplete solution – and increasing disaffection for the development policies that were seen to make this reality possible (embodied by the employment practices of the Sherritt Mine and Refinery as well as the proposed Daewoo land acquisition) made the Campus Fanantenana an important site for the rebeginning (and legitimation) of state power under the Ravalomanana regime.

Representing and Rebeginning the Campus Fanantenana Village MAP

The Campus Fanantenana was unquestionably about state power. It grew out of the political positioning of the Senator of Atsinanana and in so doing became subsumed to the increasing political importance it afforded him. This section explores the project’s connection to the state as it is pulled taught, transforming the Campus Fanantenana into the Village MAP. Examining first the representations through which the project renders invisible the histories of the populations it is meant to address – creating something of a “clean slate” for development – and then to the ways the project turns to
the state, eventually being appropriated for the state’s theatrical display of legitimacy, and rebeginning a second time.

Creating empty ahistorical space and limitless potential

Rebeginning means erasure. Like the nation-state, development relies on processes of remembering and remembering to forget (Anderson 1983) – or, put another way, processes of representation that highlight certain realities while erasing others. Project documents, as in the case of the Campus Ambanivohitra, eschew sometimes drastic changes: evaluations render the failures of the project into lessons learned, partnerships end, even while their detritus lives on, and sometimes circle back around, the peasant becomes a construction that is idealized at the same time that it is demonized, and the history of development is disappeared. As the Campus Fanantenana emerged, these rebeginnings of space and peoples were an instance of remembering to forget entrenched in project documentation.

The Senator’s plan began to take shape in March of 2008. The site of Andakolosy was chosen, and the first official document discussed the site in some detail.

Constituted of an unexploited terrain, made up of an area of 91 hectares in a fertile basin along the River Ivoloina, the site represents an agricultural reserve to exploit… It’s in an area belonging to the Malagasy State, administered by FOFIFA, that the DRDR has improved for the benefit of the rural poor in the Campus Fanantenana Project. [Internal Document 2008: 3].

This textual representation of land left unexploited was accompanied by photos that depict the rice fields and cattle that belong to the people living in Andakolosy. Like the

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90 This was the first of only a few project-created documents that I was given access to. I was told later that additional documents “weren’t ready.” The Campus itself never made it quite far enough to generate the paper trail that typifies contemporary development projects – the evaluations and re-evaluations, the project reports, etc. As will become clear, the worsening political situation precluded the circulation of the projects internal representations, even while the project itself was widely disseminated through the Malagasy state and non-state media.
Campus Ambanivohitra, which would eventually characterize the people of Niarovana-Caroline as squatters, the Campus Fanantenana figuratively cleared the land, even while displaying its continued usage. The imagery reminds us that the political importance of land as more than an agricultural tool. Like Ferguson’s (1990) description of development as a way to render people governable – a primarily political resource (236) – in the 1980s and Mitchell’s (2002) account of the role land could play as a tool of state coercion in Egypt in the 1880s, land here emerges as a way that state representations of empty land slip into state relations over not the land, but what is done on it. It also illustrates a patterning of development that layers on top – quite literally – of land inherited from colonial (and sometimes precolonial) expansions of state coercion to land tenure.

Figure 5-2. Photos included in Campus Fanantenana Description

With history and inhabitants figuratively wiped away, the land becomes an arena of limitless (yet structured) potential. At the Campus Fanantenana, this meant a space “naturally rich in vegetation… a real agroforestry and arboricultural zone, equally favorable to livestock” (Internal Document 2008: 3). These subjects would never be

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91 At least one of the photos reproduced in Figure 5-1 was taken from a moving car – a poignant reminder of the insularity of development elites viz-a-viz the local population in Andakolosy.
taught at the Campus, as it was twisted to fit desires emanating from higher levels of the state.

These representations offer an empty arena of limitless potential but the site itself was shot through with remnants and memories of power. Like Niarovana-Caroline, the site’s situation on state land meant that it was a space where state power remained particularly pointed – regardless of the government. Andakolosy lays atop a vast colonial and post-colonial infrastructure most recently administered by FOFIFA (1974-Present), and before by the Institut Français de recherches fruitières outre-mer et des agrumes coloniales (IFAC, 1942-1975), which was itself laid atop what local elders described as an early colonial agricultural training center established as a jardin d’essai or ‘test garden’ at the advent of colonialism (Madagascar 1905).

Farmers in Andakolosy, like those that lived at Niarovana-Caroline, described their linkage to the land as precarious. FOFIFA had the power to recall their rice fields or even their homes. A public improvement on the socialist agrarian projects of Ratsiraka’s regime (that now look more like a nationalized precursor of the potential Daewoo project that would, theoretically, put some 1.3 million hectares in foreign hands), the project’s usage of long held state land lent it the possibility of leveraging more political legitimacy by relegating the directionality of state power onto areas already subject to it (an ironic move next to the potential of Daewoo).

These narratives addressed a group of development experts and urban citizens that could be reached through the diffusion of the development message in project documents, newspaper accounts and television reports. They spoke to urban Malagasy and elite rural Malagasy in a way that was both historically disconnected and seemingly
ideologically neutral. It mattered little what reality stood behind these representations – most Malagasy would not remember what Andakolosy meant as a space of colonial and post-colonial agricultural intervention, fewer would ever venture into the village despite its location on a popular thoroughfare and just 7 kilometers from the city of Tamatave. In so many ways, this history did not matter in the midst of the important work of state image-making.

Like the Campus Ambanivohitra, the decoupling of individual beneficiaries and territorial spaces from their historical moorings would prove a tactic of development. Ahistory, long decried as one of the most egregious missteps of the development industry (see Sardan 2005, Lewis 2009), remains a mainstay of a governmentalist development that seeks to render messy realities into technical problems that can be addressed with technical solutions (Ferguson 1990, Li 2007, Foucault et al. 1991).

Yet on these former sites of development, the detritus of failed development, and desires for a future anterior, also bolstered development as they constituted shadow presences whose traces held the power to call up negative and positive memories of the state for the villagers called into the project. Li (2007), looking at a similar situation of the encounters of farmers and development – though this time with forestry conservation directly92 - identifies the importance of history and historical developmentalist moves. She states that previous projects had “all left traces on livelihoods, landscapes, and ways of thinking” that affected the ways individuals expressed their agency (228; see also Walley 2004). In Madagascar these shadow

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92 In Malagasy scholarship, this issue has been masterfully taken up by Christian Kull (2004), who examines the issue of deforestation, and Janice Harper (2002) whose medical ethnography documents the lives (and unfortunately frequent deaths) of Malagasy on the borders of conservation.
presences, which were stark at both Niarovana-Caroline and Andakolosy, stood as silent promises and threats of rebeginning: the promise of a status quo anterior where state funds made things that functioned, and the threat of a state’s sovereign claim on territory. Rebeginnings emerge here as a sort of manufactured consent, draped in shadow and rife with possibility.

Inviting State Connection

The representational blank slate created in project documents, was accompanied by representational work meant to court the state. This is an important point that is true of both the Campus Ambanivohitra and the Campus Fanantenana – state support is not assured, but must be actively courted and therefore development’s representation must effectively invite the state into participation, even when the state is the sole backer. Coming directly out of the BRP, the Campus Fanantenana invitation of the state was more pronounced than that of the Campus Ambanivohitra. While the Campus Ambanivohitra courted mayors, ministers, and chefs de region, the Campus Fanantenana went straight to the top.

The first articulation of the Campus signaled its intimate relations with the state beyond Toamasina. These render the state highly personal and are as darkly comical as they are tragic. Initial project documents include a photo of one of the old colonial buildings and a description of a hill over-looking the Campus Fanantenana site, “… giving a view of the ocean. The summit could house a lovely Presidential chalet” (Internal Document 2008: 5). The project as a whole would be supervised by the First Lady, who is listed as its sponsor. It is unclear whether this recourse to hearth and home was an appeal based on stereotypical understandings of gender, an assertion of the literal and figurative power of the sovereign, or both. The imagery called forth – the
President and the First Lady, perhaps relaxing on the veranda while villagers toil in the fields below – was unselfconscious yet pointed. It simultaneously recalled popular understandings of the colonial hegemony of the Merina and the French and seemed to offer that power back to the head of state – and through him to the state in general.

Figure 5-3. Ruins overlooking Andakolosy. Possibly the hill mentioned as a site for the Presidential Chalet.

State connections ran across several other, less insidious, lines. Here the business of management and the division of responsibility were key. In this earliest incarnation, two elected deputies (roughly the equivalent of congressional representatives in the US) from the district of Toamasina II (the rural district that surrounded the city of Tamatave, which had its own, urban administrative district) would be responsible for choosing proper candidates to integrate into the project, and
*Direction Régionale de Développement Rurale* (DRDR) would handle preparation of agricultural materials and interface with the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Project depicted here was remarkably thin on defining the parameters of the target population – some 70 to 80 families – who were to be housed in the buildings the project expected to rehabilitate and construct. Initially, individuals would be chosen from Toamasina II by rural commune mayors within the district. These individuals were to represent the poorest among *commune rurale* constituencies – a characteristic that would prove durable and problematic in the project’s self-representations. Their duties, as outlined here, were “learning good manners, the love of work, efficiency and productivity” (*Internal Document 2008*: 6). Training would occur mainly in the areas of market and poultry farming (6). The Campus would direct the flow of production towards the local market and the new Sherritt nickel and cobalt mine and refinery (6). These plans represented its ideological foundation – a hybrid body built from above and below that promised peasant transformation that echoed both the Campus *Ambanivohitra* and the World Bank.

Like the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, the *Campus Fanantenana* sought to (at least theoretically) change rural individuals to their core. In reality, its goals exist as doubles. As it was taken by the state, the *Campus Fanantenana*’s content became the state seen twice. It was refracted once through the prism of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, which extended self-governance in service of the state in an effort to increase personal political power, and a second time as a sort of homage to state desire. In other words, the state enters the project at two angles – one twice removed and from the bottom, the second intimately connected and from the top (see Figure 5-1, 5-7).
Auspicious (re)beginnings: the Village MAP

By October 2008, some seven months after the submission of the initial project description, the Campus Fanantenana (re)emerged rebranded. While still associated with the First Lady in local consciousness,\(^9^3\) it had now been fully adopted under the President’s World Bank and US Millennial Challenge Account approved plan for Madagascar – the Madagascar Action Plan – and christened the Village MAP. The project began to make its first national level public appearances with staff from the Bureau Regional de la Présidence (BRP) in Tamatave bringing reporters from the state television station to film long informational pieces and interview the elite governmental officials and others about the project.

Ideas to rehabilitate the old FOFIFA buildings – including the Presidential Chalet – were scrapped. Likewise, plans to bring the most in-need villagers from the district dissipated as they came up against the non-emptiness of the land that was chosen. The local inhabitants of Andakolosy, several of whom were living in the buildings deemed “empty” in project documents, protested the idea of bringing in new individuals and giving them land and buildings that, while belonging to the state, they considered to be theirs. Initial political opposition to the reclaiming of inhabited buildings near rizicultural fields was turned to advantage as the state moved the proposed model village site closer to the Ivoloina Bridge. Here the project could be easily seen from the road by foreign development experts, state politicians, and the like as they travelled the

\(^9^3\) This association was deeply embedded in the consciousness of elite Malagasy and expats in Tamatave’s private sector. When I voiced concerns in casual conversations about problems at the project, they told me I must alert the First Lady. At the level of project implementation, however, this project document would be the only one to mention her. To my knowledge, she never visited or physically interacted with the Campus. The situation points to the project’s early media saturation, but also to the ways the project was put to use among the local elite, many of whom seemed to know the project’s links to the Presidency.
sole north-south corridor on the Eastern side of the island. Obstacles created by the Andakolosy community morphed into a high degree of visibility that could be easily translated into legitimacy and directed at the highly mobile urban and expatriate elite.

The Village MAP, in its existence as the physical incarnation of the policy components of the Madagascar Action Plan, projected the state’s ideal presence, and its ideal (peasant) citizen. Andakolosy would constitute a pilot for this image. As one newspaper explained:

These villages will feature all of the infrastructure necessary for their development and vitality, namely clinics, water sources, electricity from solar power, shower and toilet for each home, school, targeted aid for agriculture and animal husbandry, army posts for security, leadership training… The village should be composed of a maximum of 150 homes and may lie far from national highways or provincial interests. After an as yet undetermined lapse of time, the village will become a model for the neighboring localities and the experience will be shared with other villages. [Rahaga 2008]

The idea was to expand this ideal across the island in stages. In the first phase, the state would create two model villages in each district. Later, the government would build upon that base and end with two in each commune rurale. The system contained an aesthetic symmetry that gestured towards development and the governance that accompanies it as objects with the potential to increase exponentially.

The ideas of creating visible examples of the model village and spreading success, almost pathologically, to others constitute specific modalities of contemporary approaches to development. For the Village MAP, it bears repeating that the projects main goal was to:

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94 This article concluded rather scathingly, stating that “Even without going further into the analysis, the communiqué relative to this training, is far from responding to the lived realities of the populations and the true development of the country” (Rahaga 2008).
… incite the neighboring localities to initiate their own development. “It’s ultimately,” according to the head of state, “about mobilizing and fully engaging the villagers and cultivating, among them, a true feeling of ownership” of the project. The President reiterated that “Development requires more than willingness, it’s the results and actions that matter the most. [Hery 2008]

In essence, the Village MAP offered a scaled up version of the ideas expressed in the “Paysan leader” and the vitrine of the Campus Ambanivohitra to an entire (at least theoretically) village system that could lead by example. The Village MAP blew out the scope of development through the vitrine from the region to the nation. The ideal of the model village is a familiar one, redeployed here, but already a mainstay of earlier state interventions like those Mitchell (2002) describes in Egypt, Caldeira and Holston (2005) explore in the modernist planning of Brasilia, or Scott (1998) depicts as high modernist and statist intervention. The idea of the “model” also tapped World Bank interest in the cultivation of “leadership” for development.

The Village MAP was unveiled during a 2008 workshop with village leaders at the National Leadership Institute of Madagascar (NLIM). The NLIM was created by President Ravalomanana in 2006 as a part of the MAP, emerged from the World Bank’s Leadership and Management Program (LAMP), and funded through partnerships with a number of international organizations and consulting agencies as well as the US government (Hery 2008; Heidenhof et al. 2007, OMB Watch 2011). Leadership is understood, at the level of international development assistance, as a supplement and catalyst to the power of expertise:

… focusing on leadership can be effective in leveraging and accelerating technical reforms in a variety of settings. Reinforcing leadership capacity is important because leaders play a critical role in prioritizing, leveraging, modeling and implementing reforms, and because they need new skills as their roles and responsibilities change as a result of reforms. [Heidenhof et al. 2007: 1]
Leadership represented a new fetish of the World Bank – and a new component of its celebration of Madagascar as an ideal case and of Marc Ravalomanana as an ideal leader.

The 2007 World Bank Institute’s working paper on Madagascar’s potential opens with the following assessment of Ravalomanana’s regime:

This note tells the story of Madagascar’s transformation after the 2001 crisis. Emerging from crisis and riddled with systemic and institutional barriers to development, amply manifest in all of its systems, structures, and in behaviors and perceptions at the individual level, Madagascar made significant progress through committed leadership and attention to systemic, underlying dysfunctions. It is the story of how delivery of customized support to those in power who are willing to make a difference can unleash capacity [Heidenhof et al. 2007: 1]

Leadership emerges here as a complement to the emphasis on partnership that both the *Campus Ambanivohitra* and *Campus Fanantenana* exemplify, and which has been identified as a key modality of global inequality (see Gould in Moss and Lewis 2005: 61). More than just a complement, leadership constitutes the leading edge of new development techniques and a replacement for capacity building (through partnership) and technical expertise, both of which are depicted in LAMP documents as failures (Heidenhof et al. 2007: 1). In Madagascar leadership was a key facet of state training for rural administrators like *commune rurale* mayors, development coordinators, and others that were supplemented by the mobility of elite western (and ivy-league American) experts on leadership who travelled in state entourages with BRP employees acting as translators from Malagasy and French to English.

Mimicking, in a way, the transformation of farmers at the *Campus Ambanivohitra* into flexible experts of the market and field, elite bureaucratic and political agents across hierarchical spaces would be trained to “promote and manage reform” and be prepared
for the transformations of their “roles and responsibilities” through reform (Heidenhof et al. 2007: 1). In 2007, leadership was hailed as a success that “re-energized the [national] leadership and helped it devise and commit to a development-oriented vision for the country” (2). The program gave the state another pathway into rural areas, energizing governmental connections and extending the reach of the state. Participants in the leadership program would travel to district capitals like Brickaville and conduct not sensibilisation, but workshops. These networks gave bureaucrats access to benefits in excess of those available at (relatively) small-time projects such as the Campus Ambanivohitra, but mirroring them at a different scale. By 2008, the electrification of these networks by this and similar projects that existed down to the level of the Fokontany were a central preoccupation. Yet they could not stem the popularity of negative sentiment, particularly in Atsinanana, where the population was set squarely against President Ravalomanana.95

(Re)Presenting the Village MAP

As the Village MAP was co-opted into the highest reaches of state power, local authorities began to engage personally with the villagers meant to benefit from the project. The Village MAP began with a series of consciousness raising meetings that took place by the one room cafe that sat just off the main road. Past the old guard house that marked the turn off to Andakolosy and the FOFIFA ruins, it stood within sight

95 In December 2008, the main guru for “leadership,” for the President who had just two weeks after conducting workshops in Atsinanana, died suddenly at a resort in a secluded area in north-eastern Madagascar. BRP staff was abuzz with theories of foul play, “poisoning perhaps.” It was claimed that the President sent his Minister of Health to collect the body and perform an autopsy before releasing it to the United States. The couple who ran the resort told European expats in Tamatave that it was natural causes, but that it had happened suddenly. The rumors underscored the state and its international development partners’ fears as the crisis threatened to spill into one of the most politically volatile regions of the country.
of the new Village MAP houses. Power – and particularly state power – sat heavily on
the site.

In sensibilisation with Andakolosy residents held in August of 2008, local
bureaucrats pressed the import of the project, offering it as a reciprocal process of
transformation:

You know that there is a plan from the president of the republic which is
implanted here, with these houses. That’s not the only plan. This assumes
that all who want to live there must beautify them with the aid of agriculture
carried out according to the standards and techniques recommended for
this land.

You’re lucky to be chosen… There will be many different types of
agricultural formation in this place. For everyone who wants to cultivate, for
example, manioc, rice, etc. It’s all about your interests.

So, as you see, there are buildings that are being built here. The poorest
people will live in them. We will train them in agricultural techniques.
[Sensibilisation 2008]

At the time, concerns over an influx of newcomers were salient. Andakolosy – as a city
- was ultimately the property of FOFIFA and residents were concerned about the
possibility that the state could, at any time, rid them of their usage rights – a situation
that could potentially take away their livelihood and their homes. The tenuous
relationship was complicated by their tenure which derived mainly from their parents’
former service as low to mid-level FOFIFA employees. Loudly voiced concerns drew
quick responses: “No one will be taken from their land; we just need to come to an
agreement. We’re not going to remove you from here but give you good things, give
you good projects” (Sensibilisation 2008).

The success of the project was predicated, according to the bureaucrats and
functionaries involved, on the actions of the farmers who would make up its target
population: “This place will be a good example if its works well. We ask you to properly
maintain this gift from the state. You must work hard.” (Sensibilisation 2008). The imagery of the gift, and the implied reciprocity of the work of maintenance expected, sets up a division between project administrators and technicians, on the one hand, and project beneficiaries, on the other. This division is filled with power, as the gift reflects the absolute authority of the state that is part of the circular nature of sovereignty (Li 2009: 12; Foucault 1991: 95). Here, the gift can be seen twisted into the legitimation of the governance, discipline, and sovereignty (Li 2007: 12) that were brought to bear on villagers in the extremely statist space of the Village MAP. The gift, as in Mbembe’s (2001) description of the regulation of power and inequality of the postcolonial African state, was about legitimizing and entrenching state power.

Consciousness-raising meetings set the parameters of these divisions, identifying the experts and bureaucrats who would occupy the spaces of power above the local peasants, and the populations that their labor would serve. A second sensibilisation was performed for Andakolosy in October of 2008, reasserting through reiteration the hierarchy of development:

You will work with technicians, with representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture, from ONN, from SECALINE, PPRR. They will help you… and above all, this father from the church…. He is… a specialist in agricultural techniques. He’s here not to convince us to follow the FJKM church, but to guide you in following modern agricultural techniques. There will also be others who will share their knowledge with you.

We, as representatives of the Region, and working with these technicians, will motivate you. We’re working together to have a good result… so everyone who lives and farms here and increases their production and has a good harvest will receive some aid or financing. For the residents of Toamasina, there is a huge and as yet unmet demand for that. [market farming; Sensibilisation 2008]

This division was common to agricultural development initiatives in Madagascar, recalling the images of the disconnected “farmer” depicted in the Campus
Ambanivohitra. Like projects elsewhere on the continent (Ferguson 1990, Mitchell 2002), and further afield (Li 2007), these depictions bore little resemblance to the lived experiences of project participants. The complex histories with and relations of Andakolosy villagers to the state and statist development are explored below.

As the project began the government embarked on a visual campaign to illustrate its ideal presence and peasant. Twenty homes were built, at a size of about fifteen by twenty feet. Perfectly matched, they contained enough space for two families and were at least twice the size of the homes inhabited by participants in Andakolosy. The houses were constructed out of locally made and available materials, but situated on large concrete slabs which were poured around the main vertical supports. The walls were made of the flattened and woven trunk of *ravinala* and the roof consisted of the ravinala fronds commonly used in eastern Madagascar. It was an impressive display, particularly compared to the ideals promulgated by similar “villages” recently built by the social mitigation group at the Sherritt nickel and cobalt operation.

Village MAP houses were situated in a barracks arrangement (see Figure 5-4), lining both sides of two small roads. Each set of two homes would share a detached bathroom and shower that were connected to a large sewage system. One common area was built with washbasins and faucets so that individuals could attend to household cleaning together. The faucets themselves were cemented into the washbasins to discourage theft.96 These plumbing systems were attached to an industrial grade sewage tank, buried by a local company, and a series of cisterns placed

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96 The theft of plumbing supplies was a common occurrence in these types of projects, and an earlier effort by the Red Cross to provide the Andakolosy primary school with clean water had ended in the disappearance of the majority of the spigots.
high on a hill above the village. Administrators hoped to build a common kitchen in the middle of the model.

Figure 5-4. Village MAP infrastructural construction (left) and final product (right).

