

## THE HISTORY OF NINETEENTH CENTURY MADAGASCAR : "LE ROYAUME " OR "L'EMPIRE" ?

by

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### Introduction

Since the independence of Madagascar there has been a substantial revision of the island's history, away from a preoccupation with the impact of Europeans towards a "rediscovery" of the role of Malagasy peoples. Given the recent history French colonization, it was perhaps inevitable that this revisionist "school" should analyse the history of Madagascar during the nineteenth century with the claims of the French colonial tradition in mind. Thus it has become standard to counter the traditional view of the pre-eminence of external European forces with the assertion that the chief feature of nineteenth century Madagascar was the rise to dominance of the Merina polity, from the time Andrianampoinimerina united Imerina under his banner in c. 1790 to the French takeover of the island in 1895. Revisionists have directed substantial effort into the reconstruction of what is fondly termed "le royaume" of Madagascar<sup>1</sup>. The emergent picture is of an enlightened monarchy that introduced compulsory education, religious

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1. Raymond K. Kent, (ed.), *Madagascar in History. Essays from the 1970s* (Berkeley, 1979), Foundation for Malagasy Studies ; Françoise Raison-Jourde (ed.), *Les Souverains de Madagascar*, Paris, Karthala, 1983.

toleration and effected a partial abolition of slavery<sup>2</sup>. As such reforms qualified it as a civilized state, the major justification for colonization, that of the civilising mission, was rendered redundant. Moreover, the Merina crown succeeded in politically uniting the peoples of the island who already shared a largely common cultural and linguistic heritage. This theme has been carried to its extreme in studies of the *Menalamba* revolt of 1895-97 in which it is claimed that the rebels were animated by a patriotism for "le royaume" which, by that stage, all the peoples of the island shared. The Merina state, it is argued, stood alone in precolonial Africa in both adopting enlightened liberal methods of government and in forging a common national consciousness<sup>3</sup>.

The travesty of colonization was thus compounded, for it represented the crushing of a Malagasy people united under a benign and enlightened monarchy. In this light, it was justifiable to execrate those external forces that were traditionally held to have brought to Madagascar the benefits of economic development and western civilization. Reinterpreted, these represented the instruments of international capitalism whose intent was blatantly imperialist<sup>4</sup>. For the revisionist school, Madagascar was by 1895 a nation state whose destiny, temporarily thwarted by French colonialism, was to reemerge with independence.

This paper seeks to re-examine the concepts of "le royaume " and of "imperialism" and evaluate to what degree they can be applied to the history of nineteenth century Madagascar.

### "Le royaume" - fact or fiction ?

Central to the revisionist argument is the emergence of "le royaume", which possessed two characteristics : it modernised to develop a recognisably enlightened government, and it created of Madagascar a nation state whose citizens, by the 1890s, were united in a sense of common national consciousness.

The Merina regime of the nineteenth century did introduce some reforms which led its European supporters, notably Protestant missionaries, to hail it as an enlightened monarchy on a par with those of Western Europe. The reforms followed the "conversion" of the Merina crown to Christianity in 1869. Religious liberty was an immediate consequence, followed by relative freedom of the press

2. See eg. Finn Fuglestad & Jarle Simenson (eds), *Norwegian Missions in African History. Vol 2 : Madagascar* (Oslo, 1986) Norwegian University Press.

3. This theme has been expounded by Stephen Ellis - eg. "Les traditionnalistes menalamba et leur conception de la royauté", in Raison-Jourde (ed.), *Les Souverains de Madagascar*, 373-387 ; see also Ellis' contributions in Fuglestad & Simenson (eds), *Norwegian Missions in African History*, Vol 2, *op. cit.*

4. Bonar A. Gow, *Madagascar and the Protestant Impact* (London, 1979), Longman.

and of foreign travel and settlement in Madagascar, the partial emancipation of slaves, reform of the administration, compulsory education and the instigation of national health provisions, such as compulsory smallpox inoculation.

However, such a view obscures the real nature of the 1869 "conversion" which reflected less the personal religious convictions of the monarch and Rainilaiarivony, the "prime minister" than the political insecurity of the Merina regime. This in turn stemmed from the failure of the autarkic programme, introduced in the 1820s by Radama I and continued by his successor Ranavalona I. The chief aim of autarky was to raise the Merina to world power status through rapid economic development and territorial aggrandisement. Economic growth, based upon the exploitation of domestic resources, would not only guarantee the political independence of the Merina crown, but would also enable it to expand militarily to become an imperial power in its own right.

The autarkic programme was based on three factors. Given the lack of domestic capital resources, the crown relied upon labour intensive means of production. Secondly, foregoing dependence upon imports of vital raw materials and commodities necessitated guaranteed access to the raw materials and products of the other regions of the island. Finally, claims to the island by any rival powers had to be eliminated. However, by the mid-nineteenth century, the policies of the Merina crown had failed and it and the economy were in crisis. Its attempt to forge economic growth through labour intensive means had backfired. It had opted for a system of forced labour based on *fanompoana*, or unremunerated forced labour for "free" subjects, and on slavery, but mounting resistance amongst the "free" population to *fanompoana*, and an increasing incidence of slave revolts raised the cost of administering forced labour while labour productivity slumped. At the same time, large numbers of small cultivators were either conscripted for *fanompoana* or fled from it. In both cases the result was a population efflux from agriculture that critically undermined Merina self-sufficiency in food production. Lastly, due to the competing demands of the army, flight from the land, and increasing resistance to Merina military expansion within the island, chronic manpower and food shortages appeared and the autarkic economy was in crisis.

Secondly, the programme of military expansionism, through which the Merina crown attempted to subject all regions of Madagascar, ground to a virtual halt by 1852. Although European military incursions had been thwarted in 1825, 1829 and 1845, and most non-Merina polities within Madagascar had been forced to acknowledge Merina military supremacy, the Merina were unable to translate this into effective domination. Plagued by counter insurgency from non-Merina regions, notably from the west and south-west of the island, and increasing

disaffection within the Merina army, the state was forced to halt its programme of military expansionism in the mid century with only one third of the island, mainly the central plateau and east coast, under effective Merina administration. This had two consequences : The Merina state was denied access to the resources of most of the island, and failed to eliminate claims to it of rival powers, indigenous and foreign. In the early 1860s, the Merina effectively renounced their pretensions in Sakalava land, covering most of the west of the island, whilst French claims in the island were postponed in 1865 only following the payment by the Merina regime of a heavy indemnity.

In addition, the authority of the Merina crown was irreparably damaged. The monarch's role was that of sacred arbiter between the world of the living and that of the supernatural. Its function was to renew the covenant between the inhabitants of the two worlds, ensuring the continued goodwill of supernatural powers necessary to ensure the health and security of the living. When Imerina was hit by a series of devastating epidemics and famines from the early 1830s, and Merina armies regularly experienced fatality rates of 50 per cent per annum, reverence for the crown was in some quarters heavily undermined. This was reflected in the rapid growth, despite persecution, of the indigenous Christian church. More damaging still was the apostasy of Radama II (1861-63) whose short reign was halted abruptly by regicide. Although the monarchy was re-established, real power henceforth lay with the post of "prime minister" which, possessing no sacred attributes, was immediately vulnerable to political usurpation.

It is against this background that the 1869 conversion and subsequent "reforms" should be evaluated. The 1869 conversion to Christianity of the Merina crown achieved three immediate results. Firstly, it gained for the prime minister the political support of an indigenous Christian party upset at the manner in which foreign missionaries had in 1862 seized control of a Malagasy church that had developed with minimal outside help during the previous quarter century. This group, although numbering only a few thousand and largely restricted to Imerina, notably to Vonizongo and Antananarivo and its immediate neighbourhood, was a powerful force because of its privileged access, via the missionaries, to western medicines and education. Secondly, the conversion to Christianity of the crown and prime minister in 1869, accompanied by a decree ordering the destruction of all traditional talismans, effectively proclaimed Christianity as a compulsory state religion. Henceforth, all subjects of the Merina crown were obliged to attend church and thus join the Christian party, owing allegiance to its head, the prime minister.

