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## THE SAILING-BOAT: CIRCULATION AND VALUES IN THE KEI ISLANDS, INDONESIA

IN THE British Isles, it is hardly necessary to insist on the fact that island peoples are conscious of the sea as part of their environment. In France, where continental feelings are so strong, one might have to explain at length the fact that the sea is of first importance. Different contexts lead to different reactions to geographical data.

Many island societies in Indonesia have long been open to influences from the surrounding world. These external ideological elements, often metaphorically described as the sea or embodied in the sea, have in some cases been integrated among the highest local values. However, the fact that a country is surrounded by water does not necessarily always have identical consequences concerning ideological values. One can perfectly well imagine an island culture oriented towards the land and almost ignoring the sea.

These rough examples illustrate the difference between what may be defined as a 'context'—that is, a mere factual situation—and a 'level of ideology'—that is, a partial ideological point of view which defines the society with reference to the values ordering it as a whole.

In the society of Tanebar-Evav in the Kei archipelago (located in the Southeast Moluccas, Indonesia) formal speech (ritual idioms, proverbs, songs and so on), spatial organization, social structure, rituals and ceremonial exchanges are more often than not defined along two axes, one referring to the sea, the other to the land. This is not due simply to the specific situation of the Tanebar-Evav people as islanders and the obvious necessity of dealing with the natural environment. The complementary opposition between sea and land is one

expression among others of the values involved in the relationship between *lor* and *haratut*, two concepts which define this particular society. In Tanebar-Evav ideology, the sea is not considered as separating islands but rather as linking societies to one another. Thus when we say that the sea is an important element of Tanebar-Evav culture, we indicate that this society has relations with other countries, other islands, other peoples and cultures. It may thus be said that in a culture where land and sea are strongly bound together, the sea is an external reference as well as an internal component for that society.

The expression *lor-haratut* means 'the village society of Tanebar-Evav',<sup>1</sup> but each term used separately also means 'village society', although each refers to a different level of Tanebar-Evav ideology. Indeed, though they are sometimes specifically employed in different contexts, they may be used and differentiated in the same context, in which case they refer to a different ordering of values.

In this paper, I will show how the hierarchical organisation of values in Tanebar-Evav society is expressed in specific combinations of meanings attached respectively to *lor* and *haratut*. The analysis of the relation between *lor* and *haratut* thus defined requires the identification of the different relevant ideological levels. For this purpose, I will give a brief account of the main aspects of these values and show how they operate in the society's most significant ritual. Then, in relation to the same values, I will analyse the repeated comparisons of the entire society with the sailing-boat, which is an image of the 'whole'.

Initially, however, it must be stressed that the two values organize in a specific hierarchical order the institutions that structure the relations between people as well as the elements of the supernatural world. Moreover, although one of the values may be dominant in a specific institution, the other is always present at a subordinate level. It is only the ordering of the values that varies according to the level under consideration in the ideology, not the values themselves.

### *Haratut*

*Haratut* has no translation other than 'society'. It means the community formed by the living and the dead, considered in relation to the origin of the society and to the sacred Masbaït Mountain,<sup>2</sup> centre of the village and of the island. This mountain is said to enclose the law transmitted by the ancestors. There is a saying that Masbaït Mountain contains Tanebar-Evav Island, its wealth, its products, its people and its laws. *Haratut* is related to the Sun-Moon God, and is considered the 'child' of God. Its main expressions are found in fishing, hunting,

1. Tanebar-Evav is the only village located on a small island of the same name in the Kei archipelago. The latter consists of two main islands, each containing about forty villages, and a number of smaller islands like Tanebar-Evav.

2. Actually, there is no mountain; this name refers only to the fact that the central place in the village is considered the centre of the world.

and war, that is 'going out' to chase something in a violent manner. The society is specifically called *haratut* when its members gather for certain ceremonies in the centre of the village or perform collective rituals addressed to God.

The smallest social unit, the house, is related to *haratut* values. As members of the houses, villagers regularly bring offerings of turtles or of other large animals harpooned in the sea to the nine pairs of ancestors who protect the houses. Each house is related to and protected by one of these nine pairs, and groups of two or three houses constitute nine units called *ub-wadar*, which taken together represent the society as a whole. The offerings are called *wad-met*, the same name as that given to prisoners of war. All social relations and institutions involved in the existence of the houses, such as marriage alliance relationships and marriage exchanges, village social subdivisions and ritual offices held by a small number of initiated elders, are related to *haratut* values.