At the main entry a small sign reading “Village MAP” was erected - after the buildings were completed, but well before the villagers would be allowed to move in. The houses were landscaped, and a guardian was hired to live in one of the homes until the village was inhabitable. As local farmers were brought into the project, individuals were assigned house numbers, but not given the keys. These individuals, along with other participants, were tasked with landscaping the site. By November of 2008, though empty of life aside from the guardian and his girlfriend, the site was clean and green. The image, visible from a relatively busy portion of the coastal highway, constituted an impressive testament to the power of the state to create an ideal and ordered Madagascar.
The project’s scope extended beyond the infrastructure of the housing site. A water retention pond and new canal were built to attach it to the community’s rice fields (see Figure 5-5). The canal would (theoretically) allow local farmers to control the flow of water and implement the *système de riziculture intensive* (SRI) at the site. A tractor and motorized tiller would also be available (at times) at the site, aiding local villagers in preparing land for the new crops that the project planned to introduce. In addition, local state agencies would provide seeds and plants for local farmers.

These items – represented in words, then in (literally) concrete – became the base of the imagined ideal state. In this state space, multiple disaggregated state institutions would reaggregate on a single site. Together – and with the participation of the local community – they would weave state-based development and present the state to its
citizens (urban and rural, public and private) and back to itself. But these were the things that would be accomplished. Other things would only be imagined.

**Limitless Potentials: Dreaming Big at the Village MAP**

As should be clear from the case of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, the representations of development rarely jive with the plans of development. Rather they circle back, conveniently forgetting what does not work. The Village MAP was destined to failure, but it was full of hope and as the situation of the nation deteriorated so did the project. The collapsing of “enough time” into “no time” as the nation came under threat meant that a number of additional hopes and dreams – technicians and bureaucrats deepest desires to create that perfect image of the state – vanished. But the promises that they made remain, shadows of a possible future taken away. They constitute an order of what I call shadow presences. While FOFIFA constitutes a shadow presence built through memories that call up the failure of a future anterior to arrive (a prosperous, proletarian, and autochthonous expertise built on top of the foreign foundations of the IFAC, IFCC, and IRAM), the lost futures of these ideas will officially disappear while they become, unofficially, bit players in the plans, expectations, and imaginaries of project stakeholders– potentials unrealized, pieces cast off and then reclaimed and formed into the bricolage (Levi-Strauss 1966) of development – as they work to construct an image of the perfect state. Put another way, these potentials had no institutional weight.

They were, in the main, bureaucratic imaginings of the perfect state – generated for the consumption of other experts. Some were necessitated by the way the project had been structured. For example, administrators hoped to get electricity to the site. Electricity was necessitated mainly by the fact that the plumbing system that was set up
would require some form of power and a pump to move water into the cisterns, where gravity would provide water pressure for the wash basins and showers.\textsuperscript{97} Administrators toyed with several ideas at the time – originally hoping to secure solar panels, which are - like plumbing fixtures - often stolen, then providing a generator that the community would have to supply with petrol, to finally attempting to convince \textit{Jirama}, the Malagasy power company, to extend its service area across the river Ivoloina. Other potential programs included: the creation of a nursery school for local children, the rehabilitation of a well near the site of the water reservoir, the amelioration of Andakolosy’s primary school buildings, particularly the ruins that made up over half of the school grounds, and one of which (in the center background of Figure 5-6) was still being used, the repair of the Red Cross water system that had been established there a year or so earlier, and the creation of a school lunch program.

\textbf{Figure 5-6. Andakolosy Primary School.}

\textsuperscript{97} Later, electricity would be the prime solution to a problem technicians encountered with moving water through the canal from the reservoir that the partner agency, Office National de Nutrition (ONN), had installed.
The plan, however, proved impractical against the missteps and mistakes of administrators, local suspicion and resistance, and the burgeoning Malagasy political crisis and its immediate effects. The specific ways in which failure was produced on the Campus, and the ways the project was rebegun from the inside as it grappled with a number of crises, will be taken up in the next chapter. At stake in the hopes that bureaucrats, technicians, and rural individuals invested in the Village MAP, are the ideals the individuals at the center of the project held for the Malagasy state and its rural citizens.

The ideal state, as constructed here, is one which takes on a highly social hue. On the surface, the “social” function embodies the provision of practical education as well as an infrastructure that can provide citizens with agricultural canals, clean water, nutritional aid, etc. This idea fulfills a taken for granted image of what the state envisions as the improvement of rural livelihoods and relies upon the statistical methods and expertise that help to define development. It requires the positioning of the state and its agents – both bureaucrats and technicians - as intermediaries in the lives of rural individuals. More specifically, the state, through individuals with their own motivations and aspirations, places itself between the village and the wider economy. This is particularly true in relation to the market needs of urban populations which are clearly envisioned as a palliative to rural poverty.

As a number of scholars have noted, the social is not the purview of the state alone and the ascension of neoliberal ideology has resulted in what some have called the “death of the social” (Rose 1999), which sees this aspect of legitimacy crafting in governance devolving onto other structures. For Ferguson (2005) and Ong (2006), the
NGO has taken up this role in some areas while corporate bodies have begun to provide it in others, resulting in forms of overlapping and graduated sovereignty that both enhance and mitigate state power. While western nations continue to grapple with dismantling the role of the state in the social, “development” means that both the social and the lack thereof remain preeminent across the board. The state does not cannibalize the social as much as it manufactures it – building up schools and hospitals for which it is visibly responsible, but which remain under staffed and under operated.

**Alternate (Ideal) States: Sherritt and (another) Model Village**

While Village MAP administrators imagined a role for Sherritt in their project – facilitated by its need for government support in Atsinanana and in the capital – Sherritt was itself engaged in very similar practices of crafting the ideal state and the ideal social within it. The inclusion of corporate social responsibility has become a key way in which extractive industries, which rely on the interruption of land tenure, craft their legitimacy (see Kapelus 2002, Frynas 2005, Jenkins 2004). The folding in of the social into the corporate accompanies its disappearance in other realms (Rose 1999) and results in uneven development, either through the relegation of space and territory into that which is “useful” and that which is “not useful” (Ferguson 2005) or a type of graduated sovereignty and zones of development (Ong 1999b). The Village MAP (and to a lesser extent, the *Campus Ambanivohitra*) banked on Sherritt’s need to craft legitimacy through the social – hoping to capitalize on the market for agricultural goods the project would create. It was an expectation of what I would term the *market social* – that is a
When Sherritt (formerly Dynatech) constructed their massive nickel and cobalt refinery within Tamatave, they displaced roughly 1000 people. To deal with the displacement, Sherritt formed its own social mitigation group, headed by a Malagasy archaeologist. An anti-developmentalist scholar, who once berated me for being overly idealistic, began his career with Sherritt by overseeing cultural resource management for the pipeline that ran from the mine, in the interior of the island, to the refinery in Tamatave. The social arm of the project offered displaced populations new, expertly planned, villages that mirrored (in a funhouse sort of way) those created at the Village MAP.

The group hired architects to design two room homes for resettled populations. The houses had wooden frames and siding, with metal roofs, different from the “traditional” architecture of the area, but reminiscent of other homes built for technicians at colonial IFAC and IFCC and postcolonial FOFIFA sites. The project created several villages and constructed wide paths between them, and established a “state” primary school and medical center, paying the salaries of the employees at each. The administration of the area was put under the control of a consultancy called The Social Group, and overseen by an Oxford educated Peruvian whose father was a career diplomat at the United Nations.

The project tried, like the Village MAP and Campus Ambanivohitra, to train locals in “modern” agricultural techniques. Initially toying with the idea of hiring state-based,

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98 Sherrit had a subsidiary from the capital that provided cafeteria services, and no one in their social services offices were interested in partnering with local farmers or had heard from either project.
internationally funded organizations like the Programme de Promotion des Revenues Ruraux, they decided this was too expensive and they would handle it in-house, hiring agricultural technicians individually to work with displaced farmers. They built an experimental field just next to a clinic they had constructed – a clinic with the familiar paint scheme of cream and red used at government offices and newly built schools like the Andakolosy EPP.

The products of this training were expected – as at the Village MAP and the Campus Ambanivohitra – to be sold to both the cafeteria operation at Sherritt, and the urban population of Tamatave. Local farmers, project staff complained, were uninterested in adopting these practices and several families moved clandestinely back to the land now controlled by the refinery. Sherritt, in this endeavor, were embroiled in a legitimacy game that fed into their relations with both the population they displaced, and the state that was enabling them to mine a very valuable resource with a largely foreign labor pool. They acted as a proxy for the state, not replacing them, but bolstering their power in an area characterized by its negative relations with the state and its leadership.

And a proxy they were – the young Peruvian expert came to mediate disputes with the teachers at the local EPP – whose salaries Sherritt paid, but who often passively resisted the project by leaving their posts in the middle of the day. She worked with village leaders to mediate violent crimes (there was a murder in late 2008) and had young Malagasy social scientists living among the villagers and keeping detailed statistics on the entire population.
The ideal state and the vision of the social refracted through development find their apex in the Village MAP, but this distorted reflection is somewhat more poignantly evident in Sherritt’s mitigation practices. Both reflect more than the desires of the state and its agents. They are carefully crafted ideals (and models) that are projected to audiences spanning national and economic borders. In this sense, the Village MAP and the Sherritt resettlement are refractions and performances carried out for a set of consumers that are overwhelmingly urban and elite. These consumers constitute the central audience of the project, and hold different positions in a hierarchy that is illustrated by the differing emphases placed on issues as divergent as getting the program on the Malagasy airwaves or addressing local grievances.

On the ground, this meant that sovereignty – funneled through a variety of institutions – was more attenuated in these spaces than in others. Because Sherritt paid for the administration and care of their town, but did it through state educational institutions, the resettlement scheme emerged as strong state space – much stronger than the Village MAP, though roughly equal in its goals. The situation fits notions of graduated sovereignty where citizens are subjected to different rights and obligations (Ong 1999b), but also exposes these sites as spaces of conflict and contestation, a reality that was true at Sherritt and the Village MAP. This conflict was not relegated to the hierarchies of “experts” and “villagers,” but saturated multiple relationships among and between expert, bureaucratic, and “peasant” stakeholders.

**Representing the State and Reproducing Status: Bureaucrats, Politicians and Technicians (and an Anthropologist) at the Village MAP**

This section explores the organizations and individuals that made up the Village and who constitute, overall, the *producers* and *consumers* of the project. But state
legitimacy does not exist outside of personal and professional desire. In examining the villagers that did and did not participate in the program, the organizations and technicians that constituted the leading edge of the project, and the bureaucrats who administered it, I illustrate the ways that their search for personal and professional rebeginnings and their own imaginings of the ideal state – and the interaction of the multiple and sometimes conflicting ambitions these entailed - brought them into the orbit of the project and structured their effects on it. The Village MAP that emerges from the project’s self-representations is intimately tied to the imaginings of these agents, their perceptions of each other, and their ideal vision of the Malagasy state.

The organizations brought into the institutional network array of the Village MAP were diverse, and included the Bureau Régionale de la Présidence (BRP), the Direction régionale du développement rural (DRDR), the Office National de la Nutrition (ONN), and the Programme de Promotion des Revenues Ruraux (PPRR; see Figure 5-7). For reasons that will become clear, I include myself – as the anthropologist – in this list. Each individual and organization had a stake in making the project work, or appear to work. Each organization could use the Village as a high profile example, one that could be, at a later date, included in its literature – those glossy materials that get handed out in spaces like the World Nutrition Day conference described in the last chapter – becoming part of their self-presentations. Individuals could see their moral and expert value through the project and it was imagined as a culmination of their desires to create an ideal world.
Figure 5-7. Andakolosy network connections, 2008-2009. Bold black outlines denote formal and active connections, black denotes tacit relationships, and gray denotes a shadow presence. Black lines denote durable relations, while gray lines represent relations that have changed over time and broken gray lines denote a funding relationship.
In addition to these self-representations, the project offered paths through which individuals could become more relevant – upping their political status, and their own position in the nodes of the network that constituted the state. In fact, it was in part the success of the creation and dissemination of a certain image of the Village – the ability of individual agents to craft and present “development” to an increasingly centralized state – that shook up and rebegan the Village under new leadership and contributed to its myriad logistical and technical problems.

**Bureau Régional de la Présidence**

The *Bureau Régional de la Présidence* (BRP; Regional Office of the Presidency), housed in a grand bright white beach-side mansion whose top floor constituted the President’s home in Tamatave, contained only two offices. The first was the Office of the Senator for the Region of Atsinanana, who at the time was also holding the title of Coordinator of the BRP. The second was the Office of the Director of Development Support for the BRP. Both were grand offices with plush couches and windows looking out on the front garden and the beach beyond.

These two individuals constituted, for a time, the pinnacle of power above the Village MAP, and their well-appointed offices stand in stark contrast to the former bathroom that housed the *Campus Ambanivohitra* or the well-appointed, though oft-flooded, offices of the French representative of the Region of Haute-Normandie at the regional governmental palace. With full time military guards, tall wrought-iron gates and a huge wall, the building was an imposing and sparse statement of presidential power. The fact that the Senator’s office was based there, while the other regional senator worked out of another office, marked him as the President’s man – but also someone
well-connected with the most supreme power in a nation where power was becoming more and more centralized under the office of the President.

Figure 5-8. The Presidential Palace in Tamatave. The avenue in the foreground was in the process of being repaved. Construction was initiated at the BRP.

Where the Director of the Campus Ambanivohitra was relegated to the rare use of an old Citroën prone to jettison parts of its chassis during *sensibilisation* trips – a car provided by the university for the project several years earlier - the highest level administrators of the Village MAP travelled in government provided 4x4s with leather seats and keyless entry and drove to the site, some 7 kilometers away, in caravans of 2-4 vehicles. These were the same vehicles that drove, lights on and horns blaring, in presidential caravans to events addressing Global Food Insufficiency, where Ministers and other national officials spoke of Madagascar's progress and then planted trees (in holes pre-dug by local labor) for the press. These caravans were a (relatively) small part of the theatrics of state and sovereign that anthropologists have identified as a key
locus of power (Balandier 1980). As Herzfield (2001) notes, caravans act to reinforce “the link between the governors and governed” (127). But the caravan also highlighted the gulf between governed and governors. In trips to the Village MAP, this power was only sometimes apparent – sometimes technicians came alone, some cars (and status positions) were better than others. But it is the larger caravans – the chain 15 cars deep with blaring horns screaming “Get out of the way!” while chauffeurs speed along – that sent state power snaking up the coast.99 These went to ceremonies and activities that the president never attended but where he was always expected. The line of government cars lent mystery to the President but also belied his paranoia. Jourde (2005) argues that the presidential tour is key to the maintenance of authoritarianism. In the case of Madagascar, it seems, absence is an equally potent symbol. In many ways, the BRP represented Ravalomanana’s shadow presence in the region.

But the BRP – whose top floor stood empty awaiting the return of the President and First Lady – acted as a space in which things got done, the image it projected making it more attractive to citizens and others who saw it as the pinnacle of state power. The outer office was often full of individuals from Tamatave and beyond, politicians and lower level bureaucrats, people seeking aid and redress from the Senator, and students he worked with at the University, looking for further guidance in their studies. It was, then, a space, and indeed the most prestigious space, from which he could fulfill his multiple duties: Senator, Coordinator of the BRP, and Professor at the University of Toamasina. Like the technicians that took on multiple overlapping

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99 The caravans also drew directly on and visibly reinforced the inequalities between urban and rural and between the bureaucratic elite and everyone else. The blaring horns underscored who had the responsibility to get out of the way.
roles that supplemented their stability and enhanced their economic potentials, the Senator engaged in multiple forms of labor, weaving them together – so that each flowed into the other. To give one concrete example, the Senator’s role as an elected official enhanced his political relationship with the region of Haute-Normandie. This, in turn, enhanced his power over the Campus Ambanivohitra and his status as Coordinator of the BRP, which enabled the existence of the Campus Fanantenana.

This is flexible labor as enhancement – a reality that is open to few. But it is also a layering of labor – rather than flexible labor seen consecutively. These labor practices – which are in reality about political-economy (rather than politics or economy) – represent a sort of flexible expert in the person of the Senator.

When the Village MAP was begun – when the houses were being constructed and it was still considered the Campus Fanantenana – the Senator was a frequent visitor, accompanying the Chef de Région and others, and calling in the Haute-Normandie volunteer and I, along with reporters from the President’s television station, Madagascar Broadcasting Service (MBS). At the time, the Senator had hoped that Haute-Normandie would help fund the project, but as the it gained the more explicit political support of the state and became more closely tied to the MAP, this became unnecessary. The optics of having foreigners involved, however, was preferable to the project being wholly Malagasy associated, and so our presence served a legitimizing function (Ferguson 1990) that grew and was transformed as it was pulled towards the Senator’s political trajectory.

The senator’s involvement in the Campus decreased as his political power increased and as the political crisis more fully emerged. By the time Andakolosy
farmers were participating in training, he had stopped visiting the site – leaving it to the BRPs Director of Development Support. A student at the University of Toamasina, the Director had worked at Care International. Her interests moved the aspirations of the Village MAP towards issues of family and education and she was key in the emergence of the (never materialized) goals of creating community childcare and a school lunch program. Pursuing a Masters in Development, she conducted a handful of focus groups with community women, asking about their nutrition and family planning practices. I accompanied her on these additional rituals of state power.

Having the shop-owner gather chairs under the shade of a small shed, the BRP Development Director settled into asking Andakolosy’s young women to talk about health and childcare. She recorded the number of children, their ages and their previous medical care. She then asked about their food, leaning in to me to express concern over a little girl, whose hair was a bright sun-worn red, explaining the linkage between the girls hair and malnutrition. When the young women pushed forward the skin on their arms to reveal Norplant contraceptive devices, she expressed surprise. This encounter with bodies already aligned to the potential intervention of the state signaled the gulf between the image of development’s targets and the realities projects so structured by political and state power encountered in practice.

The Development director, accused of some slight witchcraft by lower level BRP staff, was an ambitious woman and as the crisis unrolled she pressed herself closer to the seat of power. By January of 2009, she had largely disappeared from the project. It was duly turned over to one of its other administrative partners, the Region of Atsinanana.
Region of Atsinanana

In the region of Atsinanana, the project was initially linked to the (presidentially appointed) chef de région, who played a role similar to that of the Senator as spokesperson for the project. Eventually, and as administrative support at the BRP began to dissipate, the project came under the leadership of the Regional Director of Economic Affairs and Projects, a sub-level bureaucrat for the project.

The DAEP, as he was called, had a grand office in a building on Tamatave’s main boulevard that formerly held the offices of the province of Toamasina. As the provincial governing structure was dismantled and the new regional palace was built near the outskirts of town, the building began to handle overflow. The front of the building was impressive, painted in the familiar cream and red. The back of the building, on the other hand, was a deep weathered gray – with accents of green moss. The roads led to the back on each side were so prone to flooding in the rainy season as to be impassible without a 4x4. The paint job signaled the importance of state visibility, the roads signaled the reality of decay.

Compared to the offices of the BRP, the DAEP's office was old and decrepit, but held against the offices of other government and development officials in Tamatave, it was well appointed – primed for important meetings with a leather sofa and chair. The desk was littered with trinkets of economic development – those small gifts that accompany the entry of large corporations into the area: a leather bound date book with the Korean company, Daewoo’s, logo embossed in gold; a Sherritt Ambatovy wall calendar. These small ornaments mirrored, and surpassed, the gifts that the French region of Haute-Normandie provided their volunteer in Tamatave, who would close meetings by giving out plastic pens and key chains bearing the region’s seal. These
images’ circulation is one part in the legitimacy games that go into governance and development, each gift a reminder of what the organization represented is doing for you in ways that touch your life and remain far removed from it. Like the gifts of the sovereign (Mbembe 2001), the trinkets of development are key to the sustenance of power in ways that are important to both sides of the reciprocal relationship.

The DAEP was no stranger to development initiatives, coming to work for the government after time spent heading up a non-governmental organization called Tamokoreka (Brotherhood). His father had been the Chef de Zone de l’Agriculture in the south-eastern city of Mahanoro and had spent two lengthy sojourns in France for training. As this suggests, his family was heavily involved in service, with one cousin running a military infirmary in Antsirabe and a sister organizing for President Ravalomanana’s Tiako’i Madagasikara (TIM) party.

His role in development, and his public service was, for him, more closely linked to his religion than to his politics. The DAEP put great store in the Anglican Church he was involved in, and crafted his role as DAEP as one of religious duty. Religion was a common theme within the project – inviting linkages of religion and development as well as religion and bureaucratic power. The DAEPs self-presentation were rife with themes of development as religious duty and moral obligation.

His religion was one of many traits he shared with the other technicians involved in the project. They also shared education abroad and the title of economist. The DAEP had attended private religious schools in Mahanoro before moving to public schools in Tamatave, then attending the University of Antananarivo and the Academy of Economic Science in Bucharest, Romania, before returning to Madagascar. Like many other
development agents, his foreign training followed the trajectories of Cold War era politics in a time when the Malagasy nation was embracing socialism (1975-1992) under President Didier Ratsiraka.

**Commune**

The Village MAP’s operation also invited the involvement of lower level politicians. At the level beneath the BRP, the Senators, and the District Deputies, the project fell under the purview of the commune mayor. The mayor’s involvement was subtle – he often sent an Assistant to represent him at consciousness-raising meetings, but was not involved in the day-to-day operations of the project. For Andakolosy villagers, however, it was the commune mayor, after the *President de Fokontany*, who was the best placed intermediary as the project began to fail and threaten their livelihoods, a situation discussed in the next chapter.

**Fokontany**

One of the most present individuals in the Village MAP was the President of the Fokontany of which it was a part. A relatively young politician, he had been born in the area and his family continued to live there. His father had been a FOFIFA chauffeur before becoming a FOFIFA technician. This occupational link assured his family the right to farm the land and live in the remnants of FOFIFA buildings. Like many other families who worked for the state before FOFIFA's funding dried up, farmers in the fokontany inhabited a world of questionable tenure where they considered themselves to be farming on borrowed time.

No stranger to the “market,” and himself an exemplar of the idealized neoliberal “entrepreneur of the self” (Rose 1999), the Fokontany President was engaged in a number of economic activities. His most lucrative activity was a nursery enterprise (see
Figure 5-9). Like his father, he worked for FOFIFA, acting as security for the parts of the site they were still involved in, including an experimental nursery adjacent to his home in a colonial era garage at the abandoned FOFIFA administrative offices. He was one of only a handful of locals employed by FOFIFA in 2008-9.

The Fokontany President ran two nurseries, one near his home, and another to the north along the highway, just past the turn off for Andakolosy and the Village MAP. The plants he grew here were destined for Tamatave, where he had a contract with a British-owned landscaping office. The landscaping business was carrying out the beautification and maintenance on the grounds of the Sherritt nickel and cobalt refinery, a massive complex with elite and menial barracks for expatriate and Malagasy employees respectively. In addition, the Fokontany President was involved in manufacturing cement blocks, again destined for Tamatave to be sold in the city’s burgeoning (because of Sherritt and the industries it spurred) construction business. Finally, he was involved in intensive riziculture, identical to that which the project hoped to facilitate with their ill-fated canal.