Having thus consolidated his domestic political power base, the prime minister gained for his regime the further support of the British government. The latter, which had since 1845 renounced any serious pretensions to the island, was suitably impressed by reforms that were ostensibly on a British model : a Protestant state-church, a constitutional monarchy, and an enlightened administration headed by a "prime minister" - all seemingly under the tuition of British missionaries. With the implicit support of the British, the greatest power in the world, the prime minister could justifiably hope that any future attempts by the French to pursue their " historical claims" to the island could be thwarted.

Of greater significance was the use to which Rainilaiarivony put his new powers. The prime minister had established a state-church, over which he presided, and through which he not only claimed the allegiance of all indigenous subjects, but also gained control of the competing European missionary organizations in the island, the most powerful of which were the Protestant missions, spearheaded by the London Missionary Society (LMS) - Friends "Foreign Mission Association (FFMA) alliance. Hitherto considered a mainly religious organization, the state-church was in fact fashioned by the prime minister into the central structure of Merina government. Primarily administrative and economic rather than religious, it was specifically designed to overcome the obstacles to autarkic development that had presented themselves by the mid nineteenth century.

The first of these problems was the deficiency of manpower. Militarily incapable since the early 1850s of enslaving provincial peoples in sufficient quantity to satisfy the labour demands of the Merina economy, and subject to heavy European criticism of slavery, Rainilaiarivony changed tack. In 1877, he "emancipated" all slaves introduced into the island since 1865. This measure, which earned him the ecstatic support of most Protestant missionaries, and accolades from the British government, created a smokescreen behind which he effectively enlarged slavery : Not only did he detain as a state labour reserve the estimated 150,000 newly "manumitted" slaves, but he bought the compliance of the uncompensated slave-owning elite by state cooperation in importing African slaves, whose numbers increased dramatically as a result<sup>5</sup>. Secondly, church attendance was considered obligatory, and edicts of 1876 and 1881 made education compulsory - a measure that was enforced both by Malagasy officials and state-church personnel, including missionaries. Far from promoting

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5. Gwyn Campbell, "Madagascar and the Slave Trade ; 1810-1895", *Journal of African History* (JAH) XXII, (1981), 203-27.

Christian education, these measures were primarily designed to provide an effective registration of the population from which to base levies for forced labour. Thus the churches and schools were transformed into conscription centres, both for the Merina army and for state labour, notably from 1883 for gold-mining gangs. Until 1869, missionaries were restricted geographically, but were subsequently encouraged, under strict state supervision, to extend the geographical reach of their activities. This led to the establishment of subsidiary missions, comprising church-school complexes, in conquered territory, notably in Betsileo, Antsihanaka and in Betsimisaraka country. Potential labour supplies for the Merina economy were thus substantially enlarged. Moreover, in the face of labour resistance, and of financial bankruptcy following the 1883-85 Franco-Merina war, conscripts were levied with diminishing discrimination as to their sex and age<sup>6</sup>.

The second major problem faced by the Merina regime was its failure to establish effective control over more than approximately one third of the island's land surface. The state-church, it was hoped, would enable this problem to be overcome, in the first instance because it possessed the ideology and the personnel to effect a peaceful penetration of non-Merina areas. European missionaries and the indigenous evangelists they trained believed in carrying the Christian gospel to non-Christian areas - which by definition meant, after 1869, the areas of the island unconquered by the Merina. Moreover, occupation of the entire island by an indigenous "Christian" power would remove any justification for the French to lay claim to any region of Madagascar.

The third problem faced by the Merina regime in the mid nineteenth-century was the lack of public confidence in the sacred attributes of the crown. The destruction of the symbols of the traditional religious order and the conversion of the monarch and "prime minister" to Christianity was a bold gamble on Rainilaiarivony's part. Effectively, he was proclaiming the substitution of Christian for traditional supernatural powers as the guarantors of national health and security. Initially the gambit appeared to be pay, but ironically a series of epidemics and harvest failures, which during the 1830s and 1840s eroded confidence in traditional religious symbols, hit Madagascar with unprecedented severity from the mid 1870s, this time undermining popular support for the state-church and its powers<sup>7</sup>.

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6. Gwyn Campbell, "Missionaries, Fanompoana and the Menalamba Revolt in late nineteenth century Madagascar", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, XV (1), 1988, 54-73.

7. Gwyn Campbell, "Crisis of Faith and Colonial Conquest : The Impact of Famine and Disease in late nineteenth-century Madagascar", *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* (forthcoming).

The advance of the state-church beyond areas effectively governed by the Merina met with almost total failure, as non-Merina peoples, quite correctly, identified them as agents of Merina colonization. At the same time, the forced labour policies within Merina controlled regions of the island, combined with epidemics and natural disasters, accentuated popular discontent with the Merina regime. When French forces advanced from the coast in 1895, they gained some support from non-Merina peoples, and met minimal resistance from the Merina armed forces. The *Menalamba* revolt which followed was, far from representing a Malagasy national consciousness affronted by European imperialism, a reaction to the establishment by the French of a protectorate which maintained the Merina administrative structure. Hence the primary aim of the rebels was not the French, but the institutions and personnel of the state-church<sup>8</sup>.

### "Le royaume" or "l'empire" ?

From the foregoing analysis, it would appear evident that "le royaume" in the sense portrayed by the revisionist school, did not exist. The traditional historical interpretation concerning Merina expansion in the nineteenth century is that Andrianampoinimerina first declared a vision of an island empire when he stated on his deathbed, "Imerina has been gathered into one, but behold the sea is the border of my rice-fields"<sup>9</sup>, and that his successors not only achieved that vision, but succeeded in unifying the different peoples of the island under a humane and modernising Merina monarchy that forged the first real sense of a Malagasy nationality<sup>10</sup>. Thus Waast claims of Radama I :

*"conquérant la presque totalité de l'île, il envahit le Boina et le Menabe ; il ne s'agit plus de guerres de razzias, répliques de celles de l'époque antérieure, mais d'intégration sous un Etat unique. Le cœur du pays est occupé ; les côtes sont tenues par des postes et ports militaires ; le contrôle de la traite est confisqué par la couronne d'Imerina, et la dynastie Maroseranana mise en tutelle"*<sup>11</sup>.

The reality was different. Because Imerina was a small, infertile, heavily populated and landlocked region, its autarkic aims could only be fulfilled