Most of these elements are associated with the image of a boat. The house, as a physical structure, is considered a female figure and seen in certain respects as representing a boat. The main cross-beam, located in the middle of the floor parallel to the front wall, is identified with the keel. It separates the public front-section of the house, available for guests, from the private section at the rear where the head of the house sits when receiving guests. If someone has broken a rule during the boat-building rituals, offerings 'for the keel' must be placed on this beam. A different subdivision is made when looking toward the front door from within the house. The right and left side are then opposed: in some contexts, they are called respectively 'the older brother' and 'the younger brother', in others they are named 'the captain' and 'the watchman'. The house as a whole is not compared to a boat.

Asymmetrical alliance is practised in Tanebar-Evav society, and marriage exchanges take place between houses. In olden times the wife-takers would give a sailing-boat together with an object from the sea (a shell) and an object from the land (an opossum's tail) as the brideprice. Nowadays, a cannon<sup>3</sup> called 'the keel and the first plank of the sailing-boat' and a gong called 'the oar and the pole of the boat' are given. In the context of such exchanges, they are classified as masculine goods. The wife-givers will give dishes and textiles along with certain other goods, all of which are classified as feminine. In some expressions, the husband is said to be 'captain of the boat', while certain proverbs compare him to a piece of flotsam looking for an island (the wife) on which to run ashore.

Marriage exchanges are the expressions of *haratut* values. The wife-giver is superior to the wife-taker since he represents a category of the wife-taker's ancestors, called 'God-the dead', who are greatly feared by the wife-taker. He is a kind of intermediary between the wife-taker and God, and as such is feared for his ability to inflict death on or give life to the wife-taker's house. The origin and creation of each house of the village goes back to the first woman given as spouse to the founder of this house, that is, to a pre-existing relationship with the wife-giver's house. A myth says that the first three houses were founded by the three

3. The Dutch rulers left behind many such cannons which are commonly used in exchanges all over the Moluccas.

'first ancestors' who came from the sky. The cannons, gongs and other objects used as money and given as bridewealth, are also said to have come from the sky, in the form of a tree that settled on the top of the sacred Masbaït Mountain in the centre of the village. Thus marriage alliances, marriage exchanges and houses reflect *haratut* value.

Most of the heads of the houses (there are twenty-three houses in Tanebar-Evav) participate in the village elders' organization which is structured around the ritual cultivation of millet. Each post in this organization is seen as belonging to a house and not to the individual who fills it and who must go through an initiation ceremony on the death of his predecessor. This office cannot be transferred to another house, and if there are no heirs, a man or a young boy must be adopted from another house in an exchange similar to the one practised when a woman marries. Once founded, a house cannot remain empty.

The elder's initiation ceremony is a kind of rebirth, a washing away of any misdeeds, especially sexual ones, that he may have committed since his birth. He is then taught the severe rules that he must henceforth follow, in particular, prohibitions concerning food and extra-marital relations. These prohibitions are defined in two categories: 'sea' prohibitions (certain fishes and sea-food) and 'land' prohibitions (all women except his own wife). Once initiated, he becomes one of the guardians, that is, a servant of the laws contained in the sacred Masbaït Mountain.

Each elder has his own specific part to play in the millet ritual. Three elders, who bear special titles, have particularly significant roles. The two Lords of the Land, or Tuan Tan, who conduct most of the main rituals, are called 'Land Boat-Captains'; another important office is held by the 'Sea Boat-Captain' who is considered superior to the Lords of the Land and who has specific duties in relation to war. The other secondary elders are called 'watchmen and carvers'—those who carve up and distribute the shares of the catch (*wad-met*) after collective fishing or hunting.

We note, in the first place, that the elders can bear more than one title, the one used depending in each case on the context in which it is employed. Furthermore, and most important, the titles used constantly reflect the opposition sea/land: Lord of the Land v. Boat-Captain (a maritime office); Sea Boat-Captain v. Land Boat-Captain (in the latter case, the land itself is seen as if it were a ship, requiring a captain). There is evidence here of the superiority of sea over land at the *haratut* ideological level. Under the guidance of these elders, the society as a whole is compared to a sailing-boat with its captain, its crew and its inhabitants.