These multiple, overlapping sets of practices set the Fokontany President as an ideal flexible expert in the pattern advanced by the Campus Ambanivohitra. His activities were not all agricultural – but he could turn economic activity on a dime, following market shifts deftly. Like the Senator, he could also turn the overlapping nature of his practices to entrepreneurial benefit, using contacts in one realm (like his landscaping supply contract with Sherritt) to foster connections in others (like construction).

100 As the economic crisis began to hit the Canada and the United States in the summer of 2008, Sherritt cut its landscaping contract, and the President’s largest client was gone.
In addition to his private interests, the Fokontany President carried out the duties of his bureaucratic office. Officially, he presided over paperwork, providing death, birth and marriage certificates to locals. These duties, which were supposed to generate revenue for the local government, were rarely called upon as local individuals were rarely willing or able to pay the fees necessary to subject themselves to the power of the state. More often than not, his official duties were concerned with attending local ceremonies and adjudicating local disputes. He could also, and perhaps most importantly for his success, call on the labor of the villagers for public works he deemed necessary. In turn, his entrepreneurial success supported the local economy, providing temporary jobs to villagers whose positions would prove more precarious as the project went on.
The Fokontany President’s three sisters and one brother, concentrated near the reservoir where the Village MAP canal was built, participated in the Village MAP project, one putting her name in to acquire one of the new houses, though most planned to stay where they were – often living in the buildings that formerly housed FOFIFA technicians. The president’s brother, like him, held a political position as the Chef de Village of Andakolosy. This position gave him some power over land, but did not translate into a central role in the Village MAP.

As the project plans began to deteriorate in the face of Madagascar’s political crisis, the Fokontany President became increasingly important. Village MAP participants, including his siblings, approached him to petition his superiors to address the problems initiated by the program. As these problems progressed, he ran point between the villagers and the state.

**Direction Regional du Development Rural**

The most senior official at the Village MAP was a technician from the *Direction Regional du Development Rural* (DRDR), the local organization tasked with implementing the agricultural priorities of the Ministry of Agriculture. He was the Chief of Regional Service for Agricultural Mobilization and Producer Organization Support. In other words, his role in other areas was to aid in the creation of peasant organizations and offer training in modern agricultural techniques.

The Chef de Service attended public school in Madagascar, but was trained as an agronomist at the Bryansk Agricultural Institute in the USSR. Like the DAEP, his education coincided with the Malagasy nation’s twenty year foray into socialism. It was his uncle, an accountant for the *Ankoton’ny Kongresy ny-Fahaleovantena Malagasy* (AKFM, Congress Party for Malagasy Independence) party, that arranged this
technician's and other students' educational exchange with the Soviet Union. The AKFM is considered the national communist party, and constituted the original post-Independence opposition party in Madagascar's first republic (Marcus and Ratsimbaharison 2005). When Ratsiraka came to power in 1972, the AKFM joined other socialist parties supporting him to form Front National pour la Defense de la Revolution (FNDR).

Upon his return from Bryansk in 1981 the Chef de Service began working as a functionary, first for the Ministry of Agriculture in Fenerive Est, north of Tamatave, then in Mahajunga, on the western coast, and finally back in Tamatave, where he had grown up. His interest in agriculture was a familial one – his parents were farmers in the region of Analanjirofo, north of Toamasina, growing a number of different items including: rice, coffee, clover, bananas, manioc and raising poultry and cattle. As mentioned earlier, his cousin – an economist – had also gone into the development sector, and while the Chef de Service had taught one workshop at the Campus Ambanivohitra, he questioned the validity of their tactics and suggested that the project was not carried out correctly.

At the Village MAP the Chef de Service had the opportunity to direct agricultural training and coordinate among three knowledge bases: the DRDR, which he represented, the PPRR, represented by another technician, and the FJKM, represented by the Pastor. The Chef de Service took responsibility for instructing villagers in intensive rice cultivation, sorghum (which would be a new crop for the villagers), and maize. The PPRR and FJKM were tasked with instructing the villagers in market or produce farming, a facet of the training that was closely linked with the BRPs.
expectations and assessment of the burgeoning expatriate market spurred by the Sherritt Ambatovy project. The Chef de Service was also responsible for organizing the usage of regional resources such as the five ford tractors delivered to the Tamatave DRDR to divvy out among the five districts of Atsinanana, or a rotary tiller that was used, once, to clear land at Andakolosy.

In dictating the type of agriculture that the Village MAP would engage in, the Chef de Service called on the experiences and priorities of the DRDR as a whole. His reliance on these priorities led him to favor certain crops over others, even insisting that villagers clear land already planted with crops in order to grow new crops, for which he would provide the seeds. Villagers' ability to continue in the project, and their ability to – in future – inhabit the houses that the project built for them, were predicated on their willingness to succumb to a hierarchy of agricultural expertise that he was – organizationally - at the top of. The failures that ensued, and which are discussed in the following chapter, emerged not through his intentionality, but through his trust in his and the state’s capabilities and the superiority of their knowledge.

**Programme de Promotion des Revenues Ruraux**

The PPRR was brought into the project early on, and tasked with improving the local infrastructure to better enable the “innate” entrepreneurial spirit of the Andakolosy people. In particular, PPRR was responsible for repairing the road that ran along the site, the creation of water pumps around near village fields that could provide water for agriculture, the construction of sheds to serve as points of sale and temporary storage for goods grown at the site. Materially, PPRR was expected to provide material inputs at the site, particularly items like seeds, fertilizer, and agricultural machinery. After the
project had become viable, PPRR was expected to aid local farmers by facilitating the transport and sale of their products.

In reality, PPRR had very little involvement in the project. Like ONN, they sent technicians to mark potential pathways. Initially they were also called on to instruct Andakolosy farmers in market agriculture, but after a slight competition between the pastor representing the FJKM and PPRR, their technician dropped out of this aspect of the project. As the political crisis began to unfold, their participation, like that of many of the organizations and individuals involved, began to wane.

**Office National de Nutrition**

The ONN’s involvement in the Village MAP was limited in the start-up phase of the project to the amelioration of land, particularly as this supported the institution of intensive rizicultural practices. These priorities fell under the organization’s *Prevention et Sécurisation Nutritionnelle* initiative whose main goal was the improvement of local infrastructure (the placard announcing their work is shown in Figure 5-10). At the Village MAP, two to three technicians led work on a new irrigation canal being built at the furthest reaches of the village. These individuals, armed with handheld Global Positioning devices, mapped the canal’s route, running it from the internal boundaries Andakolosy, to the site of the Village MAP, theoretically irrigating all of the lands in between.

The canal and two retention ponds were a part of a “cash for work” program that provided locals who volunteered to work on the canal with Ar 1500 a day (around .75 USD). The irrigation canal was being built at the same time that the houses within the Village were taking shape. Local individuals, including those from Andakolosy and those from neighboring villages, found a measure of wage labor with the project that
allowed them the opportunity to work close to home. Hierarchies of knowledge emerged as local individuals working on the canal anticipated problems technicians did not. The ONN canal’s moved money, but they also acted as one signal (discussed in the next chapter) of the failures of communication across social and epistemological hierarchies.

Figure 5-10. Sign along the highway signaling the Office National de Nutrition’s project in Andakolosy.

The Anthropologist: Optical Illusion and Illusory Advocate

It is discomforting but necessary to include myself here. Anthropologists exist in a constant state of unease as they deal with their subjects. As perhaps too many have pointed out, we are a fixture in our projects and cannot escape our subjectivity in either observing or relaying our observations. But all of that is by now well-worn.
What I want to draw out in discussing my role in the project is the fact that I was called in with purpose – a strategic node in the network. Initially the Senator pulled me into the project, inviting me out to the site along with the French volunteer from Haute-Normandie. We were responsible for nothing during these meetings, but provided a background of vazaha power that backed up and legitimized the action as coming – or at least being supported – from the “already developed” in a way that offers a subtle reflection of what Ferguson (1994) describes as the importance of foreign bodies within development as a mask for the political nature of NGOs. To an extent, then, I acted as a legitimizing form that illustrated the involvement of foreign expertise.

As the project grew, so did my role in it. I got used to being in the background – an extra in the theater of the state. I was a willing participant, subjecting myself to being used by the state in exchange for access to these performances. Later, I was called on to perform speaking roles – sitting with deputies on a couch in the presidential palace, being coached by the Senator (“You should speak Malagasy. Jim Carrey was just here – and he spoke Malagasy on TV. It was great – so you should say something in Malagasy”). I would talk to him about the project, saying that I thought the biggest challenge was mistrust of the state “Oh that’s good” he said. “You should say that.”

When the Ravalomanana MBS station came by to film the Village MAP I was asked to do the bulk of the speaking. I was cognizant of my role as a propaganda piece – and hedged my speech, relegating myself to discussing only the “potential” of the project and how hard the villagers had worked thus far. In this piece I spoke only in English, and when the film was done I worked with the Senator’s assistant on a
translation until the Senator informed us that it was not necessary – they would air the piece without it. Visibility emerged here as a prime objective of the project.

As time went on, the Senator revealed more of why I was important to him. He told me that he had spoken to the President about me. According to the Senator, the President said that he should get me to come and work at the BRP; I was given permission to set up an office there. The exchange was followed by a quip by the President about never letting the French work there – they could only work in the aforementioned Regional Palace – but as I was American, I could have an office in the BRP. And finally – as an American, the Senator must put me on TV.

I was a willing pawn, then, in the Senator’s efforts to curry favor with the President, and in the President’s efforts, apparently, to continue to curry disfavor with the French (this was shortly after he had spent several months ignoring the French Ambassador, eventually forcing him to leave the country). Not much more than a blip on the radars of their lives, the small attention I did garner, and the way I inhabited this role, meant that I was tightly linked to the project.

When, in November 2008, the project’s problems and the political crisis – which precluded the assignment of attention to these problems – had initiated a small scale food crisis, I was called on by the community to intervene. I was a last ditch effort, after the proper channels up to the commune rurale mayor had been approached. My intervention was the flipside of my compliance with being used to achieve a certain sort of political optics, but – as discussed in Chapter 1 – my capabilities as an advocate did not measure up to the situation. After following the hierarchical chain from the commune back to the BRP, and relying on an emphasis on the political optics of a
development project creating hunger, my efforts garnered promises but no action. The aid I sought was – strategically – given over to functionaries working for the regional government in Tamatave, while the farmers were subjected to a long and self-congratulatory speech that reified the existential constructions of the “peasant” versus the bureaucratic and technological “elite.”

**Shadow Presences**

A few other organizations are worth adding to the context of Andakolosy’s experience with development. These sat alongside the project, visible reminders that Andakolosy villagers were not the image created for them of the desperately poor and disconnected. Rather, the villagers had experienced a layering of development interventions that began with their own families but continued in their frequent contact with additional organizations working to better the area. The site continued to constitute an experimental site, an area in which to do and show, for several organizations. This usage of Andakolosy as a field of “demonstration” in ways both practical and political is a representation to the inside and the outside. Organizations used their demonstrations as a way to simultaneously “lead by example” – with the target being the local population – and to illustrate successes to the organizations on the other side of them. Thus the Red Cross periodically brought international administrators and Directors to see the water cistern they installed in Andakolosy, despite its operational difficulties.

**Foibe Fikarohana ampiharina amin’ny Fampandrosoana ny eny Ambanivohitra**

*Foibe Fikarohana ampiharina amin’ny Fampandrosoana ny eny Ambanivohitra* (FOFIFA; The National Center for Applied Research on Rural Development) had been in the area since 1972. Prior to their taking over the land at Andakolosy, the areas fell under French scientific partnerships and organizations such as the *Institut Français de*
recherches fruitières outre-mer et des agrumes coloniales (IFAC) and Institut de Recherches et d’Applications des Méthodes de développement (IRAM). IFAC, according to locals, specialized in bananas, corn and fruit trees, while IRAM focused on rice, cocoa, sugar cane, and produce. In 1972, with the ascension of Didier Ratsiraka during his first term, IFAC and IRAM, and their technicians and administrators, were forced out of the country. The land concessions that were there then went to FOFIFA, who continued to run them until the mid-90s when a shrinking state budget caused layoffs and, eventually, the land was turned over to locals, many of whom were the descendants of former employees of the organization.

By 2008-9, FOFIFA had employed only a handful of part-time employees, two local employees and four technicians who checked in from time to time on the organization’s nursery. The effects of FOFIFA’s earlier actions, and the organizations that preceded it, constitute the temporal background of the stage on which the Village MAP was set. Shrouded in darkness in the official narrative of the project, and of how its elite protagonists imagined themselves, the contours of this past remained well known to Villagers, and shaped their approach to the project itself.

The temporal aspect of FOFIFA existed adjacent to its very real continued existence as the true proprietor of the land. This situation left Andakolosy villagers in a precarious relationship with their land they relied on for survival. At the same time, FOFIFA played a similar intermediary role between the new organizations taking over the functions it could no longer handle.

Centre Technique Horticole de Tamatave

The Centre Technique Horticole de Tamatave (CTHT; Horticultural Technical Center of Tamatave), an organization created in 2001, funded by the European Union,
and falling under the administrative control of the Ministry of Agriculture, was a semi-permanent fixture in Andakolosy. The program, though not directly involved in the Village MAP, continued the work previously done by IFAC, specializing in fruit bearing trees. In Andakolosy, they had a small field with a number of different fruit trees, each labeled with their type. The field sat alongside the road, and just across the street from what served as the Village MAPs produce fields. Initially, this was the extent of their involvement. Later, as groups like PPRR pulled away from the training aspects of the project – and as it devolved into crisis – CTHT was invited to participate, though the political crisis precluded this eventuality.

**Sampan’Asa Fampandrosoana/Fiangonan’i Jesosy Kristy eto Madagasikara**

The Sampan’Asa Fampandrosoana/Fiangonan’i Jesosy Kristy eto Madagasikara (SAF/FJKM; Development Organization, Church of Jesus Christ of Madagascar) is the development arm of the FJKM. The FJKM was closely associated with President Ravalomanana, and one of its technicians, a man called simply “the Pastor” by the Andakolosy villagers, would be a prime agent in the Village MAP. SAF/FJKM was, however, not officially or formally involved in the project. Rather, it entered through a side door, based on Ravalomanana’s relationship with the organization and with the Pastor, individually.

**Croix Rouge**

Finally, groups like the Croix Rouge Madagascar and Croix Rouge France were involved in public awareness campaigns and plumbing systems at the EPP, providing five water spigots for students and a large cistern and pump in 2005. The group visited once while I was at the EPP, bringing with them French representatives and bureaucrats to see the site. Other than the few signs around the campus admonishing
the visitors to wash their hands, they were rarely present. By the time the Village MAP was underway, many of the waterworks created by the program were in partial disrepair.

**Embedded in History: Andakolosy Peasants Outside of Official Narratives**

The creation of the target population, or the beneficiaries of development, is a key component in the creation and sustenance of development industry. The assertion of a certain type of historical and economic reality for the peasantry is at odds with the lived reality of individuals in Andakolosy. At the Village MAP, beneficiaries were imagined as a set of highly impoverished individuals, in line with the original goal of the *Campus Fanantenana*. As villager protest forced the project to address local individuals, rather than individuals from other communities, administrators continued under the same construction of what it meant to be a “peasant.” Yet Andakolosy farmers, constructed as simple, poor, and unconnected to the state by the elite involved in the project, had a much more complex reality.

The project, as it evolved, came to encompass almost the entirety of the village of Andakolosy. Situated about a kilometer west of the eastern coastal highway, the main area of the village is situated on a rise at the end of a narrow and eroded road. The rise overlooks an expanse of rice fields that are tended by individuals from the small village and those larger ones that surround it. The city, according to villagers, was constituted out of the presence of practical agricultural research and training. The Fokontany President’s sister, who lived in the remnants of a building from the era, described the site’s past:

> There were *vazaha* living here before. They built these houses. When the buildings were finished, the employees of FOFIFA used them. They had electricity before. Over there on the hill, there was a clock. You know why
this village is called [Andakolosy] … They called it Andakolosy because at 7 am in the morning, they’d ring the bell to call the laborers to work. The name is a conjunction of any (at) and lakolosy (bell). By 2008, the bell no longer functioned, and most of the buildings were falling apart – prime candidates for renovation by a state trying to impress its capacity on its population. The memories of what had been were ever-present – shells of buildings spread across the landscape, many visible in the prime real estate at the tops of hills. The creation of regimented time through agricultural development, despite bureaucratic imaginings of a space filled with a one-dimensional and “traditional” peasant, would constitute in part a return to a period of regimented modernity that was characterized more by an ideal of wage labor for local communities than the entrepreneur of the self.

Figure 5-11. FOFIFA and IFAC buildings in 2008. FOFIFA had stopped running this office in the 90s, the other was abandoned in the 70s.

Despite the FOFIFA layoffs in the mid-90s, many of the employees that had worked at the IFAC and IRAM stations, then at FOFIFA, remained, and a couple continued to hold posts with FOFIFA. Notable among these were two supervisors and nine technicians, with specialties including: coffee, rice, manioc, litchis, bananas, and jackfruit. These were the most successful farmers in the area, and tended to live in bigger houses. Among them were the father of the Fokontany President, the Chef de
Village, and another farmer who I was directed to when I asked the local seer who he considered to be excellent at cultivation. Most of these had worked their way up through the organization, starting as guardians and chauffeurs initially. Four others worked as watchmen before they were forced to leave their jobs.

The land, shifting to FOFIFA’s hands in 1974, was given to these former employees to farm, and as the workers were let go, the land was given over to them in place of a pension in 1996. According to one of the daughters of a Chef who continued to work for FOFIFA, doing follow-up evaluations on newly trained technicians, FOFIFA gave employees a choice, the land or a cash settlement. Those who took cash had to leave, the rest could stay. Her father had worked first as a day laborer, then a driver, before making chef, and as part of his deal with FOFIFA, when the site closed he was able to keep his family in the FOFIFA technician housing near the present-day dam and canal. With the seasonal onslaught of the cyclones, the housing had fallen into disrepair and the livable space being reduced.

Gaining residency and farming rights was a legal issue, and an agreement with FOFIFA had to be made to gain access to land use rights. One elderly resident who was the common-law wife of a retired, and by 2009 deceased, FOFIFA employee had to wage a legal battle to get the right to continue living on the land. One hundred thousand Ariary later (~50.00 USD) later, she had assured the right to the land for herself and her children.

The land of these former workers was divided among their children, who in large part, they had taught what farming techniques they had learned with FOFIFA. Overtime, FOFIFA parents separated it among their children, so that the father of the
Fokontany President shared his plots among his five children in Andakolosy, while his eldest son, the President, used FOFIFA land on the other side of the river. Land that was not distributed among family members was often rented out to other villagers. The practice generated income for the families living there, who earned around 20,000 Ariary a year for access to the land. Other land nearby, but no longer under the control of FOFIFA was available as well, and through another former FOFIFA employee, who used his retirement settlement to buy FOFIFA out of some of their land.

Thirteen of the 45 (~28%) local individuals chosen to participate in the Village MAP were related to these former and present FOFIFA employees. One was the Chef de Village, and the rest were the children of his former colleagues. Three of these came from the family of the President of the Fokontany, and one was the daughter of the Chef de Village. The knowledge base that these individuals had was supplemented by a younger generation of villagers who, like the President Fokontany’s brother-in-law, had either been trained as technicians or had followed some other training – through fishing organizations, micro-credit banks, and the primary school curricula.

Most of the participants had only attended school up to primary, and just a few had had no schooling or had gone on to secondary school. Yet practical education – layered on the technical education of the past’s failed agricultural projects – prevailed. The agricultural practices of Andakolosy villagers reflected the area’s history and potential as well as individuals’ interests and understandings of the market. In the agricultural fields, these centered on rice, manioc, maize, sweet potato, but also included bananas, citrus, cherries, coconut, cinnamon, litchis, and papaya. Elsewhere they were centered on cattle and poultry. In short, these peasants were not the ‘blank
slate’ or ‘traditional’ individuals so apparent in assertions of bureaucrats and experts concerned with their development. Rather, they had experience – and a particular experience of the state that invited them into the project as well as instilled fear of the project. They were reluctant and exuberant students – anticipating the promises made while, it seemed to me, preparing for their potential failure.

**Conclusions**

The *Campus Fanentenana* emerged out of the strained relationships among the two leading administrators of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*. As such, it represents an iteration of that campus, and a self-conscious (at least at first) competitor. The project was also made possible by the Campus Ambanivohitra Research Directors’s deft translation of his work in development into political capital. But this deftness also pulled him away from the project, as the state became more and more directly involved and his role was filled by other bureaucrats and state technicians. The campus’ (potential and real) powers to propel individuals up the political ladder and its importance as proof of their fealty and professional value made it a prime space for the performance of development and state legitimacy. As the Senator’s political profile rose, it was transformed into the Village MAP and linked directly with President Ravalomanana and the Malagasy First Lady.

The Village MAP was crafted in ways that followed, in part, the patterns of the Campus Paysan. It was predicated on the construction of an empty and underdeveloped countryside and an impoverished population that lacked the agricultural and market knowledge necessary to advance economically. This initial re-construction of the local peasantry met with immediate resistance and the project was forced to reconsider its target population – shifting from a plan that involved bringing students to
Andakolosy from around the region to one that would develop the peasants who lived there. This shift belied the fictionalized image of the peasant promoted in developmental narratives, as it refocused its efforts on a population built of retired functionaries and their families and neighbors.

The project self-consciously courted state power, using images of Presidential power that echoed colonial plantations to appeal to the moral vanity of the nation’s leaders. The project also offered local politicians pathways to extend their power base, giving them the right to choose (in the projects initial incarnation) the beneficiaries of development. These instances serve as important reminders that state support is not assured even within projects in which the state is the primary sponsor.

Even as the project acted as a visible example of the legitimacy of a set of ambitious politicians and functionaries, it communicated President Ravalomanana’s will to develop (see Li 2007) to international agents and agencies. The projects situation just next to the main north-south thoroughfare ensured foreign dignitaries would see its clean lines – a symbol of modern hygiene and business acumen set to the tune of a “traditional” Malagasy countryside. It would serve as the incarnation of the President’s policy goals, in miniature – a model that could be (theoretically) scaled up to the nation as a whole through reiteration.

With all of these lofty goals and the power of the state backing it up, the Village MAP evolved into a space for the creation – by politicians, bureaucrats, and technicians alike – of the ideal Malagasy state. Individuals imagined a village on which others would be based, where families had plumbing and electricity. Where their houses, mimicking the modernist ideal (Scott 1998) sat along nicely manicured streets –
mimicking each other and erasing socio-economic difference. Peasants here would, like those matriculated through the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, learn to be flexible experts of the self – empowered by techno-scientific knowledge from governmental and religious organizations to shift with the market, answering urban agricultural needs and assuring the nations food sovereignty.

The machinations of the Village MAP are not solely related to those of the *Campus Ambanivohitra*. Rather its stories, and to an extent its results, mimic other programs that aim to raise Malagasy standards of living on a village-wide level. The project was eerily similar to the relocation programs of the nearby Sherritt nickel and cobalt mine and refinery – which itself built Malagasy model villages. This resettlement – mediated by private and extractive enterprises – was arguably much more problematic than the Village MAP. It was certainly more expansive. Yet the projects share a sharp focus on crafting legitimacy through representation, present an image of the ideal state, and carve out a space of attenuated state power.