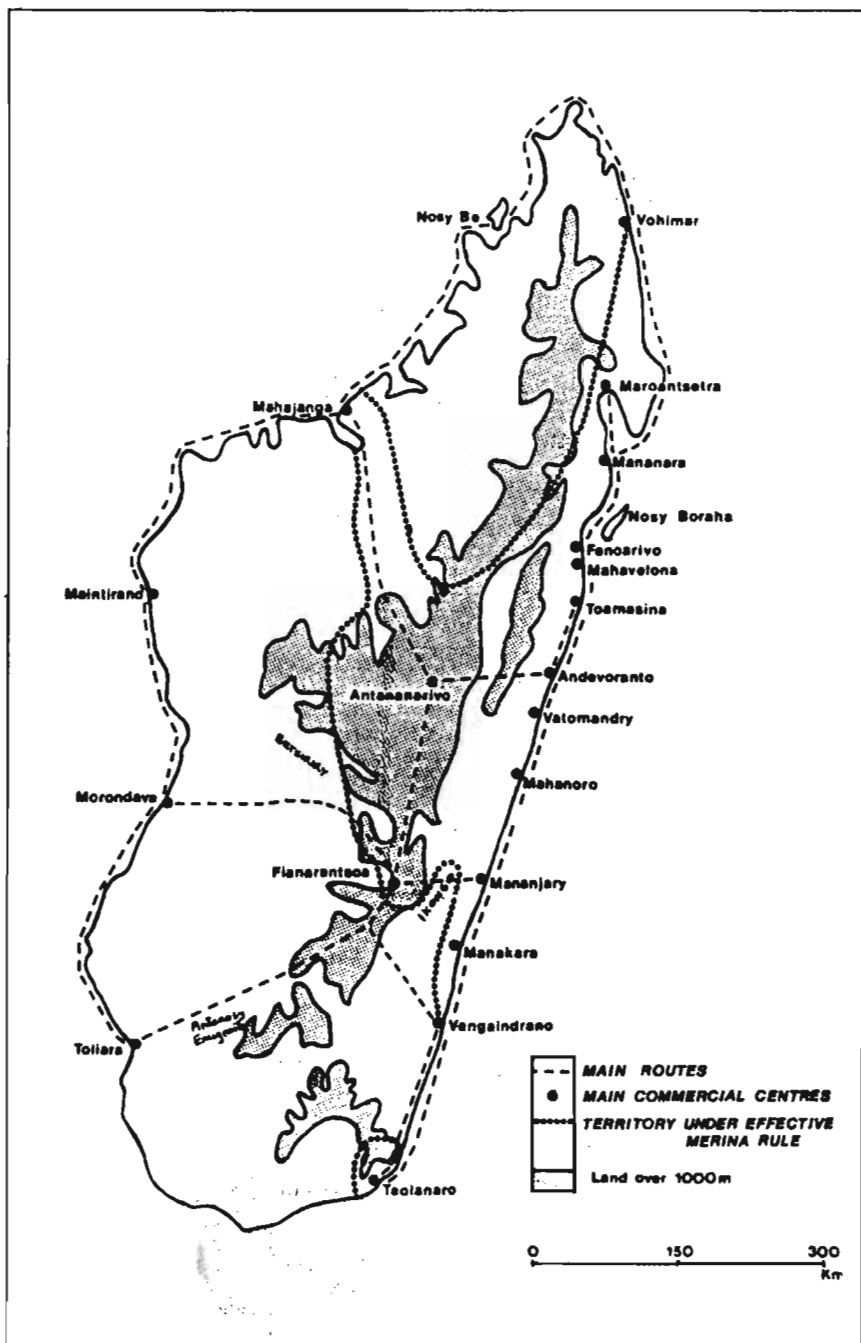
8. Gwyn Campbell, *The State and Pre-Colonial Demographic History : The Case of Nineteenth-Century Madagascar*, *JAH*, XXXII (3), 1991, pp. 415-45 ; *idem*, 'The Menalamba Revolt and Brigandry in Imperial Madagascar, 1820-1897', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, XXIV (2), pp. 259-291.

9. Quoted in Mervyn Brown, *Madagascar Rediscovered* (London, 1978), 130.

10. Raison & Kent books on Malagasy identity in 19th century.

11. Roland Waast, "Développement des sociétés occidentales malgaches au XXe siècle. Le cas de la transition coloniale au Capital dans le Nord-Ouest malgache", in Sautter et al. (eds), *Changement sociaux dans l'ouest malgache* (Paris, 1980), 41-2.

## THE MERINA EMPIRE c. 1861





through tapping the resources of the rest of the island. Expansion was therefore intrinsic to the success of its autarkic policy. Contrary to the claims of Waast, the Merina court eschewed assimilation. The Merina army and administration, including the state-church, was staffed almost entirely by Merina. Merina imperial policy was rather that of the first European world empires - military conquest and plunder<sup>12</sup>. Contrary to the claims of the revisionist school, the non-Merina peoples of Madagascar were never embraced in a common national identity by the Merina who considered them inferior peoples to be exploited. Attempts to foist Merina institutions upon conquered peoples was resisted, often successfully. Dubois's monograph on the Betsileo<sup>13</sup>, and Esoavelomandroso's history of the Betsimisaraka under Merina rule<sup>14</sup> clearly demonstrate the mutual antipathy between conquerors and conquered. The peoples of southern and western Madagascar, which remained largely free of Merina rule, were openly contemptuous of the Merina who were considered to be an alien occupying power. Thus the NMS missionary, Walen, observed in 1881 :

*"In the opinion of the Sakalava, they themselves and other tribes akin to them are the only true and original Malagasy, the Hova (Merina) being Malagasy in very secondary sense. They regard the Hova as merely a caricature of the Vazaha (Europeans), of which the Sakalava find evidence enough in their lighter skin and smooth hair, their ability to read and write, and other customs copied from Europeans"*<sup>15</sup>.

Such was the hatred of the Sakalava for the Merina that, despite their internal political fragmentation, the different Sakalava lineages would unite to confront any Merina attack<sup>16</sup>.

Indeed, the history of Madagascar during the nineteenth century could more appropriately be analysed in terms of Merina imperialism. Imperialism is generally defined as the expansion of influence of one country over the affairs of another until it dominates the policies of the subjected state in key areas, notably the economy. There is no doubt that this occurred in nineteenth century Madagascar, where two phases of Merina imperialism can be distinguished.

During the first phase, from c. 1817-52, Merina imperialism was characterised by the military conquest and plunder of neighbouring regions. In 1817, Radama I ravaged the Ankap, Betanimena and Betsimisaraka regions between Imerina and

12. See Michael Barratt Brown, *The Economics of Imperialism* (London, 1974), pp. 73-95.

13. H.M. Dubois, *Monographies des Betsileo (Madagascar)* (Paris, 1938).

14. Manassé Esoavelomandroso, *La province maritime orientale du "Royaume de Madagascar" à la fin du XIXe siècle (1882-1895)* (Antananarivo 1979).

15. A. Walen, "Two Years Among the Sakalava", *AAMM*, X, 5 (1881), 12.

16. *Ibid.*

the major east coast port of Toamasina. This show of strength so impressed Farquhar, the British governor of Mauritius that in the 1820 Britanno-Merina treaty, he gave the Merina king the title of sovereign of all Madagascar, and promised him the military aid to conquer the island. Subsequently, the Merina monarch's imperial ambitions widened to include the vision of an island empire. In 1822 when the Merina army had been re-organized into a well-trained, fulltime force, the Merina court informed the governor of Mauritius: "we have a great number of soldiers now in Madagascar and expect all the other powers will soon submit to King Radama's army"<sup>17</sup>. By 1824 after the Merina army had forged outlets to both the east and west coasts, Radama I publicly expressed his imperial intent : "It is my resolution to be king of Madagascar and not to permit that there should be a division of authority in the island"<sup>18</sup>.

In economic terms this led to two processes. The first entailed the primitive accumulation of treasure, especially of cattle and slaves, through pillage. The most crucial aspect of this for the Merina economy was the seizure of slaves. For instance, military expeditions sent against the Ibara in the 1830s were less concerned with obtaining the submission of the province than of decimating its menfolk, enslaving the women and children, and seizing their cattle<sup>19</sup>. Thus it was noted of a Merina expedition returning from suppressing a "revolt" in the "south" in October 1830 :

*"The army came home from the South last week and brought a great deal of baba (babo ie "booty" or "captives") with them. It was (sic) affecting scene to see about 800 persons (chiefly women with little ones) ascending up to Town (ie Antananarivo) tied one to another, and carrying a very heavy loads (sic) on their heads, their child on their back and many of them leading one or two children in their hands"*<sup>20</sup>.

#### THE SIZE OF THE IMPERIAL MERINA ARMY<sup>21</sup>

Month	Year	Number	Recruits	Month	Year	Number	Recruits
	1820	1,000			1833	30,000	
	1821	12,000			1834	30,000	
	1822	13,000	6,000	May	1835	45,000	
	1823	14,000	6,000		1837	2,228	

17. Rahove to Farquhar, Antananarivo, 15 April 1822, Public Record Office (PRO), London, CO. 167/66.

18. Radama I, quoted in Hastie, "Diary" (1824), PRO CO. 167/78 II.

19. Raombana "Annual", 244-6, 291, 392-3 ; William Ellis, *History of Madagascar I* (London, 1838), 76 ; George Shaw, "Rough Sketches of a Journey to the Ibara", Antananarivo Annual and Madagascar Magazine (AAMM) (1876), 104.