The elders' primary task is to take the lead in the different stages of millet cultivation, making offerings to the spirits and to other guardians of the island throughout the sacred period, which begins with the clearing of garden plots and ends with the harvest. The collective rituals are explicitly intended to help the King of the Sacred Mountain in his task: to grow the millet for *haratut*. Part of the crop will be stored for years in the village's communal granary, located in the house to which the Sea Boat-Captain and one Land Boat-Captain belong. Just before the harvest, the elders offer wild pigs killed during a hunt to the spirits, to

the dead and to God in the name of *haratut*.

On other occasions, at the biannual change of the prevailing monsoon, for instance, when serious illnesses sent by God are ritually expelled back towards the sea, the offerings to God are prepared in four parts. Three are made by the three *yam* (large social units encompassing the same houses as the nine *ub* already mentioned and like them representing the society as a whole. These units no longer refer to the nine pairs of ancestors, but to the three first ancestors of the village). The fourth part is made in the name of *haratut* by one of the elders of the central part of the village, where Masbaït Mountain is situated. This elder clearly acts in the name of the whole society, given the traditional close relation of his house with the sacred mountain.

These short illustrations are intended to show more explicitly how the values of *haratut* order the various supernatural beings (the houses' ancestors, God and all the spirits related to the village site and to the island), as well as the social groups (houses, *ub*, *yam*) which altogether constitute, in different ways, the village society. Clearly we are confronted here with 'a' whole where the value *haratut* is dominant, yet it is not 'the' whole but one ideological level in which the other value, *lor*, is not absent and appears in a subordinate position, as we shall see later.

### *Lor*

We must now introduce the other value, *lor*. Like *haratut*, *lor* is translated as 'society', but it has different meanings as well, in connection with the sea or with the outside world. Furthermore, in contrast with *haratut*, the relation of *lor* with the outside is not violent. 1) *Lor* means 'whale', an important animal in Kei society as well as in many other regions of the Moluccas. Famous local tales have as their theme the death of whales which have run aground, celebrated events in these islands. 2) *Lor* is a kind of inedible fruit which does not grow on Tanebar-Evav Island, but is gathered on the beach when it is washed ashore by ocean currents and has a ritual use in the marriage ceremony. 3) It is an edible cucurbitaceous vegetable, which has a part in the harvest ritual. 4) Finally, in the Kei archipelago, *lor* designates a multi-village social unit ruled by a *raja*. The whole of Kei society is thus divided into two coalitions called 'lor five' and 'lor nine', names which refer to the myth recounting the introduction of rules and rulers from Bali. Each coalition groups together a number of *raja* who were traditionally wartime allies.

With respect to the supernatural world, *lor* in its meaning of 'society' describes the community of the living with the spirits, who are the intermediaries between God and the living. Three of these spirits, who brought a new law, are said to have run aground on Tanebar-Evav island after a long journey from village to village. Two of them bear names of Arabic origin, Adat and Hukum, which were introduced by Islam and reflect the strong influence of outside cultures. The

third is named Wilin, 'rudder' in the Kei language, and is believed to act as a rudder for the two others as well as for the entire society. Adat and Hukum are considered elder and younger brothers. All three together punish the villagers when they break the vital rules concerning incest, adultery and murder. If incest occurs, particularly the gravest incest between brother and sister, the village society as a whole must gather to cast the guilty couple out of the island. Traditionally, the couple themselves were cast into the sea to drown, but at present they are replaced by a cannon, a gong and other valuables which are thrown into the sea. There follows a purification ceremony for the society, which is held in front of Hukum's house, not in the middle of the village, as is the case when *haratut* is involved. This ceremony is called *sob lor*, the prayer for *lor*. In contrast to our own ideology, which views incest, adultery and murder as individual actions to be punished as such, in Kei they are considered to affect the society as a whole. A proverb concerning incest states: '(Sea-)water sweeps into the hold of the boat, (rain-)water drips from the ridge-pole of the house'. The whole society, compared here to a boat or to a house, is destroyed in case of such misconduct.