In addition, and like the *Campus Ambanivohitra* that presaged it, the Village MAP created bureaucratic and political careers and held the potential to bring greater state interest and funds to a variety of governing bodies and agencies concerned with development. These included the *Bureau Regionale de la Presidence* (BRP), the Region of Atsinanana, the local Commune Rurale and Fokontany, and rural development agencies like the *Direction regionale du développement rural* (DRDR), and *Programme de Promotion des Revenues Ruraux* (PRPR). Even the anthropologist studying the project – and here I speak of myself – is implicated in an exchange with the potential to create career advantages and with the potential for further power and
influence (despite whether these are desired or materialize). My disappointments in my own failures to affect some change within the program were certainly mirrored by other embroiled agents who felt themselves stymied pawns of a system that benefited those above them.

In addition to these interested agencies and agents were a myriad of temporal and geographical shadow presences. These sat as comparative reminders of the failed promises of the past, and of the struggles of the present, where these agencies were direct competitors in the development market. Agencies like the *Foibe Fikarohana ampiharina amin'ny Fampandrosoana ny eny Ambanivohitra* (FOFIFA, National Center for Applied Research on Rural Development) had been a source of employment for several villagers, whose families now make up the core of village residents. Contemporary shadow presences belied the layered nature of development, as the site itself was centered on a number of post-FOFIFA interventions into rural life. These shadow presences offer important counters to the assertion of untouched and undeveloped rurality as the central space for development, highlighting the privileging of development’s more performative capabilities over its material results.

The creation of the peasant as an object devoid of ‘expert’ or ‘modern’ techno-scientific knowledge is rendered mythological next to the more complex realities of Andakolosy villagers. The village itself was once created as a sort of model of modern labor – with rows of barracks near the fields to house technicians. It sat, in the present and the recent past, as a space of unsure tenure in ways that echo but are slightly different from those of Niarovona-Caroline. Ironically, it was memories of these earlier
experiences that both invited them into the project with the allure of development and warned them away with the threat of land loss.

In the next chapter, I explore how this edifice begins to lose integrity faced with a number of factors including the inability of the state to live up to the picture it has painted of itself. Against the backdrop of a growing political crisis, the Village MAP is bungled. The political crisis, however, is not the cause. Rather, the need to enact hierarchies of knowledge and to buttress their stability acts as the primary cause of the projects failure. It is here, in the projects over-connection to the attempts of the state and individuals to rebegin themselves that the project's failures are ushered in.
CHAPTER 6
KNOWLEDGE AND THE OPTICS OF STATE POWER AT THE VILLAGE MAP

The Campus Fanantenana/Village MAP was forced to start over, to ask individuals to begin anew as the project’s failures became apparent. Before the project even began, local farmers – unacknowledged in the project’s presentation of an empty swath of land ideal for farmer training – muscled their way into the project. They agitated against the idea of bringing in other farmers and in this way forced the Campus to redirect its efforts in their direction. But resistance was accompanied by fear, skepticism, and a real desire to have a better life, all helped along by the attempts of individuals to increase their own standing vis-à-vis state power.

In what follows, I explore the ways that individual desire, fear and skepticism – all centered on the ways resources were set loose through the project – converged in the unfolding of the Campus Fanantenana/Village MAP project, creating small scale disasters that stole away the livelihoods of individuals in the name of development. This chapter is, to an extent, a voyeuristic exploration of disastrous development. But the story it tells is all too common, and one that illustrates the complicity of multiple and diverse actors in creating the types of failure that necessitate development’s rebeginnings.

The chapter offers a view of three areas of contested ground and catastrophe brought on by individuals’ relations with each other and with the larger state. The first is a general contestation over land and labor in an area in which individual tenure was tenuous, but individual feelings of attachment and rights to the land were strong. The second section explores the contestation of knowledge at the campus as hierarchies of knowledge were created and enacted, in the process taking powers over labor and
knowledge away from some actors and giving it to others. The third section explores how the backdrop of crisis called forth narratives of indolence and intransigence, eschewing the failure of technocratic elites as an option, and rebeginning the project under a new guise that twisted the causes of its earlier problems out of view.

Part 1: The Powers of Time, Labor, and Land

The Village MAP was about creating the ideal state through the provision of a set of services that entered intimately into the lives of participant farmers, demanding they accept changes to their agricultural practices, shift their village (and leave behind any non-participants) and thus their spatial relationships to the land and to each other, and subject themselves to new forms of visibility and state intervention. Using the coercive power of land – specifically the threat of the loss of land – the state staked a claim on villager’s time and labor. In addition, the state levered its development capabilities to generate wage labor for the village, bringing them (back) into employment relations with the state, and essentially generating legitimacy through the provision of employment as well as social services.

Waiting Games

The relationships between technicians and farmers were hierarchical from the beginning and reflected the privileging of the urban, the expert, and the educated. The borders of hierarchy were patrolled by expressions of temporal power. The project demanded time of participants for training and labor. In addition, technicians rarely arrived on time to conduct training, often leaving the farmers to wait at the entrance to the Village MAP or by the coffee shop run by one of its students. The training, when technicians did show up, was often begun an hour later than scheduled, and about half the time the villagers would leave to tend their fields after an hour and a half of waiting.
Abandoning this waiting game would later feed into the reconstruction of participants as indolent and reticent to learn – affecting a sanction on resistance to the bureaucratic and expert control of time.

Time is a key concept for understanding bureaucracy, particularly among the expert technicians who bridge the state’s relations within spaces of development like Andakolosy. Time constitutes, according to Herzfeld (1992), a “social weapon” with the power to control time – to make people wait – key in expressions of state power (165). A large part of this power resides in how time translates into lost labor and lost production. Temporal power is thus a key indicator of social hierarchy and elite status within development (see Green 2000). But time was not the only space in which hierarchy was crafted, nor was the division between ‘peasant’ and ‘technician’ the only one present.

Development at the Village MAP offered those with elite status at different levels the opportunity to control not only the time, but also the labor and resource utilization of individuals that the project helped to craft as “below” them in the hierarchy. If development reproduces inequality, land and labor are the primary material realms in which this takes place. The construction of status is not as straightforward as dichotomies of the state versus the people, or the educated elite versus the peasant would suggest. Rather, a number of different actors involved in development, from differentiated “peasants” to differentiated bureaucrats and technicians, jockey for position within the development framework. Part of this jockeying involves the legitimization of the state, but this is an implicit, not explicit, goal of the individuals involved, who rely on state legitimacy to ensure their own futures. These machinations
involve multiple contestations and negotiations that while failing to overturn completely the inequalities that are re-instantiated through the project, do disrupt them.

**Losing Land**

Concerns over land and labor drove the way individuals related to the project from its inception. Project administrators shifted the focus of the project well before technicians began working with the local community. But new suspicions arose, egged on by the tactics of local politicians, about the risks of this developmental endeavor. As it became more important for politicians like the Fokontany President – who like the farmers brought into the program farmed FOFIFA land, and like other members of his family, lived in former FOFIFA buildings – to make this effort work, it also became more dangerous in the eyes of participating farmers. As one Andakolosy farmer stated:

> The [Fokontany] President said that the training would be a village project… we almost didn’t do the training. The President is already rich but we’re poor, we don’t want to work for free. Life is really difficult, you know. We don’t have anything to eat. He told us that if we didn’t work we would have to leave this place [Andakolosy]. As we’ve lived here forever, we didn’t want to leave the land, so we joined [the project].

This farmer’s positioning was particularly precarious. She had come to Andakolosy from another village and built a house next to the river with the permission of the village head. Unlike the residents who lived in the center of Andakolosy, she was not the descendant of a FOFIFA employee. She was allowed to use land for her home and to farm rice paddy in a small plot next to the river because of the intervention of local individuals who did have a right to the land based on their familial ties.

Though she worked with the program, she did not consider herself solely a farmer and made most of her money, instead, through diving for sand in the middle of the Ivoloina River and contracting herself out as a day laborer on the plots held by her
neighbors. She was engaged, like others, in a different type of flexible production – a type uniquely suited to unsure economic situations but also increasingly valued by neoliberalism (Ong 1999b; Rose 1999).

A main concern for villagers centered on how the project would affect their already accomplished labor – namely the fields they had prepared and planted before the project began. These concerns often took center stage when administrators allowed questions after informational sessions on the project. One of these exchanges, between the technician from DRDR and a participant at a sensibilisation in August of 2008 highlights the middle ground technicians sought to strike, but also foreshadows the food crisis that would follow the project’s agricultural interventions:

Villager: Excuse me, but I have something to say. I mean, I’ve got some rice just sprouting. Do we wait for the seeds or can we cultivate these nurseries?

DRDR Technician: Do you usually cultivate rice here every year?

P4: Yes.

DRDR Technician: We’re not going to destroy what you have.

P4: Hmm.

DRDR Technician: You can do it, ok. For those who left seeds in the soil, you can start if it’s already done, but for those who haven’t yet planted, we’re going to give you seeds and you should follow our instructions. We should have a harvest two times in the coming year, if you follow the techniques that we’re going to teach you. [Sensibilisation 2008]

The concern was echoed in villagers’ questions about manioc,

Villager: I have another question. You know that it’s time to cultivate manioc. Can we do that or do we need to wait for your training?

BRP Coordinator: Regarding the fields of manioc, we should arrange that but, on the one hand is education and on the other is development. In this case, we’re going to do things professionally.
Manioc would become a central point of contention for Andakolosy villagers. For farmers, manioc was an important market crop, and most mentioned it second after rice when asked about what they grew. Economically, villagers highlighted the importance of manioc as a source of revenue before the harvest as well as extra holiday income:

You know last year, the same time period, we already had a good manioc harvest. We sold all that next to the highway. With the money we bought rice, that’s how it was. The manioc leaves, we get a lot of money from that. I pay for all the kid’s Christmas presents with money obtained through the sale of manioc leaves… If we sold 100 packets of manioc leaf in Tamatave, we earn 10 000 Ariary, and 3 000 for the children’s gifts.

Transforming the ways that individuals farmed had serious social and implications for families, who earned the type of profit from the venture to get them through the New Year.

This desire to order rural society disrupted the already existing order. The technicians heading up the project, in their faith in their own abilities, had essentially forbidden the planting of any new crops, as one participant understood it, “They said that all the land here should be used for training.” Villagers questioned the methods of technicians, and tried to offer other possibilities that would not force them to uproot and reorganize their land use practices. During a focus group after the training began to generate problems, Andakolosy villagers described how the project came to destroy their manioc fields:

Research Assistant: They took it all?

Villager 1: Yes, with the tiller. At the time that they were taking the manioc, we said that, rather than destroy the manioc fields, we were ready to clear some empty land. But they didn’t want to listen to us. I said it was a bit bizarre, this technician telling us to pull up the fields of manioc. They said to wait, but we can’t just plant manioc whenever.

Villager 2: There are weeds now growing on the land where we grew manioc before.
The disappearance of the manioc, and its replacement with a vast field of weeds was built of technicians’ desires to shift the local population to sorghum, a crop that DRDR was successfully pushing in other regions. According to the lead technician from DRDR, the seeds were already in Madagascar, but had not yet arrived in Atsinanana.

At the time, sorghum was being pushed by global development institutions like the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO 2008, 2011) and Care International (Care 2011) for the arid and semi-arid regions of the island’s south. As it travelled this circuit, it necessarily came into contact with governmental organizations like the Ministre d’Agriculture, d’Élevage, et de Pêche (MAEP) and its more localized bodies, like the DRDR, where the idea of sorghum, and its seeds were said to be redistributed amongst these programs. It appears that sorghum became a main goal of the Village MAP administration for a few reasons. First, it was en vogue and thus lacked the uninteresting patina of manioc. In other words, sorghum here was “new” and “different” and would look and sound good on camera. Secondly, and at a more practical level, sorghum was available, largely due to the interest of development agencies like the FAO and Care International and evidenced by the uptick in sorghum consumption during the period (see Figure 1-6). Sorghum and international interests in sorghum helped to structure the way the project staked claim on the land and labor of Andakolosy’s villagers.

**Laboring for the State**

The project extended state control into labor in two important ways. First, participant farmers were expected to form laboring groups, structured by state ideal of rationalized management. This situation gave individuals the opportunity to control the labor of others, complicating the relationships of individual villagers. Second, participant
farmers and non-participant residents of the villages adjacent to Andakolosy were called into the wage labor provided by the public works component of the project, offering them new opportunities to supplement their other livelihood activities.

**Association and rationalized labor**

Project administrators had very specific ideas of the ways that labor should be rationalized and arranged, and sought to transform them into realities at the Village MAP. Part of this rationalization was the creation of farm fields as efficient work spaces where agriculture would be divided across space and by type:

> All the growers [fields] of manioc will be located in the same area and the same for the others. All the cultivators of rice are one association. That’s what we’ll see to together. [Sensibilisation August 2008]

Being professional and modern would mean a fundamental change in how, and if, local crops like manioc would be grown. These changes would reflect a rationalized agriculture that brought things together “professionally” in patterns that echoed the “grid” style preferred by high modernism (Scott 1998). The consolidation of crops in space would facilitate efficient group work. It would also enable visible space for associational competition – where each group could view and (expertly) judge the work of their peers (see Li 2007).

The efforts to professionalize agriculture by controlling where and what villagers would plant disrupted normal agricultural orders, forcing villagers to wait for instructions and inputs from technicians and administrators before planting. Where normally the villagers would plant corn and manioc before sowing the rice fields, they now waited on both. Where normally they would have relied on their previous harvests to provide the seeds for the present one, they waited for the “improved” seeds promised by technicians. Agricultural time, though ideally regimented in both colonial and post-
colonial settings (see Jarosz 1994) clashed with time as status, with waiting games that were interlinked with the high status afforded bureaucrats and technicians (Green 2003).

Farming associations were created, but diverged from the suggestions of technicians. Instead, the villagers chose to work with those that lived near them or were family (and these were often the same). Thus one group was centered on a core group that consisted of the sisters of the President of the Fokontany and the Chef de Village. These groups would work together on the produce plots overseen by the Preacher from SAF/FJKM, as well as a corn field, overseen by PPRR, and sorghum and SRI overseen by DRDR.

In January 2009, the DRDR technician came with a bureaucrat to discuss, ostensibly, the formation of these groups. The meeting came at a time when the locals were already feeling the effects of the project’s claims on their land and labor. They used the opportunity to voice their concerns over how the project was progressing, a subject that will be revisited at the end of this chapter. After arriving, a bureaucrat from the Regional Government opened the meeting:

Everyone should feel responsible for what we’re doing. And, what is really important for us is to see someone who is responsible for each group. You must not confuse the responsibility I’m talking about in the first instance and the leader of each group…, ok? For example, for the rice, that each person should feel responsible. The philosophy is that everyone participates in all the work. It’s not the leader all alone who’s going to do the work. Rather he’s like a motivator: it’s up to him to direct you and to tell you everything that should be done during the day, for example… You should note everything we decide here, that way everyone will have a copy.

The admonitions to responsibility and to take notes were laden with power, suggesting that rural villagers were not previously “responsible.” The farmers had worked in groups for almost five months by this time. The precarious positions of technocrats and the
high competition of the development industry reinforced this gulf, rendering failure a non-option and thus structuring the ways villagers could emerge in the project.

In addition to restructuring agricultural habits and encouraging competitive sensibilities, the relations ushered by the groups and group leaders created new space for villagers to produce and reproduce their status vis-à-vis their neighbors. One leader demanded that each member provide him with 800 Ar (about 0.40 USD). The group members, unsure of what they were paying for, refused: “We decided to stop. If the president [of the Fokontany] says that we have to leave this place, better that we leave than do something like that.” Withholding labor is a central and effective strategy of resisting power, but this power need not be as centralized or as grandiose as the state (Sardan 2005). In this case, intervention ushered new power relations (and old ones) at the level of the village, a situation that spurred discomfort as well as the project failure as individuals within the network struggled over the resources it made available.

**Development Wages**

The project began to hire locals to clear land in October of 2008, hoping to have training start immediately and individuals planting produce by the end of the month. Labor during the project was both paid and unpaid, with participant farmers and locals from neighboring villages paid around 1500 Ar (~0.75 USD) a day for clearing fields and digging trenches for the project’s ill-fated canal and participants working for free on the fields after the initial clearing.

Paid labor was unproblematic for locals, many of whom had been previously or were periodically engaged in labor for industries that passed through (e.g. temporary positions with the road works organization Société Sino-Malgache de Travaux Publics (China-Malagasy Society for Public Works)), or working piecemeal collecting sand from
the river or breaking rocks at the quarry. In addition, it was common practice to earn wages, in cash or kind, for work on neighbors and friends plots, as well as with the President Fokontany, who, after losing his contract to provide plants for landscaping at the Sherritt Nickel and Cobalt Refinery – the landscaping company itself had lost the job because of the 2008 economic crisis – hired participant farmers to manufacture cinder blocks at his (second) compound north of the Village MAP.\textsuperscript{101}

The introduction of the public works components in Andakolosy were key to the continuing legitimacy of the project, and became one way that the project supplemented the unpaid labor it forced from its participants. The two forms of labor sat uncomfortably next to each other – calling up memories of more extensive public works and the wage labor that was lost with the contraction of FOFIFA’s infrastructure as well as the history of forced colonial labor, and the unremunerated labor of the pre-colonial period, a situation identified elsewhere in Africa (Sardan 2005).

\textbf{State Gifts}

Land and labor relations were not just centered on questions of tenure and agricultural practices. The lovely houses with the cement floors that made up the visible Village MAP, along with the (non-working) plumbing remained vacant until well after Marc Ravalomanana was deposed and the young TGV ascended to power. Initially, BRP administrators told me the houses could not be inhabited until they finished the plumbing (which did not run to the houses but to the exterior toilets, showers, and wash basins scattered among them). Then, we would have to wait until the village had electricity. Finally, the administrator representing the BRP stated blankly that the

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{101} Villagers were also responsible for unpaid community works organized by the Fokontany President.}
villagers must have a good harvest, and then they would turn over the keys, and at no time before then. The homes, it seemed, would constitute a reward for *successful* participation, but unsuccessful participation would receive nothing.

The houses that would constitute symbols of state concern for rural populations were viewed by the Andakolosy villages either as an exchange for participation or – for some who chose not to live in them – a threatening prospect of a life lived in potential debt to the state. The more the project created hardships for the village – through missteps, mistakes, and unforeseen political problems – the more the villagers assigned to the houses felt they deserved them.

By November of 2008, the cyclone season was nearing. Andakolosy villagers – their labor locked up in training and knowing they were already assigned homes in the model village – left off the important work of repair. The ability to get into the houses took on added importance:

You know, if we’re talking about these houses, everybody is ready to live there; they’re ready to follow modern agricultural techniques. The problem is that, until now, they aren’t giving us the keys and we don’t know what to do. You know that during the cyclone [a couple of weeks prior to this interview] our president gave us the keys. The next day, as soon as the cyclone was gone, they said we had to return the keys. So everybody went back to their house... He [the President Fokontany] said that... the people would only stay in the houses during the cyclone. After, he said to clean the house. People wanted - since another cyclone was coming the next week - they wanted to stay in the houses for a while. That way we could clean every day.

Again the optics of state power loom large, as the houses were held in reserve in an attempt to hold on to a theatrical performance of legitimacy that would take place when crops were harvested and infrastructure was built. Power itself was relayed through a web of individuals who sat in hierarchical relation to each other within the network (Rose 1999). It was this web of relations that the Fokontany President referenced when he
later said that he did not have the right to tell them they could stay in the houses, they would have to wait for the technicians. The houses were finished in September, but would never be given to the villagers by “the state” that oversaw their creation.

**Presidential Expectations**

The main impetus in the work of the BRP, the DRDR, the ONN, and the other state institutions implicated in the Village MAP was the pleasure of the President. This meant that the definition of project success was tightly linked with the ability of local farmers to play appropriate roles in the optics of state power and legitimacy. The fields needed to be placed near the road to ensure their visibility to Malagasy and international elites. The houses could not be released to locals because – as was rumored almost every week between November and January – the President was coming.

The rumors were constant – and excited the Director of the *Campus Ambanivohitra* as well as the Technicians involved in the much more state-centric Village MAP. Villagers were well aware of this, and the *Chef du Village*, an older villager participating in the project, responded to my assistants suggestions that they would likely give them the keys when the water was hooked up by stating, “Yeah, from what I’ve hear, the authorities are coming here in December to inaugurate this village, so they’re going to give us the keys then.” Rumor here takes a new turn, as it spurs people to action – rumors, and the specter of the President, functioned as impetus to more and harder labor among rural villagers, even while the growing crisis pulled the relevant bureaucrats away from the project.

The expectations of Presidential visits coincided with the imagery of the house as gift – the ultimate of what development projects have to offer and clearly outstripping the
kits agricoles provided at the Campus Ambanivohitra. The ceremony was timed to coincide (in an ideal world) with Christmas. It offered the allure of an image of a state, and more importantly a President, personally delivering ‘development.’ In a nation who’s beleaguered President once suggested the values of theocracy (Hogg 2007), the imagery of the Christmas gift held the power to reinforce the alignment of his rule with Christian belief and moral order. The conditionality of the gift sought to bring rural Malagasy – who were in fact not so far from the state – into relations of power backed by the legitimacy of the church, the state, and science (see Ong 1999a).

At the BRP, the senator’s assistant alerted me to several impending Presidential visits until one day she confided, “No one ever knows whether he’s arriving until thirty minutes ahead of time.” His ability to shroud himself in mystery and thereby increase the weight of his presence was partially echoed by the power-laden temporal practices of lower level technicians and bureaucrats. These powers represent the flipside of the powers of presidential visibility (see Jourde 2005). Invisibility and expectations – the secrecy of presidential locality – acted to reinforce the fiction of the state and thereby its power (Aretxaga 2003). This was particularly true among state bureaucrats, who reminded lower level staff at the BRP palace how important it was that the grounds were swept clear and the white paint on the balustrades was gleaming, pointing out spots and exclaiming “You know what the President will do if he sees that!"

The day of President Ravalomanana’s initial rumored visit to the Village MAP, he never arrived, instead sending a Minister in his place. The Minister never stopped at the site, simply passing by in a motorcade on his way to the celebration of National Nutrition Day in Foulepointe, some 40 miles north of Tamatave. On the second of his
rumored arrivals, I got to the village around 9am. Several of the women were near the Village MAP site, donning their best dresses and hats. They had been told the President would be there early, around 7am. After we saw the presidential jet overhead – a jet that was getting Ravalomanana skewered by TGV in the press – we milled about expecting a visit. After a while, the crowd dispersed and I walked to the village and did interviews. When I finished, I rode my scooter back to Tamatave, and found out on the way that the President had come and given an address at Lycée Jacques Rabemananjara, leaving immediately thereafter. By his third rumored arrival, no one bothered.