20. Johns to Freeman, Antananarivo, 14 Oct. 1830, SOAS/LMS MIL, B3 F5.

21. William Ellis, *History of Madagascar*, II (Longon, 1838), 234, 258 ; *Church Quarterly Review*, VI (1878), 381 ; David Griffiths, *Hanes Madagascar* (Machynlleth, 1843), 87 ; Freeman to Orme, Antananarivo, 9 Jan 1829 ; Freeman to Hankey, Antananarivo, 10 Feb 1829 - SOAS/LMS MIL B3 F1 JA ; "Extracts

Month	Year	Number	Recruits	Month	Year	Number	Recruits
	1824	14,250			1838	45,000	40,000
Dec	1828	12,000	15,000		1840	40,000+	
May	1829	15,000	15,790		1845	11,750	
	1830	30,000	12,000		1852	100,000	
	1831	30,000			1877	25,000	
Nov	1832	25,000			1878	25,000	

### MERINA GARRISONS ESTABLISHED 1822-61<sup>22</sup>

#### A/ Under Radama I, 1822-26

Year	Garrison	Region	Year	Garrison	Region
1820	Ranomafana	E forest	1823	Ambatondrazaka	Sihanaka
1822	Janjina	Menabe	1824	Mahajanga	Iboina
	Malaimbandy	ditto		Marovoay	ditto
	Mahabo	ditto	1825	Manerinerina	Iboina
	Bondrony	ditto		Taolagnaro	SE coast
1823	Toamasina	NE coast	1826	Ankavandra	West
	Maroantsetra	ditto		Bevato	ditto
	Hiarambaza	ditto		Tsiroanomandidy	ditto

#### B/ Under Ranavalona I, 1828-61

Year	Garrison	Region	Year	Garrison	Region
1834	Andranovana	Menabe	1848	Ihosa	Ibara
	Inanga	ditto	?	Kana	?
	Kabevana	ditto	?	Vangaindrano	SE coast
	Maneva	ditto	?	Soavinarivo	ditto
	Ranomafana	ditto	?	Andranamby	ditto
1831-5	Mananjary	SE	?	Imaintimaso	West
1834-5	Mahabo	Menabe	?	Morondava	ditto
1835	Soavinarivo	SE	?	Midongy	ditto
	(Mahamanina)		?	Morontsanga	ditto
1837	Amorontsanga	Iboina	?	Manja	Menabe

of the Minutes of the Madagascar Mission" (27 May 1829), SOAS/LMS B3 F2 JA ; "Report of the Madagascar Missionary School Society" (March 1828 - Dec 1829) and "Minute Book of the Mission" (March 1829) - SOAS/LMS MIL B3 F2 JC ; Freeman and Philips "Memorial" to the French government, Cape Town, 24 Nov 1830, SOAS/LMS MIL B3 F4 JB ; Johns to Hankey, Antananarivo, 23 June 1830, SOAS/LMS MIL, B3 F3 JB ; Freeman to Orme, Port Louis, 2 Aug 1830, SOAS/LMS MIL, B3 F3 JC ; Freeman to Hankey, "Pero", 6 Sep 1830, SOAS/LMS MIL, B3 F5 ; "Minutes of the Mission in Madagascar" (Antananarivo, 23 Aug 1832) - SOAS/LMS MIL B4 F3 JB ; Griffiths to Clayton, Antananarivo, 25 Oct 1832 ; Freeman to Philip, Antananarivo, 25 Sept & 10 Oct 1832 - SOAS/LMS MIL B4 F4 JC ; Johns, Freeman and Canham to Ellis, Antananarivo, 18 Nov 1833, SOAS/LMS MIL B4 F4 JC ; Freeman to Ellis, Antananarivo, 18 May 1835, SOAS/LMS MIL B5 F2 JA ; Campbell, "Slavery and Fanompoana", note 23 ; Raombana (RA), vol. VIII B1, 11-12.

22. RA, 291, 361 ; Hastie, "Diary" (1820), 499, PRO CO.167/50 ; anon, Thosa : Ny tantaran'ny Fiangonana aty Bara', ms. 57N, NMS/FLM ; Callet, *Histoire des Rois*, V, 1062, 1083, 1088-91, 1095-6, 1158-09 ; RA, 247, 450 ; James Sibree, "The Sakalava : Their Origin, Conquests, and Subjugation (a chapter in Malagasy history)", *AAMM* (1878), 64-5.

Like their counterparts in Ethiopia, Merina governors sometimes cooperated with local "brigand" chiefs in razzias for slaves and cattle, and even supplied the latter with information about imperial military movements<sup>23</sup>. For example, in 1845 and 1851, Amorontsangana was the base for two highly successful combined Sakalava-Merina slave raids on Nosy be<sup>24</sup>.

It is highly unlikely that, as in many regions of mainland Africa, drought and famine reduced families to sell members into slavery, although it did force people to migrate to areas where they became more vulnerable to capture. Impoverishment also reduced the defensive capabilities of rural communities and increased the flow of men into brigandry, in which slaving played a major role<sup>25</sup>.

In total, Imerina probably received well in excess of 150,000 non-Merina captives enslaved in imperial military expeditions from 1816-63, after which imperial slave raiding virtually ceased<sup>26</sup>. As imperial army officers gained the lion's share of battle booty, one third of which was subsequently claimed by the crown, most of these slaves were channelled into the hands of the Merina state and élite in central Imerina<sup>27</sup>. Together with African slave imports, estimated at possibly 100,000 over the same period<sup>28</sup>, they formed one third of

#### ESTIMATED NUMBER OF SLAVES CAPTURED IN PROVINCIAL CAMPAIGNS DURING SELECTED YEARS, 1816-51<sup>29</sup>

Year	Campaign	Number	Year	Campaign	Number
1816	Betsileo ?	2,000	1834	South	10,000
1823	Iboina	16,000	1835	South West	2,000
1830	South	800	1836	Betsileo	9,000

23. For the Ethiopian comparison, see Timothy Fernyhough, "Social mobility and dissident elites in Northern Ethiopia : the role of bandits, 1900-69", in Donald Crummey (ed.), *Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa* (London, 1986), 160-1.

24. The first was led by the Sakalava warriors, 'Samay' and 'Che-amady', and the second, comprising between 150 and 200 men, was led by Tsiantouane. The raids proved very successful ; in the second one, the refugee Sakalava chief 'Tsimandou', who had returned to Nosy Be after a brief period of exile at Anorontsangana following the unsuccessful 1848 Sakalava uprising against the French on Nosy Be, was killed by Tsiantouane's forces which also sacked the Jesuit mission there. (Jouen), "Explorations du Brick le Victor à la côte-ouest de Madagascar" (1852), CII, AHH ; Raombana, 'Annales' : Livre 12 CI, 486.

25. See Manning, "Contours of Slavery", 850 ; Miller, "Significance of Drought", 30 ; Campbell, "Missionaries, Fanompoana and the Menalamba Revolt", 54-73.

26. See chart on slaves.

27. Gwyn Campbell, "Slavery and Fanompoana : The Structure of Forced Labour in Imerina (Madagascar), 1790-1861", *JAH*, XXIX, 1988, 471-474.

28. Gwyn Campbell, "Madagascar and Mozambique in the Slave Trade of the Western Indian Ocean, 1800-1861", *Slavery and Abolition*, IX (3), 1988, 184-5.

29. Gwyn Campbell, "Slavery and Fanompoana", 473.

Year	Campaign	Number	Year	Campaign	Number
1831	?	10,000	1836	South East	10,700
1831	Ikongo	3,000	1836	Ibara	1,200
1832	Ikongo	20,000	1836	Ambongo	1,000
1832	Ibara	400 (min)	1838	South East	18,621
1832	South East	14,000	1845	West	15,000
1832	North	1,000	1847	South East	3,000 (min)
1833	South	2,000	1851	N. Betsileo	5,000

minimum total 1830-51 : 126,721

The population, rising to two-thirds in the imperial capital of Antananarivo. Most African slaves were assigned domestic work, or joined the portage gang - which totalled 60,000 men by the 1890s - established by the slave-owning elite in Antananarivo<sup>30</sup>. An unknown number of slaves joined locally conscripted *fanompoana* gangs to work in east coast plantations cultivating export crops, notably sugar and coffee.