Finally, everything washed up by the sea—wrecks, flotsam and jetsam of all sorts, dead bodies, dead fish and sea-animals—is said 'to belong to *lor*'. These objects are divided into two categories: *lor mas tomat* (*lor* gold and human being) and *lor balanun* (*lor* poison). If someone wishes to gather these objects, he must first inform Hukum by offering a small amount of money, intended to 'welcome' the object onto the island. Otherwise the worms, which 'belong to *lor*', would destroy the millet gardens. When a substantial number of objects are washed ashore, normally at the time the monsoon changes, a ceremony assembling all the villagers is held in Hukum's house, where drums are beaten and songs sung from sunset to sunrise, in a sort of collective welcome. This ritual is intended to purify the village of all kinds of pollution, those brought by the sea as well as those caused by the villagers' misdeeds. Indeed, while each individual transgression must be redeemed by an appropriate compensation given to the spirit Hukum, collective redemption is always necessary to purify the society from individual misbehaviour. Thus when an initiated elder commits adultery, he may no longer play his part in the millet ceremonies for *haratut*, and the entire society is prevented from carrying out its essential rituals. But after the elder gives a payment to Hukum, he may be initiated again, and the ritual process can continue.

It must be noted here that, although the ideas attached to *lor* may seem to define at first sight a mode of relation to the external world and to the sea, they are actually the evidence of an external interference in the internal order of *haratut*, which acts as a kind of guarantee of *haratut*'s elements and of the rules that constitute it. Not only is *haratut* protected by the law of *lor* but, as we shall see below, it is nourished by *lor*. Clearly, *lor* as society can only be understood in its relation to *haratut*, and the reverse is also true. In a way, *lor* lives on *haratut*'s sins, but at the same time restores its integrity.

*Various Aspects of the lor-haratut Relationship*

We have noted that in the marriage exchanges which refer to the *haratut* ideological level, the wife-taker is classified as masculine and related to the sea, while the wife-giver is feminine, related to the origin of the society and to the land. The former are considered foreigners and inferior, while the latter are landholders and superior. When the houses and their perpetuation are involved, *haratut* appears as the dominant value, while the subordinate position attributed to the wife-giver corresponds to that of *lor*. Although *lor* is never mentioned in this context, it seems clear that the wife-taker classified as 'foreigner' or the husband compared to flotsam, both representing the inferior masculine side in the opposition wife-taker/wife-giver, has the subordinate position and has to do with *lor*. Other examples could be given to show how, when one of the values is dominant at a given ideological level, it continues to be related to the other placed in a subordinate position.

The relationship between the spirits Adat and Hukum further exemplifies the association of *lor* and *haratut* in Tanebar-Evav ideology. Both of these spirits stand for 'the arms (of the body) of God' or for 'the weapons of God', and punish persons whom God wishes to castigate. But in the cases of incest, adultery or murder, the more important part is played by Hukum, the 'younger brother', who receives the payment, while only a small amount of money is given to Adat, the 'older brother', just to 'tell him' about the sin. Yet of all the supernatural beings who form part of this society, Adat is the most important. He is revered like a god and receives offerings in one of the most sacred places, a prolongation of the centre of the village. After the *haratut* ritual hunting of wild pigs for the harvest, Adat receives his share of a pig, while Hukum does not. The initiated elder who is the servant of Adat has, together with the Captains, one of the heaviest responsibilities in the millet rituals. Indeed, as regards these two spirits, one may say that Hukum is completely involved in the society *lor*, while the position of Adat is less clear, which indicates that he pertains to both *lor* and *haratut*. Although associated with Hukum and *lor*, Adat plays a more important part in *haratut* framework.

Without trying yet to order these facts hierarchically, one can observe with respect to the older-younger relationship which unites Adat and Hukum that Adat has the dominant position when *haratut* is involved, in the millet ritual for instance, while Hukum has the subordinate position. But, although he keeps his 'status' of older brother, Adat has the subordinate position when *lor* is involved, in the punishment of incest for instance. We note here an inversion in the respective position of these spirits, which indicates a shift in the value reference implied in each case, and thus a change of ideological level.

We shall now present a completely different example, where a particular context shows how *lor* and *haratut* are associated at the same ideological level, and how the analysis must deal with this fact.