The theatrics of state legitimacy – through the gift – and the performance of expertise - through the creation of a complete and productive village and peasantry – were objects whose directionality had very little to do with the peasants themselves, but with the projection of a vision of development for middle class elites. It is important to note that the legitimacy work that the project did was projected at a certain set of urban, educated, and mobile individuals. The recognition of this tightly honed form of legitimacy follows on the insights of anthropologists like Sardan (2005), Mosse (2005), Lewis and Mosse (2006) and Green (2003), which highlight the space of development inhabited by its brokers, and Ong (1999b) and Ferguson (2005), which call attention to the effects of this space on state sovereignty and new configurations of citizenship.

**Disappearance and Risk at the Village MAP**

Local farmers worked with technicians until late January when the politicians, BRP administrators, and even the local technicians no longer visited the village. When Ravalomanana was forced to resign in mid-March, they still had not been given access
to the houses. During the political crisis, the state retracted from rural areas as it contracted on urban areas, disappearing in ways that disrupted development.

The coup had the effect of freeing the Campusards from state control over their land and labor, but the state’s retraction also ushered new potentials. The President Fokontany, an astute entrepreneur always ready for profitable opportunities, proposed that the houses be rented out to school teachers at the local EPP or other individuals in the village or passing through for 15,000-20,000 Ar a day each (~7.50 – 10.00 USD). The proposal would have rebegun the project – creating a sort of hotel built on development’s broken promises.

The villagers were not interested – they organized a meeting with the Fokontany President and refused the arrangement. The president responded by stating, according to farmers, that “If you want to live in the houses, it depends only on you.” The disappearance of the state set loose the resources of the project, opening them up for capture in ways that bypassed certain forms of political and bureaucratic status. In the end, most of the Andakolosy villagers involved in the project moved into the houses of the Village MAP. Their position, however, remains precarious. While their land tenure was far more assured than that of farmers at the Campus Ambanivohitra’s site in Niarovana-Caroline, Andakolosy villagers would now be subject to the whims of a state twice removed from the one that had assured them usage rights. FOFIFA can come at any time to reclaim the land or the houses, primarily because they never entered into a contract with the local farmers who would live in them.

Development, for farmers at the Village MAP was a “risky business” (Chalfin 2000). More than simply economic risk, risk in the context of the Village MAP was
about the potential loss of time, land, and labor. Most farmers had ideas of how the project would end, though they always began by telling me that they hoped it would work. The project was interpreted as a set of potential futures, some bad – like the idea of being kicked off one’s land – others good – like the promise of more production, money and infrastructure. Villagers often described themselves and each other as “very interested,” and “ready to work.” Participants were not naïve about the propensity of the project to create hardships for them, but given the approach taken by local politicians, and their relationship to the land, they saw little choice. Some managed risk by refusing to live in the houses the Village MAP constructed, others by abandoning their studies to search out wage labor. All experienced a sort of structured risk that emerged out of their relations with bureaucratic and expert power.

**Part 2: Hierarchies of Knowledge at the Village MAP**

Knowledge became a locus of power at the Village MAP and hierarchies of knowledge were key to the ways that bureaucrats and technicians defined their position within the project. Knowledge was also central to the way that the elite initially constructed and then re-imagined the peasant, and then re-imagined this as the cracks in the artifice of their knowledge began to open up. Knowledge, because it was so important in the ways that individuals positioned themselves within the project, became an object of competition for technicians.

**The Pastor and the Tomato**

In late 2008, as the produce project was beginning to present itself as problematic, one of the older men participating in the project told me a story about their early meetings with the Pastor. He had come to train them and brought with him an unbelievably large tomato. The Pastor said that this tomato represented the size they
could expect to create after their training. The farmer told me that he expected the pastor to cut up the tomato and distribute the seeds among the farmers at the meeting. He was surprised when the Pastor took the tomato with him after the training was finished, and insisted instead that the farmers await the seedlings he would bring to the site.

The episode, small by itself, added to the problems already being created within the project. The tomato sealed the hierarchy of knowledge between the Pastor and SAF/FJKM on the one hand, and the Andakolosy villagers, on the other. In technicians imaginings, growing a tomato the "modern" way would be totally different from what they were used to. Rather than utilizing experiential knowledge, based on observing the best fruits, then seed selection and sharing – Andakolosy farmers’ normal practices – massive tomatoes could not be created in this way.

The story of the massive tomato was indicative of the accepted hierarchy of knowledge between development agents and their target populations. In effect, the insistence on taking the act of seed selection and breeding out of the hands of local farmers is also an insistence that this act be placed in the hands of local technicians and multinational corporations. The value placed on the peasants starting new plants with new seeds was evident in the state’s developmental direction at the time:

The diagnosis of the socio-cultural environment of peasants in regards to seeds has concluded that the peasants consider seeds as gifts of nature destined to assure the continuation of life, and to maintain social cohesion. They are an object of exchange between neighbors, with interesting variety and don’t lend themselves to sale. However, with the evolution of the economic context, improved seeds constitute a necessary production factor for increased productivity; but the accessibility of farmers to these seeds is so limited because their buying power is so weak. To fully express their potential, their use should be accompanied by an adapted technology packet (chemical fertilizer, pesticides, adequate cultural techniques), which
raises their cost again, as supply infrastructures don’t systematically exist on site. [MAEP 2009: 36]

The peasant farmer as an individual in need of being separated from agricultural knowledge at the same time that they are instilled with new knowledge is one that resonates in development at large. Here genetically modified seeds promote the cleavage of farmers from their own knowledge on selective breeding and a disruption of their social relations while simultaneously inviting survival based on consumerism and the knowledge base that goes with it – knowledge of the products “necessary” for modern agriculture (Ziegenhorn 2000; Cooper and Packard 1997).

Far from using the seeds from the tomato, and far from relying on (local) social relations to furnish these “gifts from nature,” the technicians at the Village MAP would provide farmers with seeds from the French seed technology firm, Technisem. Technisem specializes in creating seeds that can hold up to the heat and humidity of tropical climates (Technisem 2010). In a call for interns at the French Ecole Supérieure de Commerce et de Management (ESCEM), the company offers a brief description:

Technisem is a family business, created in 1985, which produces and distributes vegetable seeds adapted to tropical countries. We work mainly in Africa, where we currently have subsidiaries in a dozen countries.

No. 1: Technisem is the leader in produce seeds on the African market today.

The priority of Technisem: accessibility to quality seeds for the peasants of tropical climates at costs adapted to their buying power. [ESCEM 2010]

The projects main partner is Tropicasem in Senegal, which bills itself as “a private seed company for the tropical zone, having initiated activities in Africa since 1985. It is the only private company in West Africa doing research to ameliorate vegetable varieties” [Tropicasemensenegal 2010], but does not mention Technisem – a play on its own need
to craft legitimacy by avoiding to close a connection with France. In addition there are African subsidiaries in Cote d’Ivoire (Semivoire), Burkina-Faso (Nankosem), Cameroon (Semagri), Benin (Benin Semences), Ghana (Agriseed), Mali (Tropicasem), Niger (Sahelia SEM), Morocco (Semaroc), Kenya (Savannah Seed), the Congo (Agrisem RDC), and of course, Madagascar (Semana; Tropicasem Senegal 2010, see also Kuyek 2002).

Technisem was a blip on the radar, but its tomatoes came to play a starring role in the imaginary that the Village MAP constructed and pulled the Village MAP into another sort of institutional network array. Technisem – and the status it represented as foreign and superior knowledge – came to play a silent role in technicians’ struggles over claims to knowledge and expertise. In August, the project had two technicians attempting to instruct the villagers in produce cultivation. The villagers, under the instruction of the SAF/FJKM technician and, later, with the help of a motorized tiller, had cleared a large swath of land between the road to Andakolosy and the river Ivoloina. PPRR and SAF/FJKM came to train the farmers on two consecutive days.

When I came out to do interviews one morning, I noticed that there were two different techniques being employed on the field. The first was familiar – I had seen it before in the produce plots at the Campus Ambanivohitra site. Rows were created parallel to the road then boxed in with sliced and flattened bamboo. These, the farmers told me, were the ones the PPRR had instructed them to make. In an adjacent plot, they had created raised rows that ran diagonal to the road and the river (see Photo 7-1). When I asked the villagers about it, they told me it seemed odd. One technician told them to do it one way, the other another way. They took the issue to the DRDR
technician who headed up the training, telling him “there’s confusion about the techniques being taught by the technicians” and that they “didn’t know which they were going to use.”

The project technicians met the following week to sort out the confusion. I was invited, and sat listening while the DRDR, PPRR, and SAF/FJKM technicians discussed the problem. While some parameters had been clear at the get go – like the fact that DRDR would train the villagers in SRI and sorghum – others were not. As they began to negotiate future instruction, the Pastor from SAF/FJKM made claims to his own knowledge and political connectivity. Initially he suggested that the project carry out two projects, with PPRR illustrating the “old” way (the practices that constituted the “new” way at the Campus Ambanivohitra), and him illustrating the “new” way that he had learned in the United States.

The idea of experimental fields recalled those prepared by the Campus Ambanivohitra at Ambalamangahazo. They represented a theory based on the inherent
rationality of the “peasant”: that if you show peasants the results of good and bad farming together, they will automatically convert to the side of the “modern” and good. Farmers at Ambalamangahazo, on the other hand, found themselves engaged in wage labor to build these convincing exemplars of the value of modern agricultural practices. They often saw them as a bizarrely wasteful use of time – the act of repeating labor was a waste of labor. In reality, the results of this labor often bolstered this view, with participants seeing themselves poorer by virtue of their participation.

The negotiation of knowledge and technique moved on, and the Preacher asserted once again the value of his knowledge, particularly its political import:

You see the technique I’m going to do, we’ve already done it at lavoloha [the Presidential Palace in Antananarivo]. The president has already seen that. He’s already seen yours [the old techniques]. We’ll do this new technique here in Tamatave, if it works, we’ll apply it in all the Villages MAP in the 22 regions of Madagascar. That’s the plan. Once it’s succeeded, get ready to do it in the 22 regions of Madagascar. You see, we’re not going to do my technique on a lot of land, because the goal is the minimum land with the maximum return...

The DRDR director broke in, telling him that the villagers would not want to cultivate under two different techniques – they, he said, had trouble getting their head around it (more importantly, it is unlikely they could get their labor around it). The PPRR representative jumped to the side of the Pastor, stating that “we can then do the comparison between improved techniques and newly introduced techniques.”

The session went on to discuss the diagonal place bandes that would constitute the planting rows for the produce. The technician from PPRR began to question whether his plan to do just a few rows of produce farming would be enough. The pastor responded, reasserting the superiority of his knowledge, framed around its provenance and newness:
My technique is totally new; we must do it little by little. They should master it first with small plots… It should be done as instructed to the letter. I’m a bit demanding on that. The president also asked that we do that for him. I said yes, that’s the reason that it’s me handling the training here [the market farming training]. I said that I wouldn’t leave it to anyone else…. When we studied this [in the US]... our professor... when we were working, he never stopped saying “work, work, work.”

In references to his political connectivity and his experiences in the exterior, he touched on the geopolitical contours of epistemic and state power. The relation he cultivated with the local peasants echoed, in reverse, the relationship he identifies here with his American professor – they must work.

But the ability to claim the power of knowledge was not wholly dependent on geopolitical standing. The Pastor claimed the mantel of leading knowledge broker because of the results he claimed to be able to produce. An entire produce crop would need only 45 days to grow and he would teach the local villagers to grow during the off-season, allowing more room for profit on foodstuffs that would normally be unavailable. But the most impressive moment came when the massive tomato reemerged:

PPRR Representative: How many days is it for the tomato?
Pastor: 45 days.

DRDR Technician: Tomato? Oh, oh…

Pastor: In Madagascar, the biggest tomato I’ve had was 1.2 kilograms. 36 tomatoes will fill all the crates. One place bande, that’s 60 kilos. You see one plate filled by one tomato.

DRDR Technician: One tomato?
Pastor: Yes.

DRDR Technician: It’s a miracle…

Pastor: In their country [gestures towards me] there are good seeds. After our exam, they gave me 45 varieties. I sent the others to Iavoloha. 4.2 kilograms for petsay [chinese cabbage], 5 kilos for cabbage during the off-season. It’s very good. As we haven’t yet done that here, people doubt a
little. OGM [Genetically Modified], it’s something else, eh. In fact, we’re returning to the original state… Eden…. 45 days and it’s done. It could take 30 days. For us, we can sell products after only three weeks. Yes, it’s true. Even vegetables and fruit. If you go to my house, less than 45 days, you’ll see a huge tomato.

The supernatural powers of knowledge – its miraculous attributes – merge with religious understandings as GM plants were appropriated into the technicians’ religious understandings. These call forth the enactment of a rebirth of sorts, a transformation through development to salvation.

Development and religion invite a narrative slippage in Madagascar where conservationist imagery of destruction echo the imagery of the biblical fall. Western knowledge and technology are seen as a pathway to regain the state of grace. Again invitation to start over looms large. Yet these imaginings of development were not convincing – in fact it was their very foreignness that created problems for Andakolosy villagers who, while finding an allure in the promises of market farming and new seeds, experienced the project as a failure of knowledge more than anything else.

But the salvation of seeds needed to be accompanied by the knowledge to use them and the ability to obtain a number of implements that would not necessarily be available to the farmers after the program left, not the least of which was the seeds themselves. The use of store bought items for the produce fields - such as: fertilizer for each place bande (~4000 Ariary per) and imported seeds (the Pastor’s stated preference, 2 500 to 3 000 Ariary per packet) – would invite the farmers into the local economy. Other inputs, like wheelbarrows, spades and garden hoes – which were provided by organizations like PPRR and were distributed one per five individuals –

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102 With roughly 5 bandes per work group and 5 work groups, a total of 25 bandes at a cost of ~100 000 Ariary or ~50 USD, or a little over a dollar per person).
relied on a continuing sociality, and the cohesion of individual farmers in the groups they had formed. The continuity of the agricultural practices they engaged, then, relied upon their economic abilities to “take over” the inputs provided by the state – itself predicated on the project’s success at generating revenue - while succumbing to its control over their land tenure.

**Disappearing Seedlings and Vazaha**

The miraculous changes promised by the project never materialized. The hierarchies of knowledge it created would, however, prove quite durable through the life of the project. Part of the Pastor’s program was to aid the villagers in germinating and raising the produce seeds he provided. Initially, he asked PPRR to build a number of long tables just next to the row houses of the Village MAP, one for each group. The tables were to hold the seedlings, above the ground and safe from insects. According to the Pastor, the seedlings would be giving flowers by the third week. The villagers planted seeds in a number of small containers per the Pastor’s suggestions, and left them on the tables in view of the highway and passersby from the neighboring villages. In less than a week they were gone.

When I approached the Pastor, asking him what happened, he told me that the plants had either died of neglect or been stolen and he had been forced to take what was left back to his home. The farmers, on the other hand, told me that the many of the seeds refused to sprout and that the Pastor blamed their failure on the heat. The

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103 Vazaha is the designation given to (mainly white) Euro-American foreigners (see also Cole and Middleton 2001; Cole 2010). A circa 1888 Malagasy/French dictionary defines Vazaha as strangers, but also as someone with a quality of “wisdom.” In practice the term was used to mock more often than not, a word that could slip in to signify qualities of “weakness,” “ignorance,” and “misunderstanding” viz a viz the local population.
pépinières were in this way plucked from the control of local agriculturalists and moved back to Tamatave where they would grow under the watchful eye of the Pastor.

Figure 6-2. Unused pépinière tables flooded after a cyclone. The local road is visible to the right.

When the pépinière disappeared, local farmers were at the mercy of the Pastor as to when they would receive the produce plants. Every week seemed to put the garden off a little more. They must have cleared and weeded the plot three times before they got the first batch of cucumbers and beans from the Pastor. It would be still longer before crops like squash would appear. The project began in August, and it was not until November that each group would have enough plants to fill their five designated place bandes, and even then they would not all grow as expected.

The arrival of plants meant more labor, with farmers traveling from the river to the plot at least three times a day to water the plots. As the costs in labor began to supplant the returns, farmers sought to better their situation, looking for other ways to
earn enough to keep themselves and their families fed. “Mitady vola,” they would say.

“I’m looking for money.”

Figure 6-3. Village MAP produce garden. Cleared *place bandes* near growing up and being re-cleared over a second photo shows a group of cleared *place bandes* with still overgrown *place bandes* behind it. November 2008 – February 2009.

Eventually, the fields were neglected and group members began to drop off. As farmers’ frustrations grew, the technicians’ knowledge was called into question:

Participant 1: The practical application doesn’t work very well. What I think of these technicians – they’re teaching us things that aren’t adapted to the situation here. You know, normally, according to the plan, the produce should be growing by now. We’ve lost time because we’ve had to clear the same crop rows several times because we don’t yet have the plants. We’re waiting for him right now. We didn’t think it wouldn’t work like that… Normally, everything would be growing right now.

Husband of Participant 1: Normally, we should be picking pineapples right now. If we are talking about the canal, it should be good, but it doesn’t work well. There isn’t any water at the source. I think that…

Participant 1: They aren’t real technicians.

Participant 2: If they had discussed this with us before, everything would be fine. You know, the period to do the pineapples here, it’s between the month of April and the month of August. The technicians from Madagascar already know this. But these new ones, they’re vazaha technicians

Husband of Participant 1: They studied the vazaha agriculture. That won’t work here. Here it’s totally differently.

Participant 3: They aren’t Malagasy technicians?

Other Participants: They’re Malagasy technicians, but they don’t know what to do here.
Farmers flipped the geopolitical hierarchy invoked by technicians on its head, asserting that foreign expertise – so central to the Pastors construction of expertise - was in fact the central problem of the training they were receiving.

Figure 6-4. Produce garden in Andakolosy, February and March 2009.

Eventually more plants arrived, but the lateness of their arrival meant that very little were properly tended. Tired of repeating their labor for little return and desperate to generate income, many individuals left the project. Like the Campus Ambanivohitra, technicians and directors were left with only one good example – one worthwhile group of farmers, out of five – which became the ideal to which all others fell short. True to the Pastor’s promises, the vegetables produced from his pépinières were well-sized. Yet size mattered little when the project had essentially forced one small farming community to redirect their labor with only a partial return on investment.
Figure 6-5. The Fokontany President (center) taking a cucumber as a gift, March 2009. Still empty Place bandes are visible behind him.

A Tale of Two Canals

A central facet of the project, and one which the Office National de Nutrition (ONN) was primarily responsible, was the creation of a damn and canal with which water would be carried to the whole basin. Ideally, this project would enable farmers to practice two season intensive riziculture on their fields. The barrage was set on the far side of the basin, past the primary school and the row of FOFIFA barracks that the project had initially wanted to renovate. The undertaking was massive for the village, though it paled in comparison to other public works initiated by the Malagasy state (like the rebuilding of the Ivoloina Bridge around 2007, or similar ONN canal projects in Antananarivo). ONN hired some 30 or so workers from Andakolosy and neighboring villages to complete the canal, paying them wages on the order of 1500 Ariary (0.75 USD) a day. The canal was a boon to the Andakolosy economy, which boasted one small épicerie and one gargote (a small, inexpensive, restaurant). Normally, both
catered to a market created by the local primary school, but the canal generated revenue while it was underway.

When the project was initiated, the canal was the jewel in its crown. On several occasions I accompanied BRP personnel there, where they checked in on its progress and invited journalists to facilitate the circulation of narratives of state-led development. With land cleared and tamped down, a damn was constructed that would block water and divert it into the canal. A metal mechanism was installed so that villagers could simply lift open a trap door to release the water.

Figure 6-6. *Barrage* (dam) under construction. Old reservoir and canal is on the right. September 2008.

The work was still underway when I began conducting interviews with individuals from the neighboring villages. Many of these individuals, like those that lived in Andakolosy itself, farmed the valley and were familiar with the area. Several came from the family of the local seer who made money fishing, farming, and catering to middle class clients from the city. When they returned from their work at the site, they would tell me “Maybe it’ll work. But I don’t think that there’s enough water to go through the canal.”

When Village MAP participants were selected and began to learn the SRI techniques the canal was meant to facilitate, they started to question the project. The
canal was finished in October, but as local farmers and wage laborers foresaw, the water would not flow from the reservoir at the damn into the canal – at least not enough so that water would flow to their fields.

The scope of the problem was considerable. Water could reach the fields closest to the dam (the fields cultivated by the family of the Fokontany President), but those that were further out were either stuck with the same amount of water or drier than they had been before. Villagers began to question the project:

What I think is - they shouldn’t have constructed the dam because the water which should circulate here in our tanimbari [rice fields] becomes blocked. Everything’s dry right now. We’re not waiting for anything but the rain now to flood our fields.

Good irrigation was necessary for SRI, meaning that though they learned SRI techniques they could not apply them. Eventually, they convinced the DRDR technician to give them permission to plant the fields according to their prior techniques.

Figure 6-7. Reservoir after a heavy rain, December 2009.
Figure 6-8. ONN canal, December 2009.

Figure 6-9. Aerial map of Andakolosy showing ONN’s initial canal. This canal was meant to bring water beyond the area of the 2nd ONN canal. The highly irrigated land near the dam is farmed by the family of the Fokontany President.
The canal stretched from the reservoir pictured in Figure 6-9, tracking a path along the tree line from ONN Canal 1 to the intersection near ONN Canal 2 in Figure 6-9. The area has reverted to the previous reservoir and the old canal. Even with the mechanism blocking the reservoir open, the water could not travel this distance.

When the canal problem first began to surface, technicians from ONN arrived in 4x4s with me, the Pastor, and the BRP Development Director. They took GPS points, made drawings and notes and identified new projects they could work on, like wells and certain points throughout the village, even finding a colonial era well head they might be able to reuse in front of the old FOFIFA/IFAC barracks (the row of houses just below the dam and canal). They suggested, and later conversations with BRP staff and the senator would confirm, the addition of a pump that could be used to move water from the reservoir into the canal, and (hopefully) to the desired fields. The pump, however, never arrived.

In one meeting I attended on the problems of the canal – invited because by this time I was acting as an unofficial go-between, carrying messages and status reports from the village to the BRP – technicians from ONN claimed the root of the problem was in the reticence and intractability of local farmers. The villagers were lazy, they told me, as we sat on leather couches in an office with 15 foot ceilings and windows open to an ocean view. I responded that that made no difference if the water would not run through the canal, and tried to frame my argument in terms I thought would be convincing. I suggested that Villagers talked to each other and it would look badly to the President if the residents of Andakolosy were having problems because of the issue.
Afterwards, the BRP convened a meeting with the villagers. When representatives at ONN spoke at the meeting in early January 2009, the pump idea had been shelved, and the issue took on a new hue:

We at ONN were responsible for doing the... work here for twenty days. We did this canal during that time. But as they’ve said, the problem... is the lack of water. The water isn’t sufficient. Everyone knows it’s the rainwater that’s missing. But despite everything, our technicians have already been here two times in order to solve this problem....