#### Workforce of Crown Plantations on east coast, 1825-61<sup>31</sup>

Designation	Origin
A/ <i>Fanompoana</i> : Antaimoro	South-east - forcibly resettled
Antaifasy	South-east - forcibly resettled
B/ <i>Slaves</i> : Tsimanoa	Vorimo & Andiamahakiry - captured in 1823-4
Maromaniry	Tanala captives - served de Lastelle.
Maroratsy	Soamandrakizay - served Arnoux.
Antaisoa	Soamandrakizay - served Orieux.
Maromiasa	Captured 1853 - served Orieux.
Telovohitra	slaves of Rainizanamanga, son of Rainilaiarivony.

Finally, slave, criminal and *fanompoana* labour were used in the industrial project established by the Merina crown and centring upon the Mantasoa complex, which lasted from 1830-57<sup>32</sup>.

The second phase of Merina imperialism was from c. 1869-95. Given the failure of the militaristic approach of the early nineteenth century, this phase of imperial expansion was characterized by a more pacific approach, in which the state church, notably European missionaries and indigenous evangelists, represented the storm troopers of intended Merina colonization.

30. Campbell, "Labour and the Transport Problem", 341-56 ; *idem*, "Slavery and Fanompoana", 468-73.

31. Fontoynt et Nicol, *Les traitants français*, 11-12, 29-30.

32. Gwyn Campbell, "An Industrial Experiment in Pre-colonial Africa : The Case of Imperial Madagascar, 1825-1861", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, XVII (3), 1991, 525-559.

There existed a close link between the state-church and Merina imperial expansion. From 1869, there was a rapid extension of the state-church institutions of churches and schools outside Imerina.

GROWTH OF THE LMS/FFMA STATE-CHURCH, 1869-95<sup>33</sup>

Year	Churches	(% Change)	Members	(% Change)	Members per Church	(% Change)
1863	68	—	n.a.	—	—	—
1868	98	- 44.12	5,000	—	51.02	—
1870	621	- 533.67	n.a.	—	—	—
1880	1,024	+ 64.90	68,227	—	53.90	—
1890	1,223	+ 19.43	59,615	- 14.45	48.74	- 10.59
1893	1,000	- 22.30	n.a.	—	—	—
1896	1,400	+ 28.57	62,750	—	44.82	—

33. "Statistics of all LMS Missions in Madagascar, 1880 and 1890" in *LMS Ten Years Review (1880-1890)* ; Bee Jordaan, *Splintered Crucifix. Early Pioneers for Christendom on Madagascar and the Cape of Good Hope*, Cape Town, 1969, 251 ; Teny Soa (1870), 19 ; LMS, *A Brief Review of the LMS Mission in Madagascar from 1861 to 1870* (Antananarivo, 1871), 20 ; LMS, *Report (July, 1875 - June 30, 1876)*, 59; LMS *Report of the Imerina District Mission for 1877* (Antananarivo, 1877), frontispiece, LMS *Report (1878)*, frontispiece; LMS *Report (1879)*, frontispiece; LMS *Report (1882)*, frontispiece; LMS *Report of the Madagascar Mission for 1883* (Antananarivo, 1884), 819-23; LMS *Report (1884)*, frontispiece, 51, 54-5; LMS *Ten Years Review (1880-1890)*, 86, 88, 103, 128 ; LMS *The Madagascar Mission. Ten Years Review, 1901-1910* (Antananarivo, 1911), 71, 81, 84, 180 ; S.P. Oliver *Madagascar II* (London, 1886), 152-3 ; Rabary Ny Daty Malaza III (Tanananarive, 1931), 27-35, 66-7 and IV (Tanananarive, 1984), 78, 152 ; H. Rahamefy, "L'Eglise du Palais à Madagascar", *Le monde non-chrétien*, XXXII (1954), 398, 400, 413 ; P. Doncaster (ed.), *Faithful Unto Death. A Story of the Missionary Life in Madagascar of William and Lucy S. Johnson* (London, 1896), xi ; J.S. Sewell, Extract from 'Address at the Monthly Prayer Meeting at Ambatonakanga Church, Antananarivo, 5 June 1876, in Edith Sewell, *Joseph Sewell. A Quaker Memorial* (London, 1902), 116 ; Sibree, *Madagascar* (1880), frontispiece ; Thorne 'Elementary Education', 41-2, 46 ; Richard Lovett, *The History of the London Missionary Society, 1795-1895 I* (London, 1899), 745 ; James Sibree, *Fifty Years in Madagascar. Personal Experiences of Mission Life and Work* (London, 1924), 68 ; George Shaw, *Madagascar of Today* (London, 1886), 174-7 ; R. Wardlaw Thompson to French Minister for the Colonies, London, 10 March 1896 in J. de Seynes 'Album : Madagascar, 1893-1897', Archives of the Société des Missions Evangélistes de Paris ; Adrien Boudou, *Les Jésuites à Madagascar au XIXe siècle II* (Paris, 1940), 81, 403.

# GROWTH OF THE STATE-SCHOOL, 1869-95<sup>34</sup>

## A/ LMS/FFMA

Year	Schools	(% Change)	Pupils	(%Change)	Pupils per school	(% Change)
1863	7	—	365	—	52.14	—
1868	28	+300.00	1,735	+375.34	61.96	+18.83
1870	359	+1,182.14	15,834	+812.62	44.11	-28.81
1879	890	+147.91	50,000	+215.78	56.18	+27.36
1880	862	-3.15	39,258	-21.48	45.54	-18.94
1882	818	-5.10	105,516	+168.78	128.99	+183.25
1890	700	-14.43	68,187	-35.38	97.41	-24.48
1893	400	-42.86	n.a.	—	—	—
1896	1,410	+252.50	74,796+	—	c.53.05	—

All main provincial stations of the state-church were located in Merina garrisons in order to benefit from both the status resulting from being identified as an imperial institution, and Merina military protection. In addition, the state-church trained a substantial proportion of the officers who staffed the garrisons. Many of the 700 students accepted into the LMS college between 1869 and 1909, served as governors, or state-church agents, whilst many members of the prestigious LMS/FFMA affiliated Antananarivo congregations were posted to

34. 'Statistics of all LMS Missions in Madagascar, 1880 and 1890' in *LMS Ten Years Review (1880-1890)*; Bee Jordaan, *Splintered Crucifix. Early Pioneers for Christendom on Madagascar and the Cape of Good Hope* (Cape Town, 1969), 251 ; *Teny Soa* (1870), 19 ; *LMS A Brief Review of the LMS Mission in Madagascar from 1861 to 1870* (Antananarivo, 1871), 20 ; *LMS Report (July, 1875 - June 30, 1876)*, 59 ; *LMS Report of the Imerina District Mission for 1877* (Antananarivo, 1877), frontispiece ; *LMS Report (1878)*, frontispiece ; *LMS Report (1879)*, frontispiece ; *LMS Report (1882)*, frontispiece ; *LMS Report of the Madagascar Mission for 1883* (Antananarivo, 1884), 819-23 ; *LMS Report (1884)*, frontispiece, 51, 54-5 ; *LMS Ten Years Review (1880-1890)*, 86, 88, 103, 128; *LMS The Madagascar Mission. Ten Years Review, 1901-1910* (Antananarivo, 1911), 71, 81, 84, 180; S.P. Oliver *Madagascar II* (London, 1886), 152-3 ; Rabary Ny Dity Malaza III (Tanaranive, 1931), 27-35, 66-7 and IV (Tanaranive, 1984), 78, 152; H. Rahamefy, "L'Eglise du Palais à Madagascar", *Le monde non-chrétien*, XXXII (1954), 398, 400, 413 ; P. Doncaster (ed.), *Faithful Unto Death. A Story of the Missionary Life in Madagascar of William and Lucy S. Johnson* (London, 1896), xi; J.S. Sewell, Extract from 'Address at the Monthly Prayer Meeting at Ambatonakanga Church, Antananarivo, 5 June 1876' in Edith Sewell, *Joseph Sewell. A Quaker Memorial* (London, 1902), 116; Sibree *Madagascar* (1880), frontispiece; Thorne *Elementary Education*, 41-2, 46; James Sibree, "The Arts and Commerce of Madagascar, its recent progress, and its future prospects" *Jnl. Soc. Arts*, (June 1880), 628 ; George Shaw, *Madagascar of Today* (London 1886), 183 ; J.C. Thorne, "Elementary Education in Madagascar", *AAMM*, IX (1885), 37, 41-2; R. Wardlaw Thompson to French Minister for the Colonies, London, 10 March 1896 ; FFMA to French Minister for the Colonies, London, 11 March 1896 ; FFMA to French Minister for the Colonies, London, 11 March 1896 ; NMS 'letter', May 1896 - in J. de Seynes, "Album : Madagascar, 1893-1897", Archives of the Société des Missions Evangélistes de Paris ; Edgar Scarborough & Finn Fuglestad, "A Note on the History of Education in Vakinankaratra and Neighbouring Region, 1870-1907" in Finn Fuglestad & Jarle Simensen (eds), *Norwegian Missions in African History. Vol. 2 : Madagascar* (Oslo, 1986), 104.