When a sea-turtle is caught while laying eggs on the beach, that is, neither harpooned at sea nor washed up on shore, both *lor* and *haratut* are concerned. One specific portion of the turtle is prepared for the houses' nine pairs of

ancestors in the name of *haratut*, while another is offered to Hukum in the name of *lor*. The first offering is called *haratut ni*, 'it belongs to *haratut*', the second *lor ni*, 'it belongs to *lor*'. Since the turtle has been found on the shore, it cannot be offered in its entirety to the houses' nine pairs of ancestors (*ub*), who usually receive a share when an animal is killed at sea (when *haratut* is involved). At the same time, neither can the entire turtle be given to Hukum, for it has not really run aground, though it seems to have done so. Hukum does claim his share, however, since the animal has been caught on the beach and, we recall, all objects washed up on shore 'belong to *lor*'. Furthermore, the turtle is cut up outside the village, since carrying it into the village would be an offence to Hukum, who has not yet been told of the event.

Neither the values of *haratut* nor those of *lor* prevail in this context. On the contrary, the fact that they are both associated, and apparently at the same ideological level, indicates that we may here be nearer to the 'whole' than above, when we were dealing with a 'partial whole'. The intermediate position of the turtle between the sea and the land, between life (itself giving birth to new lives) and death, between masculine and feminine (turtles are protected by the male prophet Adam in the sea, while pigs are protected by the female figure of Awa-Eve) implies that the turtle partakes of both, and that it may consequently refer to the whole. I shall return to this point in the conclusion.

### *The Millet Ritual*

An analysis of the ritual cultivation of millet may give us further insight into the operation of *lor* and *haratut*. As noted above, the aim of the ritual is to help the King of Masbaït Mountain in his task of growing the 'millet *haratut*', to be stored in the communal granary of the Tanebar-Evav village. The explicit objective is to bring about the King's rebirth—that is, the rebirth of the millet itself, subject and object here being confounded in one—so that the King's name, Masbaït Mountain, which also identifies the village, will be renowned throughout the archipelago and beyond. This collective task is described by the metaphor of a sailing-boat putting out to sea in the formula: 'May the sea be calm and the winds propitious for the journey.'

While gardens for other plants usually consist of small fenced plots scattered throughout the island, the millet gardens are located in one large plot cleared in the forest, inside which individual unfenced pieces of land are usually cultivated by members of a single house. The cycle proceeds as follows:

- 1) The work, from the clearing of the forest to the harvest, is led by the Lord of the Land who starts his garden first, followed the next day by the other villagers.
- 2) Each step of the gardening begins with ritual acts performed by the elders in various places on the island, in the village or in the forest. Offerings are given to God, to Mother Earth, and to the spirits Adat and Hukum and to a category of supernatural beings called the 'disappeared', all of whom are asked to protect



the society and to bring good luck, millet and pigs (for the ritual hunt) from all over the outside world.

3) The 'disappeared' are the spirits of persons 'lost' either at sea or in the forest. Our prior work leads us to conclude that they are the wandering souls of drowned or guilty persons whose sins are answerable to Hukum, and thus related to *lor* values, and perhaps also a part of the souls of ordinary dead. If these spirits were not honoured, worms and other small animals and parasites which 'belong to *lor*' would destroy the crops, and the villagers would say that *lor* had already taken its share and that nothing was left for the others.

4) Just before the sowing the Lord of the Land must make an offering in the forest, in order to 'replace' the animals, trees, stones, land, and anything else that may have been destroyed during the clearing operation and which is considered as having been 'murdered' by the villagers. This is a *lor* offering, comparable to the one made to Hukum as replacement for a murder victim.

5) At the same period a rain ceremony is held by the villagers. The King of the 'disappeared' is requested to ask the winds to blow and bring the rainfall required for the sowing.

We note here again that *lor* intervenes, bringing from the outside world the (male) rain water needed to fecundate the (female) seed in the earth's womb. The word translated here as 'seed' is the one usually employed to speak of the female principle associated with the male 'water' or semen in the conception of a child. We recall that the growing of millet is considered the King of the Mountain's task, he himself being reborn each year in the form of millet *haratut*, which also represents the rebirth of the society.