The idea that a lack of rainwater was to blame reinforced by the Fokontany President, who oscillated between identifying himself with the technicians and the villagers:

What we want to specify, peasants, is that there are things that don’t depend on us but on God – like drought, the lack of water. So even if we want to do the maximum, we can’t. But despite everything we should put forth the maximum willingness, we should always be ready. It’s necessary to have the will, because this training is in your interest.

The DRDR technician echoed this sentiment, telling me that they would have to wait until the rainy season to plant SRI. They seemed odd statements considering the running joke that in eastern Madagascar there were only two seasons, rainy and rainier – and SRI was supposed to be possible in both. In addition, two cyclones had hit the coast, bringing a large quantity of rain to the area since the canal was built. The fact that they seemed unwilling to accept was that the canal was not working properly.

After this meeting, the ONN decided to abandon the canal altogether and instead clear another canal near the site where the first canal ended. Fed by a natural spring that stretched in two directions from either side of a local path, the canal had been created during the colonial era and utilized by IFAC and then FOFIFA. This would become ONN Canal 2 (Figure 6-9). The canals that linked the original reservoir had, over the years, become quite narrow, so that the addition of space would improve the capabilities of local farmers to practice SRI. Yet the question remains – why was the
first spot chosen? Why did technicians want to start over rather than reusing what was already there? And why, when locals were often quite vocal about their understandings of the land – both to me and to technicians – was it impossible for these concerns to register?

Figure 6-10. Second ONN canal, February 2009.

Figure 6-11. Overgrown canal, February 2009. This canal is on the other side of the path from Figure 6-10, and heads in the direction of the reservoirs. This is approximately the state that the canal in Figure 6-10 was in before ONN paid farmers to clear it.
A few issues deserve attention here. First, the political optics of the new versus the old were key for technicians’ understandings of themselves. From their GPS devices to their assertion of the utility of the pump, the ONN technicians were deeply invested in the new. Politically, the rehabilitation of old forms was unnecessary. In the same way that the plans to renovate the old buildings set off from the road in the area were scrapped in favor of building the new ones next to the highway – with possibilities (never realized) of running water and electricity into the village, the infrastructure of the past precluded re-inhabitation by virtue of its existence in the past. Secondly, the “peasants” needed to be constructed in a way that could make them a part of a social edifice in which they were dependent upon the technicians as experts of development. Their knowledge of the land, either through personal or technical experience with the canals, was problematic for an edifice that, in addition to holding peasants within a certain social space at the bottom of the epistemological hierarchy, held technicians at the top. The canal and the admission of the culpability of failed knowledge were an existential threat to individuals and organizations that claimed a monopoly on correct knowledge.

The failure of expert knowledge, however, also came to constitute what was perceived as an existential threat to villagers. As in the case of the forced destruction of the manioc fields or the wasted labor of the place bandes, the failure of expert knowledge prompted the questioning of this knowledge and people’s claims to it. The assertion that the Village MAP technicians were outsiders was echoed by another villager who worked as a PPRR technician, though not with the project. Married to the sister of the Fokontany President, he once asked me if after I was finished in
Andakolosy, I could come to visit the peasants he knew and assess the reasons why they would not implement “modern” techniques. He claimed to be the only one in the village, aside from his in-laws, practicing intensive cultivation. His wife was among the three students from the Fokontany President’s family participating in the Village MAP training. When technicians’ appearances on site became infrequent, villagers asked him to help them continue what they were doing. In early 2009, he summed up the situation:

They made an error with the *sensibilisation*. Why? Because they did the *sensibilisation* without having done a study or a preliminary discussion with the elders here – the people who already know the situation. What I can say is that the canal and the other things – normally before doing that, they should have had a discussion with the *Tangalamenas*. They studied all that solely in their imaginations; they looked for the water and immediately added a dam. After making the barrage, everything was blocked - there’s no more water going downstream, the pressure is insufficient. Not only that, they drained the water. That’s a mistake – they don’t know the people from here – that after having discovered the problem. The people here have already made the same mistake. At the time, we couldn’t grow rice for two years. If they had discussed this with the people before, we wouldn’t have this problem.

Other villagers commented that the technicians never visited their homes (which was true) choosing instead to call people for large gatherings, such as the *sensibilisation*, next to the high-way and the Village MAP site, or (once) call them for focus groups in central areas like the local gargonete.

The gulf between the villagers and technicians is enforced by the “development” apparatus even while development ideology asserts a desire to erase socio-economic inequality. Development is not simply about a neo-colonial turn, as with Escobar (1995), or the expansion of bureaucratic and state power, as with Ferguson (1990),

104 Mainly, these are local elders who retain exclusive rights to communicate with the ancestors and often preside over ceremonies where the ancestors were invoked.
though both are certainly a part of what goes on within the development industry.

Nestled within these seemingly monolithic forms of power are the nodes of inequality that give them their strength – the technicians and bureaucrats whose jobs depend on the salience and durability of their categories.

**Part 3: The Impossibilities of Addressing Failure**

The control and regimentation of land and labor, coupled with the creation and sustenance of epistemological hierarchies that buttressed social inequality created what villagers considered a dire food shortage. At the same time, a political crisis meant technicians and bureaucrats were missing in action. December 2008 saw the boiling point of a crisis and competition that had been simmering since the winter of that year. It was in December that the President shut down Viva TV, the station owned by Andry “TGV” Rajoelina, after it aired a 45 minute interview with former President Didier Ratsiraka. The move was followed by widespread protests, and those responsible for the *Campus Ambanivohitra* were increasingly called to the capital by a President who was anxious to quit the crisis.

**Growing Concern**

By December 2008, the issues the Village MAP were wearing on the villagers. Discussions came to center on the effects of the practices described above:

Participant 1: I’m going to tell you the truth. The majority of students here, they’re already disappointed in this training because there aren’t yet any real results. We spent a lot of time, but we’ve got nothing to show for it… This year we’ll all die of famine. We asked for food aid but they haven’t yet given anything. If we have enough to eat, I think we could come here [to the fields] every day.

Participant 2: A lot of students have already left the project. Do you think that everyone can live off two or three rows of produce? I don’t think so.
Participant 1: It’s not our fault, we’re ready to cultivate but it’s them that aren’t doing anything.

Participant 2: We even want to finish all this because we want to get out of poverty… They said, “Compared to the land where we do our training, your land here is very good.” They said that.

Students spoke of the way they were made to divide their days – three days to work with each of the three technicians, the rest to tend the crops on their own parcels. They spoke of how the PPRR technician got angry and quit the projet because one of the students went to find something to eat during his training and never came back. I heard elsewhere that the technician left because he did not see the point in having the same training done by three different organizations.

The list of grievances that students took to technicians went nowhere, and they asked the Fokontany President to step in. His family being closely involved, he knew of the problems. He discussed the issues with bureaucrats and technicians alike: the pépinière, the canal, the hunger the villagers had because of their wasted labor. The technicians, particularly PPRR said that it was not working, and suggested that they give the houses to the villagers and hire a technician to live with them. Still, nothing seemed to happen. The Fokontany President suggested that they go above him politically, drafting a letter to the Mayor of the commune and asking for his intervention.

At the same time I began trying to explain the situation to the Senator’s assistant at the BRP office, and trying to track down the relevant staff. The worse the situation got, the more time I spent in government offices. The bureaucrats from the BRP had gone to Tana to deal with the rising political protests. I went to the DRDR representative, who told me that the real problem was that the peasants were parasieux (lazy) and did not want to work. Then I went to the DAEP at the regional
offices and apprised him of the situation. He was receptive to the problem, telling me that he would see what he could do.

When the BRP Director for the Project finally returned from Antananarivo, we set up a meeting to discuss the canal with ONN. The horticultural group CTHT was invited as well, though as the representative said, he was not sure why. We spoke of the Canal, and I was told flatly – and again – that the problem was that people were lazy. The meeting concluded by turning to expanding the program – doubling down on development – and including the training CTHT could offer.

I went back to the DAEP, setting up another meeting with all of the technicians and bureaucrats at the regional office on Tamatave’s main avenue. When I headed to the meeting room I was met by regional bureaucrats, who were in the middle of filing past the armed soldiers guarding the building, saying they had cancelled the meeting due to the threat of protests.

Later, a friend told me she had been to the local police precinct to handle some business and had seen a truck full of rice under guard there. I went back to the DAEP, asking if at least the project could convince the government agency in charge of them to let five 50 kilo bags go. We waited for his 4x4 and chauffer to arrive to take us to city hall, less than a mile down the road. Here, we spoke to someone at the Mayor’s office about the possibility. We were told the rice belonged to the region, not the city, so we should ask there. The DAEP worked for the Region, but could not make that demand, and I was instructed to return to the BRP to see if they could secure the release of the food aid. They said they would see about it and that they would meet with the farmers to explain the situation shortly.
Resituating Power in Crisis

The morning before the meeting, I exchanged texts with the BRP Development Director who was now in charge of the project (the Senator was almost permanently in Tana by now):

01/07/2009, 7:08 am

MLK to [BRP]: I’m going to Andakolosy with my scooter. How’s it going with the food aid?

[BRP] to MLK: We’re going to bring 5 sacks of white rice just for today. Go with your scoot because I can’t go because the president will be here at 9h. DAEP will be with you.

I went to Andakolosy and waited with the Villagers at the entrance to the Village MAP. The technicians and bureaucrats arrived at 9. They had no rice.

The Fokontany President opened the meeting, stating that they had gathered to address the “dysfunctions” of the project. Specifically, he spoke of: the lack of water in the cistern meant to serve the village and the lack of a generator to move water to it, the fact that the produce farm “wasn’t working like it should,” the lack of a working canal, and the food shortage that was resulting. After this opening, technicians took turns speaking and giving their explanations of what had happened.

The Pastor spoke first, suggesting that the training was too much for the farmers to learn quickly, and that putting a water pump near the site of the fields would help preserve their labor. At the same time, he said he would help the groups that had not had good results to catch up with the ones who had. Next the representative from DRDR spoke, changing his tune 180 degrees from what he had said to me just a week earlier. Rather than suggest that the villagers were “lazy” or “reticent” as he had in our private meeting, he highlighted their inability to do the work required given the material
constraints of a lack of water, and a lack of seeds. Next the representative from ONN spoke, blaming the problems at the canal on the lack of rain, and offering that the ONN would find other public works jobs that would help the locals to address this problem, and insisted that they “Know that it’s necessary that these peasants work for a salary.” He asked for time to get through the bureaucratic process of beginning this project. In effect, the ONN proposal to deal with the Village MAP problems would kill two birds with one stone: public works would constitute a way for the ONN to provide aid to the village, and the bungled ONN canal created need for public works.

The CTHT representative who had been at the meeting at the Presidential Palace in Tamatave spoke next. He explained what they were doing on their experimental field across from the place bandes. He stated that while they were not yet finished with their experiments, they would be willing to train the villagers in nursery practices that could grow the trees faster. The Fokontany President - an accomplished pépiniériste - broke in, making it clear where CTHT would stand with the local community:

To tell the truth, I was a bit surprised to see your pépinières. I want to thank you again..., but if you weren’t doing that, it’s up to you, eh. But according to the plan, you must not forget that we’re making this place a model village. If it works, we’re the ones who reap the rewards.

His words gestured towards his own power in the situation, and a little to his concern that he was not apprised of the addition of another group, less so than one that might stake a claim on the benefits the project might produce.

The final speaker was the individual who had built the houses. An entrepreneur and an advisor to the Chef de Région, he suggested that the houses be turned over to the villagers, citing the expense of posting a guardian at the site and of having to replace the locks every time that some bit of mischief happened there. He also stated
he would be making furniture for each home - a bed, a table, and some chairs. He offered to hire local villagers, mainly from the program, as laborers to finish whatever else needed to be completed on the project. These ideas were not components of the original plan, but seemed rather another instance of doubling down on development. But it was when he took up speaking as an advisor, rather than an entrepreneur, that served as a reminder of what being a model meant to the village, mentioning the import of the programs optics if, as the Regional Chief had told him, the First Lady were to visit.

Then the region’s MAP Coordinator, what the Fokontany President called the groups “coach,” an individual I had never seen or met before, began to speak. It was as though the entire project rewound to day one:

Hello everyone. I want to give my thanks to all our collaborators. The question we should ask ourselves is how are we going to have a good harvest while working with these technicians and trainers… The Andakolosy Village MAP is a bit special. In the 22 regions of Madagascar there is the Village MAP, but the one in Andakolosy is very different. Why? Because in a very small amount of time you already have many trainers, technicians, and directors in this zone.

He went on to engage in a side conversation, trying to get the President of the Fokontany to tell him exactly how many people resided in Andakolosy and the neighboring villages, his own unfamiliarity with the project beginning to show:

What I was saying, it’s a little special, the Village MAP of Andakolosy. We expect your willingness. Normally, we should start work, we work, we shouldn’t wait, but there are always problems. Take the region of Analanjrofo, for example, you know it’s very far there, eh? The people there, they work very well because they think the place was chosen there for the Village MAP. The Village MAP isn’t only gifts; you need to get that out of your thoughts. The Village MAP has already started, eh. We’ve already heard what these leaders have said… We should organize ourselves. Is the SRI going to work for you? Bananas? The subsistence foodstuffs [sorghum and maize]? Are you ready to do it, yes or no? We must make an agreement about that. We won’t have a harvest in June if this continues.
The “coach” went on to direct the technicians to work with the villagers to come up with hard numbers of what they could produce per hectare of rice, sorghum, maize and then pulled the Fokontany president aside to tell him that they he should see to it that they produce exactly what they say they’ll produce. He followed it up telling the group leaders to ignore the farmers who were not present, declaring “Absents don’t take responsibility.” And finished with: “What I’m saying is that you should feel responsible, not just expecting. I’ll say this, in Madagascar there are 22 regions, so 22 Village MAPs. In this other Village MAPs, there is nothing, but you – you have houses, water and everything. You should take responsibility.”

The meeting, as striking as it is on a number of levels, constituted a stage on which the idea of the good farmer, and the good peasant was being remade. It represents a negotiation among these elite actors, themselves suspended in a hierarchy that allowed the “coach” to have the last word. The meeting, in the end, acted not to address problems, but to allow their open discussion and then their burial. It was a moment that taught the anthropologist where she stood as intermediary advocate between a group of villagers and the state, and the villagers where they stood. It tasked the Fokontany President with disciplining his subjects, despite his attempts to negotiate his own space of control. It threw the impossibility of sympathy (whether sincere or insincere) in the face of the DRDR director’s statements. The solutions, where they were to be had, were to be found in the farmers own “willingness” and “responsibility” that could only be achieved through self-surveillance within groups for each culture they attempted. Peasant grievances and the failures of the project were shoehorned and disappeared into a discourse of “bad” rural entitlement.
New Beginnings and the End

The participants in the Village had been, by now, working for four months with no return on the labor investment they had made. The day after this meeting, they had a meeting with a new regional representative and the DRDR representative. She reminded them of a conversation they had had before. She had asked the villagers whether they knew asan-tanana or how to do crafts:

You responded that you don’t know crafts. But are you willing to do it? If I ask this question, it’s because our crop won’t be for a few months, and we don’t know when the financing will come through. Are you willing to do it? No sex distinction: male or female, no problem because I can find someone to teach you. For example: basket weaver. The objective is to replace the goods sold next to the road, like at Ivoloina, also to have something original. I can find someone who can do it. Then, while waiting for the harvest, you’ll still have work that earns you an income.

Students responded quickly to the assumption that they had time to weave baskets.

The Chef de Village spoke first, stating that their problem was that they were already “occupied by their work.” One woman began to ask about the crafts, and then another broke in, “When we’re waiting for the harvest, we look for little jobs that can pay us.” Then a male student, “There’s also the sand from the river, 300 Ariary for a can of sand.” Then a female student, who had already gone through similar training called the woman’s attention to the fact that there had not been bamboo and raffia growing in Andakolosy for a long time. The training was fine if you lived where bamboo and raffia grew, she explained, but there had not been any there for a long time. Then another, mentioning her sister’s negative experiences with learning tailoring, questioned whether the crafts they taught would cost too much after.

Later the Chef de Village, who had worked at FOFIFA before, expressed anger about the first meeting held to address the Village MAP problems:
I was really angry at the meeting last Tuesday. The technician said he would train us. I said we need training by we don’t have time for that… We know how to grow produce with our traditional techniques. If we had done that with our traditional techniques, it’s certain that we would have had a good harvest. [Because] we didn’t use modern techniques, that’s the reason we’re involved in this training. I told him that “If your technique is going to produce in one or two months, let’s do it. If not, you know the answer.” You know that there’s someone who didn’t train with us, his maize is already being harvested. Us peasants, if we do something, we just want to have something with which we can buy petrol and rice, that’s it. You know, we’ve already grown manioc on the land there where we’re doing sorghum now. Why did they order us to pull up all that [manioc]? What I think is that they want to kill us, not make our lives better.

And further:

We are deceived by these technicians. The problem is that they said we should destroy our fields of manioc, we executed this order. Finally, we’ve got nothing. We’re in despair. We’ve said that these technicians don’t want to improve our lives, they want to destroy us. Why don’t they improve what we’ve done, but instead they destroy it. You know there’s available land here, why didn’t they do it on the other available land? They should leave the land that is already full and exploit the empty land. They said that it was necessary to destroy it all because Ravalomanana was coming. We are not happy.

Afterwards, it became clear that the flurry of activity precipitated by the diverse efforts of technicians, the president Fokontany, the DAEP and myself were for naught. The villagers took it upon themselves to reorganize into a new farming group, and approached the young brother-in-law of the President Fokontany to help them continue their training. They pooled money to get seeds to supplement what they had left, and planned to replant manioc and corn.

The five sacks of rice (50 kilos each) earned the same fate as the rest of the truckload. It was finally released and taken to the Regional government offices where it was distributed among the functionaries there. Each received a half a bag of rice (25 kilos) and a quart of cooking oil. A gift from the government meant to see them through a time of crisis that reflected the priorities of a state in crisis, and perhaps the more
durable purposes of development in the creation and sustenance of the expert and bureaucratic classes.

**Conclusions**

The Village MAP brought together a diverse group of self interest parties ranging from national level politicians to local villagers. As the project began to generate and distribute resources, conflicts emerged over land and labor and over how diverse forms of knowledge would be put to use. As these potential spaces of collaboration and negotiation emerged, they quickly fell subject to familiar asymmetries of power.

Power over time, labor, and land became central areas of conflict at the model village. Villagers played constant waiting games with project personnel and important (and not so important) interlocutors between the project and the various levels of state power. Land became a tool of coercion as the state put it to work to access villager’s time and labor. The state also turned development projects into projects that could employ local workers, doubling the linkages between the target population and the state. The agricultural training itself brought the state and Andakolosy villagers into close encounter. Through the rationalization of peasant practices, the state staked a claim on intimate agricultural practices, and forced new forms of association while attempting to break others.

Conflicts over land, labor and time were accompanied by disagreements over the relative value of different forms of knowledge that were precipitated in part by the construction of the peasant as an individual impoverished by ignorance and indolence. Project technicians jockeyed for position, negotiating the value of their respective knowledge bases and, in the process, adopting experimental practices that engaged peasant labor in ways that threatened their ability to survive. Knowledge itself was
closely guarded, and the incident with the massive tomato bears this out. Being knowledgeable was a status that aligned with urban and educated, but also connected to the contemporary Malagasy state. This knowledge was in direct conflict with the knowledge of villagers, itself based in the experiences and expertise of previous political regimes. In 1997, Victoria Bernal, looking at colonial development in the Sudan, argued, “If knowledge is power, so too is the more insidious power to remain ignorant that is the privilege of rulers” (Bernal 1997: 453). Knowledge certainly matters, as does ignorance, but power inheres in the ability to order knowledge and thus lay claim to expert status. Yet expert status does not guarantee success, and several of the main public works projects initiated by the Village MAP failed – at least one to disastrous effect. Villagers foresaw, based on their experiential and technical knowledge, the spectacular failure of this component and tried to warn development agents and technicians, to no avail.

Conflicts over techno-scientific knowledge and the control of land, labor and time helped to create a food crisis that threatened many villagers who had participated in the project’s agricultural training. Efforts to rectify these issues were rebuffed with familiar discourses of peasant ignorance and indolence. The situation was worsened by the constant shifts in local power because of the burgeoning political crisis unfolding in the capital and, to a lesser extent, in the island’s largest cities. The handling of the crisis, or lack thereof, laid bare the asymmetries of power within development and signaled the often disheartening proclivities of the state to value performance over results.

For the state, the Village MAP would, and to an extent did, constitute a central example of its legitimacy. It had the potential, had it been undertaken earlier, to balance
the accusations that Ravalomanana’s form of development was only concerned with
taking land and revenue from farmers – an accusation whose genesis came in the form
of the Daewoo land deal and the dispossession of thousands of farmers through the
Sherritt Nickel and Cobalt Mine. The project mattered – or, it could have mattered. By
February and March of 2009, Andakolosy villagers were matter of fact about their
standing: “You know, we’ve lived forever with agriculture. If there are technicians or
not, we can do it [farming].”

In the end, and somewhat counterintuitively, the project succeeded in transforming
the lives of everyone involved. As meetings were taking place to address problems at
the Campus, the Senator was being named Minister of Decentralized Cooperation - a
winner, no doubt, in the President’s last effort to restructure his cabinet and gain some
time with the supporters of the opposition. Of course, he would end up in exile in
France, working as a mathematician at the University of Rouen and attempting to
perfect development ahead of his (inevitable) return. His second in command was
climbing the bureaucratic ladder before the coup, setting herself up as a central actor in
Antananarivo before being tossed aside in the restructuring of the government. The
other regional heads, rising the ranks by overseeing Ravalomanana’s Madagascar
Action Plan, were inevitably - as the state starts over and attempts to prove that it has
moved on from the failed politics of the past – demoted or chased out of office. These
agents transformed twice by development – the development that propped the state up
– and the rhetoric of development that would tear it down.

At the local level, too, individuals were transformed. The Fokontany President, for
a moment, gained more political power and more control over land and labor through
his championing of the project. He would remain the President Fokontany past the mid-March coup, continuing to translate his admittedly substantial entrepreneurial skills into profit.

The villagers of Andakolosy, despite their differences, may have had the last laugh. In the end, they got their houses, telling the Fokontany President that renting them out was “unacceptable.” With the coup, the threat of being kicked off the land was dissipated. The land they had been cultivating was carried in common by the association they had created in February. There were disputes, and many of the students who had the hereditary right to farm the Andakolosy land left the group. As of April 2009, they planned to continue working with PPRR, the only organization that did not stay long enough to ruin their relations with the local population. The canal problem was solved, but it is unsure whether the site itself ever got real plumbing.
CHAPTER 7
DEVELOPMENT AND THE CONTINUING REBEGINNING OF THE STATE

The End of the Beginning

This chapter returns to the subject of the 2008-2009 coup d'état that opened this thesis and the political crisis that caused it, and continues until now. The ultimate rebeginning – or more correctly a perpetual state of heightened rebeginning – Madagascar’s political crisis sat behind the two projects examined here: causing one to end, another to begin again under new governmental leadership. This chapter offers the opportunity to – in a highly self-conscious way – take stock, evaluate lessons-learned, and draw some conclusions about what rebeginning means for anthropological understandings of the complex political-economy of the development industry in Madagascar and beyond. It is a place to ask questions about where this study goes and what it means for the more practical concerns of development: the very real poverty that exists suspended in the relations of development described here, and the implications for concerned scholars.