imperial offices in the provinces. For instance, at Mahamasina, in south east Madagascar, Street and Sibree found an ex-member of the Ambatonakanga church of Antananarivo to be the governor. Moreover, he was married to one of Street's former pupils. Such relationships ensured a cordiality between the missionaries and imperial Merina officers which could not have passed unremarked by subject peoples<sup>35</sup>. Of critical importance in this respect were the top missionary students who were selected by the prime minister to serve as "evangelists" to non-Merina controlled regions. Under his direct control, they liaised with governors of Merina garrisons in applying Merina policy locally.

Churches were established in all garrisons following the "1869" conversion. The output of mission trained pastors was insufficient to meet the demand, so that in some garrisons, notably those on the periphery and beyond the frontier of firm imperial sway, the local Merina governor frequently doubled as pastor. Thus Rainisamanana, governor of Trabonjy from 1875, was also the garrison pastor<sup>36</sup>. For many of these governor pastors, the tenets of Christianity were of secondary importance to the status and profit accruing from state-church office. In 1875 Sewell commented of the governor-pastor of Tsiroanomandidy, in Sakalava land :

*"He could not answer a question about Jesus Christ, and he knew nothing about His death; he told me there were many who received the (Lord's) Supper, but he had not the slightest idea as to what it meant"*<sup>37</sup>.

Attendance at the Merina established state-church in the provinces, as in the heart of the empire, signified allegiance to the Merina crown. Thus in 1877 Richardson commented of the service, attended only by Merina soldiers, held at Fanafaka, in Ibara:

*"They knew nothing of the sanctity of the Sabbath... After each prayer they responded with a very hearty amen, and a number of them appealed to me at the close saying, "Are we not Hova (Merina) ?" The sole idea they have of religion being that it is right to meet in large numbers on the Sabbath, listen patiently to an address, and vociferously cry out amen at the close of each prayer. These they consider convincing proofs that they are subjects of Ranaivalona"*<sup>38</sup>.

35. James Sibree "South East Madagascar" (1876) ms., FJKM X52, 35 ; James Sibree, *Fifty Years in Madagascar Personal. Experiences of Mission Life and Work* (London, 1924), 112-3.

36. Micheline Rasoamiaramanana, *"Aspects économiques et sociaux de la vie à Majunga entre 1862 et 1881"*, thèse (Université de Madagascar, 1974), 111.

37. Joseph Sewell, *The Sakalava. Being Notes of a Journey made from Antananarivo to some Towns on the Border of the Sakalava Territory, in June and July 1875* (Antananarivo, 1875), 6.

38. J. Richardson, *Lights and Shadows* (Antananarivo, 1877), 41.



The ritual of church attendance was highly military in nature. Thus Sibree commented of Sunday morning in the Merina garrison town of Mahamasina in the south east of the island, in 1876 :

*"Early this morning the drum began to beat for service, for here drums take the place of bells. Three times this morning, and the same in the afternoon, was this "orun ecclesiastic" beaten to call the people together. We overtook the governor and his wife on their way to church, preceded and followed by soldiers carrying musket and spear... About half or more of the congregation consisted of the Hova (Merina) colony here, and their slaves and dependents"*<sup>39</sup>.

Moreover, state-church personnel promoted their association with Merina rule. For example, the LMS missionary Shaw who, with the governor of Ihosy, accompanied a Merina evangelist to the court of the Bara ruler of Isahy, informed the latter that all peoples subject to Merina rule should also adopt the imperial religion<sup>40</sup>. The following year, Richardson delivered a similar message to king Rabodo, at Kiliarivo, on the river Teheza, in south-west Madagascar, when urging him to accept Merina evangelists :

*"If you love Ranavalomanjaka, if you wish to be respected by the Prime Minister, if you desire to be looked upon as Hova (Merina), and as men having minds and souls, if you desire white men to move and settle among you; and more than all, if you desire one favour and blessing of the Most High, receive these men and listen to their teaching"*<sup>41</sup>.

In this case, Rabodo accepted Richardson's advice, at the same time presenting to the missionary agent of the state-church, with the one dollar hasina, or traditional symbol of subjection to the Merina crown<sup>42</sup>.

The state-church also provided the ideology of empire. All missionaries supported Merina imperialism as the means to carry Christianity and civilization to all the peoples of Madagascar. As Sewell, the FFMA missionary told the Merina in his parting speech in 1876 :

*"I long that you, my friends, the Hova, may become the conquerors of many nations... that, the Ibara, and the Sakalava, and all the tribes of Madagascar, may be conquered by you, and all be brought into the kingdom of Christ. I do not want to take spears and guns and cannon in this warfare, for I have no confidence in weapons such as these. Let it be the gospel alone which with you... we missionaries... work with you in the extension of the kingdom of Christ"*<sup>43</sup>.

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39. James Sibree, "South East Madagascar" (1876) ms., FJKM X52, 38.

40. George Shaw, "Rough Sketches of a Journey to the Ibara", AAMM (1876), 107-8.

41. J. Richardson, *Lights and Shadows* (Antananarivo, 1877), 44.

42. *Ibid.*

43. Joseph Sewell, *Remarks on Slavery in Madagascar* (London, 1876), 35-7.

The association of Merina rule and Western civilization was in some cases graphically portrayed. A wall in one chapel in the Merina garrison town of Ambohipeno, on the south east coast in 1876 was decorated with a picture of a two-masted European ship, and on a wall of another wall was inscribed the words "Hoy izay tompony ity trano ity : Matahotra" (The Master of this house says : Be afraid)<sup>44</sup>. Missionaries and other personnel of the state-church in the provinces were regarded as imperial Merina agents. Thus, even when travelling without official passports, the missionaries Sibree and Street were received with honour whilst travelling in the south east of the island in 1876 :

*"Do what we will we cannot get out of being treated as "Irak' Andriana sy ny lehibe" (messengers of the queen and great people) although we carry no letters from the government, and tell them we are simply messengers of the churches"*<sup>45</sup>.

Related to church attendance, was the observation of Christian *fady* wich had a significant impact upon their daily economic routine. Thus in 1873, Rainilaiarivony informed the subjected Betsileo :

*"Hianareo vahoaka Betsileo rehetra, aza maka tahaka anay milasa. Aza mantsaka rano raha alahady. Tandremo ny Sabata. Ataovy tsara fiomanana ny Asabotsy ny rano, totovary, maka kitay. Aza manao raharaha alahady araka ny Didin' Andriamanitra". ('All you Betsileo subjects, (do not fetch thing as formerly). Do not fetch water from well on Sunday. Respect the Sabath. Prepare the water, pound the rice and fetch firewood on the Saturday. Follow the laws of God and toil not on the Sabbath')*<sup>46</sup>.