6) When the gardens are ready to be harvested, a ritual hunt, which may be compared with the waging of war, and which lasts at least three days, is held in the forest. Seven wild pigs must be killed, to be offered to five village spirits (but not to Hukum), to God and to the dead. The hunt is led by the Sea Boat-Captain in the forest outside the village, while the two Lords of the Land or Land Boat-Captains keep watch inside the sacred house where the village millet is stored. All adult men participate in the hunt, while the women remain outside the village walls and are forbidden to work.

When offering the pigs, the elders pronounce a prayer requesting the continued protection of each of the five spirits, of God, and of the dead, so that this ritual honouring them may be repeated in the future, year after year: 'May the crop be excellent and thus may the name of Masbait Mountain [i.e. the village society (*haratut*)] become great and famous among the villages of the archipelago [i.e. the entirety of Kei society (*lor*)].'<sup>4</sup> A parallel may perhaps be drawn with childbirth. Before a new-born child is given a name, his father must kill turtles or fish to be offered to the elders and to his wife-giver in a ceremonial meal. There is a saying that the father seeks the name in the sea. During the ceremony, the child is carried to the threshold of his house for the first time, and there presented to the whole society of which he now becomes a member. In a similar manner, the society's name becomes famous throughout the archipelago

4. *Lor* is employed here in its widest sense, embracing the whole Kei culture.

(*lor* five and *lor* nine) after the successful hunting of seven wild pigs and a plentiful harvest. Indeed, what is vital for the village is the renown obtained in victorious wars, which constitutes the sacred force of the village enclosed in the central mountain and made visible in the harvest derived from its sacred land.

It is of course impossible to explain fully in a few pages a ritual cycle which comprises dozens of offerings to a great number of supernatural beings in numerous places around the island, which lasts about eight months—beginning with a divination to choose the appropriate plot and ending with the collection from each individual of his share of millet to be stored in the *haratut* communal granary—and which involves an increasing participation of the members of the society. My purpose is only to stress that although the whole ritual cycle is related to *haratut* values, it is at the same time enclosed within the values of *lor*. *Lor* protects (restoring *haratut*'s integrity) and punishes (e.g. through worms which may eat the crops), plays a part in the fecundation of the earth (the rain sent by the 'disappeared') and finally appears as the ultimate reference for the society which seeks renown among other societies. Here we reach the highest value level, where Tanebar-Evav society is taken as a whole; that is, where the relation between *lor* and *haratut* takes the form of the encompassment of *haratut* by *lor*. Neither *lor* nor *haratut* in themselves can define a society as a whole; they are interdependent, even though *lor* is the encompassing principle bringing life and death from outside. One must remain aware, however, that when speaking of *lor* and *haratut*, I am not describing two entities related to each other, but one single entity, the society, founded on the hierarchical relationship between the opposing principles and values of *lor* and of *haratut*.

### *The Sailing-Boat*

I shall now examine in more detail, with reference to *lor* and *haratut* values, the parallelism already noted between the society and the sailing-boat with its occupants. I include the words 'and its occupants' intentionally to counteract any tendency to think of a sailing-boat or of a house as mere objects, usually 'symbolic' objects, which they are not in Tanebar-Evav ideology: while in a sense they represent the society, they also 'are' the society. When a boat-builder measures out a keel, he always counts out an odd number of cord lengths and then adds one more to include a human presence. An even number of cord lengths always results, representing the whole. (The same kind of measuring process also occurs in the construction of a house.) The whole thus consists of a boat plus mankind.

While the house is considered a female human body, the sailing-boat is considered both a male and a female human body. The hull is called the body, the keel is called the backbone, and other planks bear the names of different bones and arteries. The keel consists of three parts: the central one is female and bears the heart and eyes, while the bow and the stern are male parts. The

tenoned joints of these three parts are called 'the interstices between the penis and the vagina'.

A parallel may be drawn between the building of a boat and childbirth: the three main logs on which the keel rests during construction are called 'the mother' of the boat, and receive offerings of food at the time of the launching ceremony, when the mother is to be separated from its child.

At *haratut* ideological level, when speaking of marriages and of houses, the 'keel of the sailing-boat' (the name applied to the cannon given as part of the bridewealth by the wife-taker to the wife-giver), which 'replaces' the woman in marriage exchanges, is considered a masculine good. In boat-building, we note an inversion: the keel is feminine and is associated with two male parts. The inversion indicates that we are no longer at the same ideological level.