And It All Came Crashing Down

Development plays a role in relations much larger than the hierarchies that inhere between the Malagasy elite and the Malagasy peasantry, neither of which have clear geographic or temporal boundaries. In 2008 and 2009, “development” was a key player in Andry Rajoelina’s efforts to dissolve Marc Ravalomanana’s government. Relying on tropes of good and bad development and popular ideas of who should benefit from development and what this development should look like, he began to disrupt the official narratives that projects like the Campus Fanantenana and Campus Ambanivohitra were
integral in constructing. At the same time, and in very real ways, his “Révolution Orange” forced some development projects and funding to disappear, while allowing others to gain a better foothold. In other words, the crisis halted many types of development aid, while the change in government opened new trajectories for development’s powers.

What occurred as things fell apart was a massive shift in the contents of the development network. The winners and losers changed while the institutional relations remained, albeit in altered form. The ultimate effect of this rebeginning is a new extension of the state and the entry of new agents into the networks of development while other agents disappear (in)completely, are cast into the realm of shadow presences (like the Campus Fanantenana) or are able, by virtue of their status slightly removed from the state, to survive and overcome a political death that seems eminent for the pet projects of political power (like the Campus Ambanivohitra, which still operates today).

A Troubled State

Political dissidence has been attenuated in Madagascar since the 2006 presidential election. After winning a second term, Ravalomanana famously had the mayor of Tamatave, the nephew of former President Didier Ratsiraka and his 2006 opponent, Roland Ratsiraka, arrested for corruption (Ploch 2009, Madagasikara-Soa 2007). Dissident voices, like Father Sylvain Urfer, who made a habit of speaking out against inequality on the island, were expelled in May of 2007 (Madagascar Tribune 2007a). These acts laid bare the politics of state power and were especially salient in coastal regions, where the population was mainly Catholic, and where, despite his
faults, Roland Ratsiraka and his uncle, the former President, were regarded as (relatively) important and popular political leaders.

By the time I arrived to carry out research in 2008, the Mayor of Antananarivo, a young disc jokey nicknamed ‘TGV' after the French bullet train (Train à Grande Vitesse), was already butting heads with his predecessor — former Mayor of Antananarivo (now President) Ravalomanana. After some skirmishes over state funds for the city’s budget, their relationship deteriorated. TGV began to use the media resources at his disposal (he owned a television and radio station called Viva) to lambast the President, accusing him of personal profiteering and selling the Malagasy peoples’ ancestral lands out from under them (referring to the Sherritt and Daewoo deals; Larquier 2009). Critiquing development and accusing the Ravalomanana of being a dictator proved to be a winning strategy.

Accusations that Ravalomanana was a dictator were old hat by 2008. But the international community would not begin to interrogate his leadership until well after the crisis began. In retrospect, Ravalomanana’s rule would come to look “presidentialist,” “neo-patrimonial,” and overly connected to his company Tiko (Marcus 2010). In an environment where dissidents did not last long, Rajoelina emerged as a single voice that could speak for what was, up until late 2008, a disorganized and ineffective opposition. He was deliberately provocative, using Viva TV and radio to speak out against the president.

Yet Andry “TGV” was not so different from Ravalomanana. Like the President, he was a self-made man and a Merina who translated his professional success into the public realm. He was elected to the high profile position of Mayor of the capital of
Antananarivo in 2007. As calls for reform, more open and democratic government, and new elections were articulated the parallels with the 2001-2 crisis that brought Ravalomanana to power were palpable:

There was a sense of *déjà vu* about it all... young entrepreneur, wealthy, handsome and popular, mayor of the capital city. A massive crowd crammed into the Place du 13 Mai. Protests and an immense sense of hope for real democracy. Peaceful demonstrations and a march on the presidential palace and other symbolic seats of power. [Raharimanana 2009]

The crisis would prove durable, and while Rajoelina did not offer the type of leadership that won many to his side (see Le Monde 2009), he proved to be the only political leader still in office willing to take on Ravalomanana. He also seemed, at the outset, capable of bringing former leaders – who were key to the opposition – together around the goal of ousting Ravalomanana.

Reaching out to previous presidents like Didier Ratsiraka and Zafy Albert, and former Ravalomanana opponents like Roland Ratsiraka, Rajoelina became the center of what seemed – in parts of the island – to be a social movement – *Révolution Orange*, he called it. Zafy and Roland Ratsiraka would both come to Tamatave to lead protests. In calling on these leaders, and at the time, collaborating with them, Rajoelina promised a new state and a renewed state. Like the powerful *shadow presences* of FOFIFA within development, these representative leaders sat as emblems of futures that could have been – if Roland Ratsiraka had won, if Didier Ratsiraka had succeeded the 2002 standoff, if Zafy had not been impeached.

In late 2008, Rajoelina did something particularly provocative. He hosted a 45 minute interview with former President Ratsiraka on Viva TV. Ravalomanana’s response was swift. He closed down Viva TV in December 2008, sparking widespread
protests (Rakotoarison 2009). In early 2009, Ravalomanana shut down TGV’s VIVA Radio, prompting retaliation from TGV’s supporters and the burning of Ravalomanana’s state TV, the Madagascar Broadcasting Service (MBS), offices. Efforts to silence the opposition only led to more protests, and by late January, demonstrations were commonplace.

**Living Crisis**

In Tamatave, the crisis captured everyone. Rumors flew – mainly positing the massacre of Merina by cotier and the robbery of vazaha in Atsinanana. The state department sent out a young diplomat to interview Americans and political notables in an attempt to gauge the probability that the violence would turn ethnic. The prospect loomed over the Merina in town, who still remembered the sporadic ethnic violence that characterized the 2001-2 crisis and that would rise, on occasion, in spurts that signalled the political-economy of violence.

In late January protestors attacked the visible symbols of Ravalomanana’s power, particularly the Tiko subsidiary Magro, whose warehouses and markets were looted and burned. Some Malagasy took advantage, buying up this limited supply of goods at drastically reduced prices. Expatriates and development staff were, for all intents and purposes, locked down. We closed up our houses at 7 pm, sitting in the stifling heat and – on one particularly bad night – listening to the looters carry goods past the garden wall. Days were punctuated by flurries of text messages relaying information gleaned from Sobika.com, a news site that scrolled constantly updating posts on the situation in Antananarivo. Protests were planned in Tamatave. Some culminated in the boom of tear gas cannisters. Others did not. Thunderstorms took on new significance as people kept sheltered in their homes – recalling the crack of breaking barricades that echoed...
around the city on the day Magro was burned. Shots rang out as Tamatave’s grocery store owners paid the military for protection in cash and cigarettes. The city was revealed as a bowl that carried sound remarkably, and eerily, well. And then it was quiet – a silence brimming with dark anticipation.

**Black Saturday**

On Friday, February 6, 2009 I received a message from the US Embassy that echoed the periodic updates being sent out to American citizens: “This is the US Embassy. There will be a rally at Place 13 Mai Feb 7 at 10 am.” The *place du 13 Mai* is a premier location for the contestation of state power in Madagascar’s capital. It was a central gathering space in 1972, 1991, and 2002 (Raison-Jourde 2002). A couple of thousand protestors showed up at the Presidential Palace in Antananarivo to demand President Ravalomanana’s ouster. Guards and police opened fire, killing 26 and wounding some 300 more (TopMada 2009). A journalist wrote a piece published in *All Africa* shortly after: “A military cordon, brief negotiations, and then the massacre. Weapons took over and today, the people are still mourning their dead…” (Raharimanana 2009). One Malagasy newspaper carried a political cartoon consisting of an inky black panel with the caption “Saturday.”

Saturday, February 7, was the height of the violence – but was certainly not the only violence. In Tamatave rumors circulated that 20 had been killed, or 6, or more – the numbers never emerged clearly. These narratives of violence circulated – adding fuel to the fire against Ravalomanana and Rajoelina alike. They also added to the exhaustion of anticipation as uninterested Malagasy hoped for an unlikely return to stability and normalcy.
And Then It Was (Sort of) Over

On the tenth of March, after several months of crisis at oscillating levels and an unknown number of deaths, the army gave its two protagonists a 72 hour ultimatum (Agence France Presse 2009; Reuters 2009a). I went to the Bureau Regionale de la Presidence (BRP). They had already started locking out the Senator’s staff. When I arrived, the soldier in charge of security was talking with the Chief of Police outside the main gate. I told him I had heard the military might be taking over. He smiled as he replied, “Maybe.”

The ultimatum came and went – the General who declared it was removed from power and replaced by a Rajoelina supporter who took control of the government and then immediately handed it over to TGV who declared himself the President of the Haute Autorite de Transition (HAT). Setting store in the stabilizing powers of governing / institutional networks (seen through the prism of “neopatrimonial” rule; see Marcus 2010) and the lack of an effective opposition, scholars were taken aback by the suddenness of the fall. On the island, citizens and expatriates were surprised, concerned, and sometimes hopeful. Individuals who had been tied closely to Ravalomanana were scared.

In the two years that have followed the crisis, the state has engaged in a constant process of rebeginning and reshuffling. In December 2009, former heads of state like Zafy Albert, who rallied protesters in support of the ouster of Ravalomanana, and Didier Ratsiraka, who was key in spurring the crisis through his VIVA TV interview, would find themselves banned from the country (Midi-Madagasikara 2009). Banned as well was the Rector who preceded the Campus Ambanivohitra Director as leader of the University of Toamasina. He had been named Prime Minister by the HAT in October
2009 as a part of ongoing power-sharing negotiations (he was the choice of Didier Ratsiraka, Midi-Madagasikara 2009, Reuters 2009b). Commune rurale mayors and chefs de region were unceremoniously dismissed (Agence France Presse September 21, 2010). New Ministries were created – notably the trifurcation of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fishing (Madagascar 2009) – that allowed Rajoelina the power to extend his own networks and solidify his power base, while partially dismantling and partially reinhabiting the same structures that had served Ravalomanana’s interests.

In the foreground, the Rajoelina regime has continued to make and break agreements for a power-sharing government and elections. The constitution was reformed in late 2010 to enable Rajoelina to claim an indefinite mandate (World Bank 2011a). Two projected election dates have come and gone. Intergovernmental bodies like the African Union and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have refused to recognize Rajoelina’s legitimacy (Al Jazeera 2010), while the World Bank has discussed him only as a “de facto” president (World Bank 2011a). Inside the country, the situation mirrors, in altered form, the strategies that characterized Ravalomanana’s regime – dissidents are arrested, rivals exiled, and the inner circle is enriched and constantly reshuffled.

For people not connected too closely to the old regime or otherwise disconnected from the new one, the new order – so much like the old order – fails to address their concerns. The lack of legitimacy has remained a major problem and has worn on the public consciousness. Malagasy in Atsinanana describe an increasingly desperate situation express hopelessness about a promised future that they might never see. At
this point, Ravalomananana would be considered an improvement, albeit slight. An editorial in early 2011 expressed a similar sense of despair:

Good news for the week: “the army announces a presidential election before the end of the year.” Sadly for us, it’s happening in Egypt. The Egyptians are lucky to have leaders who really think about their country. Here, the elections are postponed indefinitely, and those that really think about the country’s interest? There are none. [Rabehevitra 2011]

The country’s interest, and those of the politicians at the helm of the state, is clearly wrapped up with continuing development and has very real effects on the ground. For some of Madagascar’s state agents, this would be an opportunity to “start again” as policy and institutional changes pushed them in new directions, forcing them to abandon old projects and embark on new ones. Those closest to the former regime would see their fortunes reversed as they were forced into exile or out of their posts. The TIKO group would disperse, split up for all intents and purposes. These pieces of the corporate body sit as remnants, waiting to be reanimated when (and if) Ravalomanana returns. Less connected Malagasy would see change mainly in the transformation of acronyms and the entry of new and adjacent bureaucracies of expertise as well as governance.

**The Costs (and Benefits) of Crisis**

When the crisis began in earnest – complete with the requisite political violence – the World Bank suspended its operations. USAID evacuated its staff. The Millennial Challenge Account monies were rescinded. In partial parallel to the disappearance of the Village MAPs main administrative directors while they struggled to keep order in the region, foreign (and particularly Anglophone) development expertise disappeared. France stayed, continuing its programs of decentralized cooperation, keeping its volunteers in place, and fueling suspicions that the French had orchestrated the coup.
Rajoelina has actively cultivated geopolitical relations that set him apart from his predecessor, but call into question his continuing anti-neocolonial rhetoric. Opposition, in this schema, is always foreign born – backed by the same interests I have described here, and illustrating the prevalence of what Holmes and Marcus (2005) describe as para-ethnography, with ethnographic practices diffused and put to myriad purposes. Put another way, Rajoelina’s constant rhetorical calls for autochthony, summed up in his responses to Daewoo and Sherritt, tap critical engagements with and understandings of the network that take up and use the same practices of ethnography engaged in this work and prevalent across the development industry (see Geschiere 2009; Li 2007; Ferguson 1990).

Yet autochthony in word does not equal autochthony in deed, and while Rajoelina claims that his electoral successes (consisting in the main of his constitutional referendum which won 74% support with 52% participation; Haute Court Constitutionel 2010),105 were a reprisal of foreign intervention, the reality is one of continuous connection, particularly to the power of the former colonizer. The rebeginning of the Malagasy state fed into the rebeginning of the contours of geopolitical relations – and a realignment of the flows that run through these relations, giving the French (and others) advantage.

Since Rajoelina declared himself president of the HAT in 2009, the World Bank reentered the country (World Bank 2011b), foreign investments have grown – spurring new “Presidential” projects like new hospitals (World Bank 2011a). This money – like previous development investment – will do more than just build hospitals. It will build

105 During the referendum there was an attempted coup by a group led by a former Rajoelina supporter (BBC 2010)
legitimizing networks that will further entrench Rajoelina, until – eventually – his position is successfully challenged. These interventions, I would venture, will layer over the projects of previous regimes in a process of rebeginning that draws power and distinction from Rajoelina’s predecessors. This process will grow the state, pushing it deeper into the lives of rural Malagasy, even while this extension of power and control is masked by development and the politics of individual leaders.

**Cultivating the Network: The Campus Fanantenana and the Campus Ambanivohitra**

Neither the Campus Ambanivohitra nor the Campus Fanantenana are isolated objects of development. Instead they are outgrowths of a series of networks that come, overwhelmingly, from on high (at the level of state and international policy) and act most stringently on the ground. The two projects are structurally adjacent and ideologically similar, illustrating two competing nodes in development’s oversized networks that act as receiving points for the resources set loose by development aid.

The Campus Ambanivohitra and the Campus Fanantenana crafted, through their networks, techniques of capture that implicated every actor, from international partner to project target, in their own rebeginnings – offering multiple potentials for transformation that legitimized the differential distribution of power and capital within the project. Both projects were able to transform labor into resources within the network – for the Campus Ambanivohitra, this capital was mainly economic, in the Campus Fanantenana, it was mainly political.

In Madagascar, the crux of the development matter is centered on land, labor and knowledge. The main difference between the two projects examined here is how their positioning within structures of international and state power shifted the projects
relationship with land, labor and knowledge and how these key resources were struggled over and translated into other forms of capital. At the Campus Ambanivohitra, labor, knowledge, and land, were used to generate not just “development,” but also to provide financial support that would feed back into the project. The Campus Fanantenana, on the other hand, generated political capital and state legitimacy. In other words, the Campus Ambanivohitra relied heavily on the ability to harness and manage labor in ways that produced physically marketable goods (through harvest) whereas the Campus Fanantenana worked mainly to harness and manage labor in ways that produced visually marketable images of the ideal state. It should be clear that these were general trends in overlapping and dynamic strategies of resource capture: both projects were awash in resource flows and both were characterized by the struggles that accompanied these.

New configurations of development are never quite as new as they make themselves out to be, and, to an extent, that’s their nature as political objects and network arrays. The Malagasy cases examined here, while small and seemingly anecdotal, are built out of the same highly mobile ideas and ideals that inform development across geographic and temporal space. These projects speak not only to Malagasy concerns – whose twists are seen in the ascension of certain images of the peasant over others, or certain forms of expertise over others – but also to projects across Africa and beyond, highlighting one of the processes that enables the durability of development in the face of failure.

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106 Model villages are old ideas (see Mitchell 2002), as are paysan leaders (Sardan and Bierschenk 1993).
Returning to Rebeginnings

Rebeginnings are a loose frame set around highly complex phenomenon. Theory requires simplification – in that way it does much the same work as statistics: it disaggregates and reaggregates data, or in this case, actions. The idea of rebeginnings, however, is also a very personal understanding of the phenomenon of development and may trouble the subjective viewpoint of another who prefers to view development from another vantage. As such, the process I outline here is not an endpoint, nor a final conclusion, but rather the outline of processes of development seen from a specific vantage and focused on the networked flows of political, economic and social capital. In other words, I do not propose to have discovered the final key to our social reality, only to have outlined a process that – to me – seems ubiquitous in development, and, to an extent, outside of it.

As I have outlined the idea in this work, rebeginnings signal a double transformation. On the one hand, rebeginning represents the siren call of development, on the other, the effort to keep this potential open amidst struggles among diverse interested parties. Put another way, development is best understood as a promise of rebeginning made to institutions and individuals through the very real political, economic, and social capital that flow through development’s networks. These flows spur competition, making development a site of confrontation and contestation. It is precisely within these points of conflict that the boundaries of diversely and variably weighted individual, expert, and state power are constructed. These conflicts are subsequently smoothed out by the sorts of rebeginnings made possible by teleological notions of progress and neoliberal notions of governance; which are then put back to work in the rebeginnings of individuals and institutions.
The process can be (crudely) illustrated as a cycle that circles back on itself (see Figure 7-1). In the first instance, individuals and agencies are invited in with the promise of transformation. This promise of transformation is existential to the idea of development – development is transformation. The second instance of rebeginning - the entry into a network, the struggles over resources, the eventual reinvention of institutions – seems ubiquitous among states and corporations whether they make transformative promises or not. Imagine for instance the way a state reinvents itself with each new leader, the way corporations jettison subsidiaries when they become troublesome, redefining their very nature (think Monsanto), or the way they are broken up only to re-configure and eventually re-animate (think Bell, Cingular, ATT).
Rebeginnings help us remember to forget (Anderson 1983), they help us survive the past and think the future in ways that keep power – largely – untroubled. They are a revolution in place.

**The Paradox of the Past in Development**

In order to gain traction, the idea of development relies upon well worn teleological notions of progress that depend on an imagined past characterized by a lack of development. This notion of development has replaced older understandings that took development as one facet of a circular process of growth and decay mirroring the human life cycle (Cowen and Shenton 1996). Development is, then, centrally concerned with an imagined future. In contemporary views of development, which continue, for all intents and purposes, to be largely modernist, “developing” nations can become “developed” in ways that do not threaten or displace the positionality (read superiority) of those nations already considered to have “developed.” Within this viewpoint there is an idea of a finish line – a point at which development is no longer necessary, an idea made possible, in large part, by the decoupling of ideas of decay from development (see Cowen and Shenton 1996, Ferguson 1999).

Another facet of the unilineal notion of development and its imagined futures is the construction of what Lewis (2009) calls the ‘perpetual present.’ Here the idea of development and the individual projects the idea engenders are always re-situated in the present – each iteration is the project in the now – the past is obscured. This “perpetual present” is a characteristic of the development industry at all levels – from the small scale local projects where the documents written today quickly supplant the objectives crafted yesterday, to the well-appointed halls of development agencies where previous incarnations of policy are reformulated into lessons learned, incorporated into
new policies, and then chucked into obsolescence (see Lewis 2009, Scott 1998). The negation of the past in project documents propels the present backward – the project’s objectives now have always been the project’s objectives. The consequences of past failures are disappeared behind this presentist perspective – the current situation does not have a history; it just is. In this way, the past is simultaneously erased and re-written as the present.

Yet despite these conceptual moves, real and imagined pasts remain the ephemeral impetus to development; “a history that must be transcended” (Scott 1998: 95). On the one hand, the intricacy and complexity of this history is obscured and erased within development, rendering it “schematic” and subsequently ignoring the “essential features of any real, functioning social order” which it is meant to address (Scott 1998: 6). Perhaps most striking is the obfuscation of the role of earlier developmentalist policies in the creation of the predicaments that contemporary policies hope to address (see Ferguson 1999, Cowen and Shenton 1996); and certainly the obfuscation of the failures of the past are a necessary component of development’s self-sustainability.

On the other hand, the past remains an ever-present and necessary factor in the imagined futures that development proffers. In the accepted discourse on Malagasy development, the past emerges as a necessary component – not for its lack of development but as development lost. Thus a number of World Bank documents advise readers of the island’s shift from the status of a net exporter of rice in the period following independence to a net importer since 1980 (FAO 2000; World Bank 2001) or the continuing decline in rice production per capita since that time (Mintin and Dorosh
Thus while the past may be reduced to a sentence or lines on a graph - showing, for example, agricultural output over time - it remains a necessary, though truncated, component of official development.

This past, however, is more insidious than these one line additions of temporal longevity suggest. What remains important – key even – to the sustainability of developmentalist ideology is the silent, yet heavy, presence of development’s past. For all the ahistory and obfuscation involved in contemporary development, the development industry relies heavily on the material and ideological residue of “development’s” earlier relations for legibility and coherence. Thus “development” recalls its earlier incarnations through what I have called its shadow presences: crops that worked in the global marketplace; systems, networks, and institutions of expertise that offered visibility to development and an active role for local and expatriate agents; and state and international institutions that appeared to answer the capitalist desires of those whose lives they touched.

In Madagascar, as in much of the postcolony (see Li 2007, Chalfin 2010; Walley 2004), material infrastructure, intertwined as it is with the ideologies of local, state, and international actors, are reused, re-inhabited, rehabilitated, or left to sit, decaying, alongside the newer structures that represent the interests of new regimes. The projects I studied located themselves on government land inherited from earlier colonial, and then post-colonial developmentalist efforts. They trained farmers next to buildings falling down from neglect – buildings that had once trained farmers or housed

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This concept builds on the insights and observations of Chalfin (2010) and Li (2007), and reworks the analytic structure of the “shadow” in Nordstrom (2004) work on the relationship between the informal and formal economy.
technicians. They proposed rehabilitation schemes that layered atop their precursors schemes and sometimes abandoned these, building anew somewhere close by, but also more visible. Thus while “development,” in its presentist and progressive mode, is represented as always new, always intervening as a response to a “lack” – a something that was not there - it is structured by the past, its very place (both geographically and ideologically) is tied to that past.