However, the chief aim of Merina imperialism was the exploitation of the economic resources of hitherto unconquered provinces. The labour resources of such regions could be tapped directly through the churches and schools. However, of possibly greater significance than labour in the relatively sparsely populated west and south west, was the exploitation of their vast cattle herds, and their fertile river valleys. As the LMS missionary Sibree stated in 1878 :

*"It would be a decided gain to civilization if the Hova (Merina) power were extended completely along the western coasts... Under enlightened and upright Hova governors, the Sakalava country would recover its prosperity, commerce would be opened up, and the vast agricultural resources of the western provinces would be developed"*<sup>47</sup>.

44. James Sibree, *op. cit.*, 32.

45. *Ibid.*

46. Quoted in John A. Nilsen 'Ny Tantaran'ny Distry Fianarantsoa, 1878-1943' ms. 57H, 8, NMS/FLM.

47. James Sibree, "The Sakalava : Their Origin, Conquests, and Subjugation (a chapter in Malagasy history)", AAMM (1878), 65.

Merina and state-church officials in the provinces tried to amass as much personal wealth in as short a time as possible by exploiting their office. This involved in the first instance the establishment of a private trading network using deka, or subordinate officers, as commercial agents. Indeed, just as the state-church was in reality the central administrative institution of the Merina regime, so the army was less of a military organization than a massive commercial structure benefiting both Merina officers and the Merina state. During the era of military expansionism, in the first half of the nineteenth century, military officers expected to benefit mostly from battle booty. From the mid-nineteenth century, following the virtual abandonment of military expeditions, they vied for office in the more lucrative garrisons established on the main long distance trade of the island. Indeed, the more important the trade route, the greater the competition amongst imperial officers for the garrisons abreast it.

One of the most profitable activities of garrison officers was the slave trade. On a regional scale, this involved attendance at provincial slave markets to purchase slave for the higher priced Merina market. On the west coast, it also involved participation in international slave shipments, with East African slaves being imported at points north of the river Manambolo, south of which there existed an export trade in Malagasy slaves who, together with slave re-exports to the north, were destined chiefly for the French sugar islands. The weak position of Merina garrisons beyond the effective imperial frontier, especially from 1883, frequently meant that their commanders were obliged to come to a *modus vivendi* with local chiefs that might entail the payment of tribute, but more frequently led to collaborative slave-raiding operations, in which commanders would turn a blind eye to, or even assist, brigand raids return for a percentage of the booty<sup>48</sup>. It is likely that in total Imerina gained about 200,000 slaves between 1861 and 1895, whilst Madagascar exported possibly 136,000 slaves. As the average price of a slave on the west coast was generally one third of that in Imerina or on the French islands, vast profits could be made by intermediaries in the trade, many of whom were Merina officers, including church pastors and evangelists<sup>49</sup>.

The second major means of enrichment through imperial office was through extorting money, property and goods from subject peoples. Many imperial officers, as in Betsileo, became wealthy through money lending at rates of interest that virtually guaranteed the bankruptcy of their clients. In addition others accumulated riches through outright plunder. The fortunes thus accumulated could be considerable. For instance, Rainigory, governor of

48. For the Ethiopian comparison, see Timothy Fernyhough, "Social mobility and dissident elites", 165.

49. Gwyn Campbell, "The East African Slave Trade, 1861-1895 : The 'Southern' Complex", *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, XX (1), 1989, 1-25.

Ankarana, in south east Madagascar, had by 1876 amassed three "official" and more unofficial wives, 200 slaves and 500 head of cattle, and lived like a king<sup>50</sup>. Indeed, the rapacious character of the Merina élite in the provinces was reflected by the name them of *araralahy*, meaning 'gluttonous or eager to take one's share before others'<sup>51</sup>.

Given the close association between imperial officers and the state-church in Merina garrisons, it was little wonder that Christianity and imperial oppression were linked in the eyes of provincial peoples<sup>52</sup>.

### **The Reaction against Merina Imperialism**

By the last decade of the nineteenth century, far from forging one Malagasy nation, united in loyalty to the Merina crown, the Merina had through imperialist exploitation earned the enduring enmity of non-Merina peoples who, increasingly, rose in revolt against the Merina crown. The reaction to Merina imperialism took five main forms : passive resistance, flight, defensive guerrilla tactics, political alliance, and revolt. Of these, flight, defensive guerrilla tactics and political alliance were characteristic of the period of Merina military expansion during the first half of the nineteenth century, whilst both passive resistance and revolt were features of the entire period, with revolt becoming prominent in later decades as Merina power waned. Passive resistance and flight were more common of those peoples under tight Merina control, namely the Betsileo, Antsihanaka, Bezanozano and Betsimisaraka. Beyond the frontiers of firm Merina rule, the distinction must be made between the Sakalava Bara and other independent homogeneous peoples who fought to preserve their territorial independence, and 'refugee republics', comprising communities of mixed ethnic and caste origin, who had fled Merina rule to establish themselves in regions beyond effective imperial control. These were mainly situated in the *efitra*, a no-man's land beyond firm imperial frontiers, in the forest fortress of Ikongo, in the south east of island, and on the southern and western plains.

#### **(i) Passive Resistance**

Passive resistance was most marked amongst those peoples subject to firm Merina rule. All such conquered groups protested against Merina imperialism even, by the end of nineteenth, the Tsimihety, to whom the Merina were at first

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50. James Sibree "South East Madagascar" (1876) ms., JFKM X52, 56.

51. James Sibree, "Curious Words and Customs connected with Chieftainship and Royalty among the Malagasy", *Jnl Anthropol Instit.* (Feb, 1892), 221.

52. See Micheline Rasoamiamanana, 'Aspects économiques et sociaux', 111-12.

viewed as liberators from the Sakalava, and who initially fully accepted state-church Christianity<sup>53</sup>. Typically, such protest took the form of boycotts of the state-church. For instance, when the LMS missionary, Richardson, visited the large Betsileo town of Ambohimandroso in 1877, only four people attended the local church<sup>54</sup>. In the largely independent reaches of the island, the situation was even worse and the state-church had little success in conscripting *fanompoana* labour<sup>55</sup>. For example, in 1876 it was noted the church in Ihosy, the Merina garrison stronghold and former capital of Ibara, was totally boycotted by the Bara<sup>56</sup>. The same year, Renarivo, the Bara chief living nearest to Betsileo, even refused to grant missionaries an audience<sup>57</sup>.

The reason for such animosity was twofold. In some cases, it was primarily the venality of Merina officials that excited the animosity of subject peoples. For instance, following a successful Merina campaign against the Bara king of Aborano (in the early 1870s?), Ilehimanjaka, the defeated king was pressed to accept two Merina evangelists. The latter tried to proscribe local talismans, and polygamy, as well as asserting a monopoly over wood, an extremely scarce and valuable resource. At the same time, the local Bara were distressed at 'the greed and immorality of Hova (Merina) traders... men wholly given up to drink, to money making, to whoremongering'. The evangelists were soon expelled from Ibara. Ever present, however, was the undercurrent of hostility occasioned by the belief that state-church officials were agents of Merina imperialism<sup>58</sup>. This view was clearly expressed in 1876 when two Merina evangelists to the court of the Bara chief, Itsikora, were expelled because 'the Ibara feared that the teachers were agents of the government, and sent to prepare the way for bringing them more completely under Hova (Merina) authority'<sup>59</sup>. In another case the Ikongo, who wished to possess the art of written communication so that they would not be technically inferior to their Betsileo neighbours, insisted that Betsileo rather than Merina teachers be sent to them<sup>60</sup>.

This hostility prompted a belated attempt alter missionary policy. Thus Sibree, on his return from a trip to the south east of the island in 1876,

53. Henri Rusillon, "Au pays Tsimihety", *Les cahiers missionnaires*, VII (Paris, 1923), 18-19, 48.

54. J. Richardson, *Lights and Shadows* (Antananarivo, 1877), 7.

55. Campbell, 'Missionaries, Fanompoana and the Menalamba Revolt' ; *idem*, 'Gold Mining and the French takeover of Madagascar, 1883-1914', *African Economic History*, XVII (1988) 99-126.