Finally, one of the planks of the hull, indicating approximately the ideal water-line, is called 'the junction between the dead and the living'. In the same way as the shore (situated between sea and land) and the village walls (situated between forest and village), this plank marks the frontier between two worlds, that of the living (usually the island), and that of the dead (the sea). The capture of the turtle alive on the shore was seen to be a reference to the whole, while the body of the boat is *in itself* a whole enclosing both what is above and what is under the sea.

Boat-building is usually a collective concern. Although there is an owner who takes the decision to build a boat, from time to time the whole village gathers to help him, the men shaping the logs, the women cooking for the assembly. Moreover, the entire village must participate in a ritual which is held several times at various stages of the boat's construction.

A myth refers to this ritual. A young woman dances the war-dance in the sky near God, and while dancing her blood falls down upon the earth. A man on the beach, an orphan, is building a boat, and the blood falls inside his earthenware pot (one which is used for cooking, but is also employed to hold the foetus resulting from a miscarriage). The next morning, the man hears a noise in the pot, opens it and finds a little boy crying for his mother. They then decide to climb up to the sky and seek the mother. When they arrive, the mother recognizes her child and marries the man. In order to replace him on earth, they send two children, a young boy and a young girl with a message: 'when a boat is launched, the boy shall go on board to "feed" the boat during the journey, while the girl shall stay in the house to keep watch'.

During the ceremony the pair, boy and girl, are represented by small figurines carved out of sago palm wood. They are offered food which is prepared in two parts. The men cook a kind of stew—made of chicken (considered to be the husband) and bananas (considered to be the wife)—which bears the name of an offering consisting of a pig and a gold jewel, and made to the spirit of the house at the time when a woman marries and must follow her husband to his house. At the same time, the women prepare a conically shaped rice-pudding together with seven small rice-balls ('the children of the pudding'), called respectively 'the captain and the crew'. Three of the 'children' puddings are given to the logs which are the 'mother' of the boat, two to the 'interstices between the penis and

the vagina', and two to the boy and girl figurines. The rest of the food is eaten exclusively by the men, sitting inside the empty hull. During this ceremony, it is strictly forbidden for women to enter the boat or to eat any of the food.

We have omitted here many details of the myth and of the ritual, but this short summary is comprehensive enough to allow us to note a number of inversions which are interesting to analyse. We observe immediately that the fecundation process described in the myth contrasts sharply with that for the conception of a child, where impregnation is brought about by the wife-taker's semen, as well as with that represented in the millet ritual, where rain sent by the 'disappeared' spirits fecundate the land. Here, on the contrary, female blood (obviously menstrual blood) drops from the sky into a pot which is usually employed as a kind of coffin to contain the remains of an unsuccessful birth, that is, a miscarriage. In fact, we are dealing here with the birth of a boat, but it is clear that it is not the kind of birth to which we are accustomed when *haratut* is involved. While usually the earth is classified as feminine, in the myth the man on earth receives the blood for the conception of the child.

The men prepare and eat the stew, which consists of elements representing the husband (chicken) and the wife (bananas), while the women prepare but do not eat the food called 'the captain and the crew' (who are always men) or 'the children of the pudding', part of which is offered to the figurines representing the two young children, guardians of the boat. Here again, we recognize the wholeness of the boat, which is also that of the society, since male and female principles are united both in the form of figurines (obviously brother and sister) and in the male and female food. The male principle seems to encompass the female one, since only men are allowed to sit inside the hull and to eat the ceremonial food.

A complementary observation may further illustrate this last point. The maiden voyage of a boat is the occasion for a long, important ritual which lasts until the boat returns or until the purchase money for it is brought back (if the boat was to be sold). Its most striking aspect is the ceremonial part played by a young boy and a young girl (representing the children of the myth) who act as guardians of the boat and of the voyage. The young boy goes on board the boat where he must sit in a specific place and must not move for the entire voyage. The young girl must similarly remain seated in a specific place within the house to 'keep watch over the taboo' and assure the success of the voyage. Each of them keeps in his possession one of the wooden figurines, as well as one of two black stones about which a peculiar story is told. They are said to have fallen from the sky after a violent copulation of the thunderstorm with the earth, and are considered to be the testicles of the tornado, which is itself called 'the penis of the rain'. These stones are composed of a mineral unknown on the island, although they were found on it. In the ritual, they are considered husband and wife. We note that here again the male principle encompasses the female one: the tornado, penis of the rain, is obviously male, while his testicles, by nature also male, are considered to be one male, the other female, indicating that a contradictory female principle is enclosed in the male principle, which, simultaneously, is male and female.