This relation between “development” and the past is precarious. The same ideas that build up the infrastructure on which development projects depend – the elements reused by the development industry and that foster new imaginings of a future anterior, a future full of what should have been – are themselves built on ground soiled by a pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial past of slavery, forced labor, land disputes, state power and inequality. This precarious relationship and its necessity foster the rebeginnings that development constantly engages in.

Rebeginnings, visible in the mundane and seemingly slight changes in project objectives, locales, and priorities – the tangible aspects of this analysis – are constituted through the coalescence of the more ideological and ephemeral rebeginnings that development offers individuals and states. While development presents itself as about demonstration – rendering visible “real social needs” through wide scale rural surveys, rendering visible the possibilities of farming through experimental fields, rendering visible certain missteps through follow-up evaluations and stock-taking procedures written into project goals – they are also about disappearance and obfuscation. At the level of individuals, development’s rebeginnings obscure the historical particularities and political positionality of individual farmers and development agents alike. These agents
are rendered invisible and then visible again in project documents that repackage them for development’s markets. At the level of project objectives, development disappears its larger mistakes, relegating them to the trash-pile of obsolete plans that continue to exist at the margins as forgotten project documents and defunct websites that laud its earlier incarnations. For international agents, rebeginning offers a way to sustain international relations and craft legitimacy that obscures while re-inscribing asymmetrical power relations between north and south.

**Rebeginning and Development’s Subjects**

Development, in its self-presentations, is about the promise of transformation. More often than not, transformation is presented as a formula built of marketable concepts of problem and solution. This equation, implying an inverse symmetry of lack and gain (lack + knowledge = development) must be carefully crafted in a way that can call forth agents both above (the international and state agencies that support ‘development’) and below (the target populations that must submit themselves to the transformative knowledge of development). In this way, the objects that represent lack – those farmers who ‘need’ to change – must be represented multiple times – to themselves (so that they are invited to subject themselves to the transformative power of knowledge) and to outsiders at both local, state and international levels (so that they will support this endeavor; see Ferguson 1990; Escobar 1995). The “peasant,” in order to be plugged in to this equation, must be constructed.

This construction is one of development’s more visible effects – peasants are translated and re-translated into development texts; they are engaged and promised a better future through the knowledge and practices of development. Thus development
offers a downward funneled expertise that, in Madagascar, promises peasants the capability to be entrepreneurs of the self in a neoliberal world (Rose 1999).

Less visible are the constructions and re-constructions of development expertise itself, which is present in the mastery of the knowledge of how to create project documents, how to audit and evaluate project outputs, and how to define and craft the allegiance of both target populations and supporting agencies. Projects funnel academics and scientists into the (sometimes profitable) world of development – allowing them to turn expertise into entrepreneurship in a way that mirrors the transformative powers of development they promote for rural farmers. The flipside of this mobility is a rate of turnover that ensures the continual shifting of project desires.

Both cases were generative of a sort of knowledge labor that I am calling *flexpertise*. The term has two meanings: one ideal and one real. First, flexpertise gestures towards the ideal of the expert entrepreneur that can anticipate and respond to market shifts deftly, flexing with the market, and shifting agricultural practices according to their reading and analysis of market phenomenon. This is the idea embodied in the *Paysan leader* and the wide ranging curricula at the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, and the ideal village and economic projects of the Village MAP. This notion of the expert entrepreneur is part of a larger democratization of expertise that responds to critiques of development as unresponsive or tone deaf to indigenous knowledge and the speeding and tightening of global interconnection. Second, flexpertise gestures towards the very real ways these projects facilitate the flexible labor of agricultural technicians that supplement their state and non-state positions and precarious financial existences.108

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108 For both, these were positions that might change due to political shifts, or might go unpaid because of budgetary issues, which linked back to international donors and development aid.
**Imagining the peasant**

Despite the many critiques of development’s teleological underpinnings, it continues to promise “progress” on a unilinear path that sets “tradition” at one end and “modernity” at another (Ferguson 1999). These notions of development have a long history in Western constructions of the “self” and “other” which posit “tradition” as stagnation and “modernity” as innovation. These ideas are important for agricultural interventions which must construct the farmer, first as the object of intervention and then as an imagined outcome.

The creation of target populations is a well-studied facet of development interventions and it is the discrepancies between the construction of these individuals and their everyday reality that is held, in part, responsible for development’s failures. Anthropologists analyzing the development industry have noted and critiqued the ways that its official discourses have crafted an idea of their target population.

Escobar (1995) explores what he calls the “discovery’ of mass poverty” in the global south in the post-WWII era (21). He traces this to the translation of treatments of poverty – much of which were partially reconstructed from colonial administrative policies (Comaroff and Comaroff 1997) – to the global south. In this viewpoint, development replaces colonialism as a mode of control and governance. This shift was accompanied by the construction of the poor as “objects of knowledge and management” (23). Yet development was also folded into the aspirations of newly and soon to be independent colonies, and became a rallying cry and point of contention within new nations, who struggled over the content and control of the emerging development industry (Cooper and Packard 1997). So in addition to reflecting continuing relations of inequality between the global “north” and “south” in which the
“north” defines the parameters, the construction of the peasantry became a central concern for newly independent states.

Ferguson (1990) explores the disjuncture between the everyday realities and scholarly depictions of Lesotho migrant laborers who also farm and their construction in development texts as simple farmers. He illustrates the linkage of project failure to this disjuncture, but, more importantly illustrates the way that the usage of western models and the erasure of the everyday reality of Lesotho workers enabled the expansion and sustenance of state power. In a later work, Ferguson explores the temporal dimension of these constructions of poverty, identifying shifts in global development policy from farming to industrial wage labor and back again (Ferguson 1999:241).

Rossi (2006) illustrates this further in exploring the representation of the “peasant mentality” that legitimizes the role of development brokers and mediators in Niger (37). Here metaphors of stagnation and disconnection predominate. ‘Tradition’ is depicted as the enemy of reason and progress. Peasants are assumed to be sensitive to processes of knowledge transmission that will render interventions – and the changes to labor and land they precipitate and require – a rationale (and often times the only) response to real and perceived needs and desires.

The creation of the peasantry within development discourse is, however, not independent of the lived histories of development actors. Mosse (2005) illustrates the ways that local histories were key in the stereotypical representations of development’s beneficiaries in one large scale project in India. Like Ferguson (1990), he identifies the contextual realities that inform the identities of project participants, including the experiences of past forms of development.
The construction of the peasant, then, must be seen as both local and global, carried out at the level of individual projects and with the involvement of brokers and mediators, and at the level of international policy and accepted contemporary views of what it means to exist as peasantry. The projects I examined wove together historical relations among regional ethnicities – in as far as these can be identified – aiding in the further creation of ethnic divisions, and setting the central highland, or Merina, ethnicity above the coastal populations the projects wished to address. At the Campus Ambanivohitra, coastal farmers' practices were depicted as both traditional and destructive – symbols of an indolent and unwilling populace – even while they were imagined as corrupted by contemporary economies, and by the development industry itself. They were, thus, both disconnected and too connected. These were intertwined with wider ranging imaginings of “tradition” and “modernity” that have been identified elsewhere (Appadurai 1996; Latour 1993; Comaroff and Comaroff 1997), as well as with contemporary concerns with conservation that are central to global imaginings of Madagascar as a world apart. In other words, the idea of the peasant is shot through with the desires of the state and international agencies for which they are, in part, packaged. At the core of all of this is a belief in the parallel rationality of local beneficiaries – a sort of “if you build it, they will come” process that imagines the infinite seductive capabilities of rational self-interest.

This conceptual creation of development’s object, in order to be effective, must engage the desires of the Malagasy themselves. Development must be inviting – it must speak to the desires of individual subjects to “improve” their lives (Li 2007). As Rossi (2006) asserts, a main facet of development work is the work of mediation that
calls individuals into participation – usually through sensitization. It offers, then, a promise of new beginnings to individuals whose current situation leaves them wanting. For project directors and funders, the ideal transformation that could occur would mine the innate entrepreneurial capacities of the individual, transforming peasants into entrepreneurs of the self. The peasant would be rendered a flexible expert, able to respond to complex market phenomenon with the easy adoption of new agricultural practices. This ideal sat uncomfortably next to the reality in which many rural farmers were already quite flexible – layering economic activities in ways that stretched them beyond being simple farmers. This grounded flexibility was already intimately related to market shifts – but remained largely unthinkable for technicians and bureaucrats whose work relied on a certain type of rural subject.

For the Malagasy project participants and villagers, development opened up possibilities to tap into powerful social and financial networks, solidifying their political positions, granting them access to capital through credit that could compensate the risk required in entrepreneurial endeavors, access to wage labor, mobility, etc. The imagined futures of project participants often tacked back to the future anteriors on which the projects’ depended – each of which was itself dependent on those that came before it to define its objectives. Peasant interpretations, desires, and fears about their futures were closely tied to these layered histories, which constituted a store of understandings with which to approach the labor relations engendered by the projects.

Initially, local farmers hoped for the ideal, if attenuated, future similar to the one described for them by project directors and established as a ghostly presence on the sites in which they studied. On the other hand, the very act of promising development
and the exchanges for participation, and thus agricultural labor, that the projects provided spurred accusations that too much participation – specifically getting too involved in this exchange – could and would trap participants into a relationship akin to slavery. Lack of adequate room and board at another project inspired similar suspicions. At the same time, failures of projects to adequately or fairly compensate participants for lost labor were met with suspicions that spurred accusations of forced labor. In so doing, rural farmers were redefining development agents at the same time that they sought to realign the futures they could and would imagine.

**Being and becoming development’s agents**

In creating development’s object, the development industry also creates its subjects in the guise of development’s agents – those who have the skills to intervene and hold the expertise to direct the labor of others. The asymmetry of relations between development agents – the brokers, mediators, and experts who drive the administration, provide the pedagogy, and translate development between donors and recipients within individual projects – mirrors the asymmetry between global north and south, or more specifically the range of possible power relations that inhere as development’s agents encounter each other, their supposed benefactors, and their imagined beneficiaries. Within the field of actors involved in development are bureaucrats, functionaries, and businessmen, rural and urban, low level and high level political figures, agricultural technicians, etc. Individual agents tend to move between these arenas – with individuals translating social capital in one field into advancement in another, and often pursuing numerous political and economic activities at once. Thus many of the individuals engaged in development are also engaged in other ventures, such as restaurants, small shops, etc. The practice of layering livelihood – of having multiple
enterprises – is a practice of diversification that parallels the flexible practices of peasants.

Each of these agents can lay claim to a certain form of expertise – or the mastery over certain aspects of knowledge, whether this be technoscientific, agricultural, managerial or bureaucratic – that links into contemporary ideas of development. Expertise translates into the forms of power that allow individuals the abilities to prescribe and proscribe the activities of others. In the development industry, this expertise solidifies alongside the creation of the non-expert peasant described in the previous section. Expertise is also one facet of the promises that development agents offer to peasants in order to call them into participation – but not always something that can or will be given. The failure of attempted transfers of expert knowledge are accompanied, and in some ways precipitated, by the intractability of expert status.

“Expertise,” as knowledge and status, has constituted the leading edge of development interventions since colonial governments first began using development as a salve for social unrest in the colonies and began replacing colonial civil servants with “experts” (Cooper 2005). Since that time development experts have proliferated – constituting a mobile population whose mastery of certain forms of western knowledge and acceptable argumentation give them power. The highest echelons of development expertise – the administrators and technicians that drive the development machinery - are trained at the universities of “developed” nations (Escobar 1995).

That these individuals at the apex of development are able to – for the most part – rise to the top within the local development industry reflects practical concerns that in

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109 This development intersects with Bourdieu’s (1996) assertion that credentialed university graduates constituted the new “state nobility” in France.
turn reflect contemporary epistemic asymmetries. This is particularly true where foreign education may facilitate a sort of network expertise in which the cultural and social capital imbued in accredited degrees or time in the exterior is supplemented by an array of personal relations that can ensure the success of funding endeavors within a project. It also reflects another level in the already over-constructed objectivity of experts – foreign experts and expertise foster both the legitimacy of the state (Ferguson 1990) and protect it from accountability (Strathern 2000). This occurs, as Steiner-Khamsi and Popkewitz (2004) note, in the utilization of foreign policy models which distance expertise from the state apparatus. It is the distancing provided by experts’ foreign status, along with the erasure or subversion of cultural variables in the statistical measures they use, that allows development to become what Ferguson (1990) calls the anti-politics machine.

Much of the work carried out by development experts is concerned with the reduction of contemporary and historical realities into easily consumed bits and pieces that can then be subjected to generalized formula for change that can be imported from anywhere. This reduction of complex problems into bits of easily quantifiable data is a staple of science and that has diffused out to become what Schofer, Ramirez, et al (2000) call “a taken-for-granted component of the modern nation-state” (868).110 Riles (2000) conceives of this sort of practice, and the networking that accompanies it, as an “aesthetics of information” (2). Strathern (2000) suggests that this dynamic is a part of the rise of an “audit culture” in which the methods of accounting come to signal...

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110 These authors argue that the increase in “science” will lead to an increase in the quality of life of rural individuals, a contention that tends to leave untroubled the political uses to which “science” is put, as well as the ties of power that stand behind the ascension of certain types of knowledge over others.
legitimacy and accountability in all walks of life (see also Harper in Strathern 2000). In this sense, the practices that constitute development expertise constitute a form of magic, what Scott (1998) calls “high modernist ideology,” based on the belief that “anything is possible” and that constitutes a way to both offer hope and respond to social and economic problems (Ball 1998; Ferguson 1990; Tsing 2005).

These aptitudes allow individuals entry into the international aid circuits on which “access to power and economic resources” relies (Bierschenk et al. 2000: 2). Development experience translates into development expertise. The arena of expertise, made up of a diversity of roles and statuses from high level politician to mid-level bureaucrat, from university professor and researcher to extension technician or project administrator, stand as the networked web between funding providers and recipients. Money is funneled through the hands of states and individuals, who use it to entrench their own status over and above their colleagues in a situation that is at best precarious.

These agents are suspended in hierarchies of varying degrees of solidity. These are under constant threat as new agents attempt – sometimes successfully, sometimes unsuccessfully – to out maneuver their colleagues; translating development activities into personal gain (see Bierschenk et al. 2000, Lewis and Mosse 2006). These strategies are necessary to the survival of individuals and projects that are vying for unstable positions and unstable funds. Thus while the hierarchy implies stasis, the opportunities for career mobility (as well as stagnation and backsliding) intrinsic to the work of development disrupt development hierarchies. Thus, for example, as the second in command for one project, the *Campus Ambanivohitra*, became an important
political figure in the region, he began to direct the projects movements from the outside – through the new relations that the project offered with state and international development apparatus, at times directing funders from above much to the chagrin of his former superior.

The interrelations that are created in the spaces inhabited by development’s agents are both cause and consequence of personal rebeginnings that in turn feed transformations in project practices and discourses. At times these changes are driven by individuals, who find it expedient to distance themselves from the actions of those that came before them (Lewis 2009: 34). But as Ferguson and others have illustrated, the state and its modes of power are implicated, though not as monolithic forces, but as actors in their own right, both strategically using power and being used strategically by powerful forces.

**Rebeginning and State Power**

As a number of scholars on development have noted, development constitutes an important element of and supplement to state power. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) represent the “horizontal contemporaries of the organs of the state” (Ferguson and Gupta 2002: 993). Together the two constitute a system of “transnational governmentality” wherein the “operations of government” normally carried out by the state are dispersed among non-state organizations (989).

While this dynamic may be common in other areas, it is necessary to understand that the split between state and non-state is not so clean cut. As stated in the previous section, bureaucrats, functionaries, and development agents often inhabit fluid positions— they move between posts as functionaries, development leaders, private entrepreneurs, etc. In so doing they also move between private and public domains.
The state, then, should not be seen as ceding control to non-governmental organizations, but rather of facilitating the layering of administrative, governance, and state legitimization among state and non-state institutions and agents.

These conglomerations may strengthen the power of the state as they allow the state to expand its institutional field of vision and control by contracting out governance functions while it simultaneously shrinks into a centralized hub to administer and monitor these controls (Chalfin 2007, 2010; see also Ong in Hansen and Stepputat 2005). Elyachar (2002; 2005) suggests that the proliferation of governmentality among non-state entities has allowed for the emergence of a “hybrid state” wherein development agencies are situated both inside and outside of the state. This arrangement allows states to utilize NGOs as tools for legitimacy and thereby strengthen their political position.

What is at issue in Madagascar is the way that development allows the state to attach itself to and distance itself from the perceived successes and failures of earlier regimes. Thus developmentalist forms have the potential to legitimize state power, illustrating the “will to improve” the lives of its citizens (Li 2007). This happens in ways mediated by foreign agents but dependent on local understandings and memories of the state. In this way, the state’s reach is reanimated by development, and reanimated in specific nodes of importance – nodes where development is the lost promise of a status quo anterior. It may be that more than simply structuring development, that sites of FOFIFA – the rural homes of former technicians of the state – are important sites for directed development among the more educated and elite rural populations of the state.
At the same time, the failures of past Malagasy state forms, and the similarities of contemporary practices have the potential to spur local resistance and force projects to realign their objectives and redefine the relations states initiate through development. The legitimacy provided by development, then, is tenuous at best. It is also dependent on the real and constructed agents described in the previous section – the abilities of experts and the participation of peasants, each of who utilize established forms of development to their networked ends.

Rebeginning Geopolitical Relations

As the state starts over, casting off and reusing the forms that came before it, international relations are renewed by development. Scholars have noted the important role that international governments and non-governmental organizations in development within the global ‘south.’ Escobar (1995) has traced the linkages between the relations that inhered in colonialism and the developmentalist relations that followed. Development aid and the development industry, as Ferguson (1999) states:

…was laid on top of already existing geopolitical hierarchies; it neither created north-south inequality nor undid it but instead provided a set of conceptual and organizational devices for managing it, legitimating it, and sometimes contesting and negotiating its terms [248].

In Madagascar, the failures of the state and of past development schemes have allowed the re-instantiation of developmentalist interest, and the entry of new agents into Madagascar’s development system often along the same lines as those that preceded them. International interests remain a presence within development. Their involvement is, like that of all of developments agents, highly performative.

Like individual agents, international groups and governmental bodies brand themselves as developmentalist and engage in activities to this end. Contracts require
their logos remain prominent, they participate in training, and their names cross the lips of developments agents as they interface with each other. Entry into these arenas spins aid into a visibility that crosses public and private sectors, and urban and rural settings. Their involvement in the production of the social in Madagascar, and their presence and dissemination as a brand among the Malagasy through development, assures access to the important political and private interests. These can in turn influence ways that state and private privileges are divvied out.

The ability to gain privilege through development then feeds back into the legitimacy of these international organizations, showing up on websites, in newsletters, etc. as testimony to the morality of the French nation-state and of French businesses and organizations. It is in these spaces that the ideal of development is packaged again. This final branded life, disconnected from its reality, projects the ideal images that the aid agency has of itself and re-centers, and potentially re-aligns, reigning geopolitical hierarchies. It is in these ways that development offers international governments and agencies opportunities to begin international relationships again, affecting the discursive erasure of painful memories while continuing the relationships that characterized these periods of history. As with state power, the continuation of these relations also holds the potential to threaten development’s objects by revealing the symmetries of old and new global hierarchies.

Rebeginnings and the Anthropology of Development

Rebeginnings work as a loose frame to understand the processes that sustain development despite its visible failures. These are what draw agents and institutions into the network. In the networked effort to achieve individual and institutional rebeginning, agents come into contact and conflict, resulting in institutional rebeginnings
that work to keep flows of social, political, and economic capital flowing. Each of these adjustments to the plan, each expected and unexpected shift in scope, locale, and focus constitutes a response to expected and unexpected political changes, local conflicts, and practical problems.

Within this framework, development emerges as an apparatus for the capture of land, labor and knowledge that reproduces inequalities between north and south, urban and rural, and expert and non-expert. This work is suggestive of several trajectories within the anthropology of development. This may consist of a further investigation of the roles of shadow presences, and particularly the contemporary lives of past forms of development. These developmental spaces could add depth to our understandings of how state power and legitimacy are spread and sustained. Another research area might focus on the flexible labor relations that are engendered by development, and understanding how individuals manage lives stretched across multiple livelihoods.
APPENDIX
ADDITIONAL FIGURES

Introduction

This section includes additional graphs discussed in Chapter 1. All graphs are based on the World Bank’s World Development Indicators, published in 2010, unless otherwise specified.

General Economic Indicators

Figure A-1. Malagasy per capita Gross National Income since Independence.
Figure A-2. Malagasy Gross Domestic Product since Independence.

Figure A-3. Malagasy annual percentage growth in Gross Domestic Product.
Figure A-4. Madagascar’s per capita GDP in comparative perspective. Current International Dollar.
Employment Indicators

Madagascar

- Agriculture: 82%
- Industry: 15%
- Services: 3%

France

- Agriculture: 4%
- Industry: 24%
- Services: 72%

United States

- Agriculture: 1%
- Industry: 21%
- Services: 78%

Malaysia

- Agriculture: 14%
- Industry: 30%
- Services: 56%

Mauritius

- Agriculture: 10%
- Industry: 32%
- Services: 58%

Figure A-5. Employment by sector in comparative perspective, 2005.
Exports

Figure A-6. Malagasy exports by product, 1970-2005.

Figure A-7. Malagasy merchandise exports by region, 1960-2010.

Figure A-9. Malagasy merchandise exports by region, 2009.
Figure A-10. Malagasy imports by product, 1970-2005.

Figure A-11. Malagasy merchandise imports by region, 1960-2010.

Figure A-13. Malagasy merchandise imports by region, 2009.
Demographic Indicators

Figure A-14. Malagasy population growth rates since 1960.

Figure A-15. Population growth rate in comparative perspective.
Figure A-14. Malagasy mortality rates. Source: US Census Bureau 2011.

Figure A-15. Mortality rates among children under 5 in comparative perspective.
Figure A-16. Rural population as a percentage of total population in comparative perspective.

Figure A-17. Rural population growth rates in Madagascar in comparative perspective.
Figure A-18. Urban population as a percentage of total population in comparative perspective.

Figure A-19. Urban population growth rate in Madagascar in comparative perspective.
Figure A-20. Malagasy crop production in tons, 1961-2007.
Educational Indicators

Figure A-21. Literacy rates in comparative perspective. Source: UNESCO 2011.

Figure A-22. Primary school completion rates in comparative perspective, 2008.
Figure A-23. Secondary school completion rates in comparative perspective, 2008.
Malagasy Currency

Figure A-25. 100 Ariary note (~ 0.05 USD)

Figure A-26. 200 Ariary note (~ 0.10 USD)

Figure A-27. 500 Ariary note (~ 0.25 USD)
Figure A-28. 1000 Ariary note (~ 0.50 USD)

Figure A-29. 2000 Ariary note (~ 1.00 USD)

Figure A-30. 5000 Ariary note (~ 2.50 USD)
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