These stones also have another ceremonial use. In the middle of the marriage ceremony, a woman from the wife-giver's group hangs around the bridegroom's neck a small basket containing, among other objects, one of the two black stones, half a betel leaf, and a small vulviform fruit called *lor* collected on the beach, where it has been washed up. The black stone is said in this context to be the husband, while the fruit is the wife. We recall that marriage is related to *haratut* values, and we observe that here, at the level of *haratut*, only half of a whole is involved: one of the two stones, half of a betel leaf. A sort of complementarity in the male/female opposition is achieved with the aid of a 'female' fruit washed up from outside the island. We observe an inversion of the ordering present in marriage exchanges where the male element, associated with the wife-taker, is related to the outside world—the husband who is washed up on shore like a wreck—while the female element, associated with the wife-giver, is related to the land. Specifically as regards the stones, we may say that marriage, where only one stone is employed, pertains to a 'partial whole', while the boat, where both stones are employed, refers to the 'whole'.

The myth and the rituals connected with the boat demonstrate that the opposition male/female plays a very important role in Tanebar-Evav ideology. The preceding example, where a 'husband and wife' (the stones) are cared for by a 'brother and sister' (the boy and the girl), probably conveys the idea that two ideological levels operate here, the brother-sister relationship being placed at a level which encompasses the subordinate level, where the marriage relationship is situated.

### Conclusion

Finally, it must be stressed that within the limits of a short paper the resources of the kind of analysis used here cannot be fully deployed. To study 'the whole', one must take into account *all* the elements comprising it, which are numerous and related to one another and to the whole in such a complex way that a complete description would have to be extremely lengthy.

My purpose has simply been to present the principal values of Tanebar-Evav society and to show how at different levels they order its social institutions as well as its rituals. *Lor* and *haratut* are simultaneously expressions of 'partial wholes' (Dumont 1971: 25) and of the whole because they define a single society at different ideological levels. *Lor* cannot be explained without *haratut* or vice versa, any more than the left side can be understood without an implicit reference to the right side, and *at the same time* to the whole body. The relationship between the partial wholes is a hierarchical one, because one of the values is dominant and the other subordinate in reference to the whole.

In the case of Tanebar-Evav society, whatever the value level we deal with, a reference to the sailing-boat (i.e., a boat and its inhabitants) at sea—that is, to the whole—is always to be found. The true nature of this society is to be a boat sailing on the sea.

The sailing-boat cannot be classified exclusively at one level or another. It is neither caught by the society *haratut* like big sea-animals nor is it flotsam belonging to *lor*. It is not a wreck destined to come to rest on an island. It is an entirely independent whole, sailing where it wants to under the guidance of its Boat-Captains. It is simultaneously on the surface of, below and above the sea, that is, like the turtle laying eggs on the sand, an intermediary between different components of the society: the living and the dead, masculine and feminine, the 'disappeared', the spirits and God.

Indeed, the relationship between *haratut* and *lor*, as a combination of sea and land, can be understood as a circulation within the society. *Haratut* expels illnesses, the dead and sins from the island, and receives in return from *lor* everything which is washed up on the shore, as well as the rain, the millet and the pigs. In a way, the 'lost souls' of the 'disappeared' are reintegrated in *haratut*, when they are honoured during the millet ritual and their King is asked to bring the rain. It means the transformation of death into life again, which the boat also indicates by the plank called the junction between the dead and the living.

In conclusion, we may say that the boat, which represents the whole, does not belong either to the *haratut* or to the *lor* level of values. We have already seen how *haratut* is only a partial whole. But to assert that the boat refers exclusively to the *lor* level of values because of its relationship with the outside world, because it is a potential wreck or because it metaphorically sinks as the result of incest, would also be incorrect. The sailing-boat does not refer to one ideological level or another; it is the ideology, the society as a whole, made up of the hierarchical relationship of two values, *lor* and *haratut*.

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