56. George Shaw, "Rough Sketches of a Journey to the Ibara", *AAMM* (1876), 107.

57. *Id.*

58. James Sibree, *Fifty Years in Madagascar. Personal Experiences of Mission Life and Work* (London, 1924), 167.

59. James Sibree, "Brief Summary of Important Events", *AAMM*, (1876), 121.

60. George Shaw, "Notes on Ikongo and its People", *AAMM*, I (1875), 68 ; *Idem*, *From Fianarantsoa to Ikongo - Notes of a Journey* (Antananarivo, 1875), 12-18.

recommended that non-Merina evangelists be sent to the Tanala who had already rejected two Merina teachers because 'Another generation or two must pass away before their remembrance of Hova (Merina) cruelty and conquest can be effaced'<sup>61</sup>. Similarly he argued that for missionaries to successfully establish themselves outside Imerina and Betsileo, they must isolate themselves from Merina garrisons for only in this way could they remove the stigma of being considered 'agents of the dominant race'<sup>62</sup>.

A major form of resistance to Merina imperialism in areas under Strict Merina control, notably in Betsileo and on the periphery of Imerina, was rejection of the state-church religion. In some regions this assumed the form of 'Christian' movements independent of state control. The most striking example of this was the *fifohazana* movement that commenced in Betsileo in 1894 and subsequently spread through the central highlands. More challenging to the state was the tendency to re-adopt traditional religious symbols for these formed a focal point for hostility towards the Merina state. Such was the case on the western periphery of Imerina, where local people rejected Christianity in favour of the talismans of ancestral religion which became a major feature of the Menalamba revolt in 1895-97<sup>63</sup>.

## (ii) Flight

Flight generally occurred in the regions where direct confrontation was sought with Merina armies, whose comparative military superiority ensured victory in any pitched battles and spontaneous, uncoordinated uprisings. The provinces initially most affected were Sakalava land and the Betsimisaraka region. Merina campaigns against Iboina between 1825 and 1837 resulted in the widespread dispersion of many Sakalava groups to 'Andronah', the region east of Amorontsangana, and to the offshore islands<sup>64</sup>. In 1826, for example, the Sakalava Boina king, Andriantsoly, and his followers were forced to flee to Mayotta to evade advancing Merina armies<sup>65</sup>. Similarly, thousands of Sakalava sought refuge on islands off the north west coast of Madagascar in consequence of the 1836-37 Merina campaign. Vidal estimates that between 1825 and 1845, some 18,000 Sakalava left Iboina for the offshore islands and the Comoros in order to escape Merina rule. By 1848 the entire population of the 'island of

61. James Sibree 'South East Madagascar' (1876) ms., FJKM X52, 73.

62. *Ibid.*

63. See Gwyn Campbell, 'Crisis of Faith and Colonial Conquest', forthcoming.

64. Anon, 'Notice sur les Sacalaves du Boény et de l'Ambongo', (n.d.), sect. II 08, AHII.

65. Hastie, 'Diary' (1825), 89, 90, 92, PRO CO. 167/78 II ; RHI, 127. Jean Valette, *Etudes sur le règne de Radama Ier*, (Tananarive, 1962), 70-77 ; S.P. Oliver, *Madagascar I* (London, 1886), 40 ; William Ellis, *History of Madagascar II* (London, 1838), 358.

refuge', was estimated at about 30,000, approximately 20,000 living on Nosy Be, 3,000-4,000 on Nosy Mitsio, 3,000 on Nosy Cumba and a further 3,000 on Nosy Faly<sup>66</sup>. During the second half of the nineteenth century, partly because of its emergence in the mid-century as a highly prosperous and 'independent' centre of foreign commerce, Baly also became a major centre for refugees<sup>67</sup>. Likewise, between 1831 and 1851 an estimated 8,750 Betsimisaraka migrated to Nosy Boraha, off the north-east coast, in order to escape Merina rule<sup>68</sup>.

Possibly the most brutal military expeditions were against the peoples in the south of island. In the 1830s, the Merina court unleashed a series of devastating expeditions against the Bara who, armed with foreign muskets earned in exchange for cattle exports, tried unsuccessfully to confront the Merina head-on. In The 1830 assault, after 1,000 Bara defenders were killed, many survivors fled to mountain caves, or west to Sakalava land<sup>69</sup>. From the late 1830s flight became the accepted tactic of the Bara. For example, when Merina armies conquered the Bara towns of Ihosy and Ivohibe in the 1840s and 1850s, the local Bara migrated to the Horombe plateau<sup>70</sup>. Chief Tsiety and his Antaivondro followers, who originated from the region of the river Manambia, an affluent of the Mananara on the east coast, similarly fled west to Mahaly to avoid Merina troops<sup>71</sup>.

Flight also occurred because of economic exploitation. The Sakalava who remained in Mahajanga following its capture by imperial forces in 1824-5, were pressed into *fanompoana* to supply the Merina with wood, to service Merina boats, and from 1837 to 1842 to surrender the hides of all slaughtered cattle to

66. Dalmond, "Mission Apostolique de Madagascar, 1837-1847", p. 50, Diaiers, sect. II. 1, AHH ; E. Vidal, *Madagascar. Situation Actuelle* (Bordeaux, 1845), 36 ; Jouen, "Rapport sur la Mission de Bourbon et de Madagascar" (jan. 1848), p. 4 ; 'Correspondance', 36b, AHH ; anon, 'Notice sur les Sacalaves du Boény et de l'Ambongo' (n.d.), sect. II 08, AHH ; Jean Valette, *op. cit.*, 71-7.

67. These were not all refugees from the Merina. In 1890, when Androka, in Marambity Bay, the home of the Islamised children of Andriantsoly, former king of Iboina, was attacked by non-Islamic Sakalava who destroyed its mosque, the royal children, Kassim, Safiambala and Safintamo, fled with their followers to Baly Bay. They settled at Soalala where Safintamo was declared queen. She was succeeded by her sister Safintamo, Baly, who died about the year 1913.

Pierre Verin, A.Mille, R. Battistini, "Recherches du centre d'archéologie sur les sites Islamiques du nord-ouest", *BAM*, XLV (2), 1967, 99-100 ; *idem*, "Archéologie des côtes nord de Madagascar. Bilan des recherches 1968-1969", *BAM* XLVII (1969), 22.

68. RA, 263 ; Raombanara Livre 13 B2, 22 ; Campbell, "Role of the London Missionary Society", 338-9 ; Wolf, 'Analysis', 203 ; *Madagascar Times* (5 Nov 1884) ; Grandidier, *Histoire*, vol. IV, T.I, 297 ; Putnam 'A Cruise' ; A. Smith, "From Zanzibar to Nosibe", *AAMM*, VII (1883), 41 ; Dalmond à son frère, Madagascar, 1 fév. 1840, in 'Lettres de M Dalmond à ses parents entre 1826 et 1846', C47, AHVP ; Finaz au Jouen, Nossy-bé, 20 juillet 1846, Correspondance C35, AHVP ; Nourse to Farquhar, HMS Andromarche, 17 Nov 1822, CO.167/66 ; Campbell, "Madagascar and the Slave Trade", 210-211 ;

69. Johns to Freeman, Antananarivo, 14 Oct. 1830, SOAS/LMS MIL, B3 F5.

70. Alfred et Guillaume Grandidier, *Histoire physique, naturelle et politique de Madagascar*, Vol IV, T.I, (Paris, 1908), 281.

71. Trousselle, "Renseignements généraux sur le secteur de Mahaly", *Notes, reconnaissances, explorations* (1899), 507-8.

Rainijoro (Andriamaro), governor of Mahajanga, who subsequently sold them on his own account to American merchants. In response, at least two-thirds of its Sakalava inhabitants moved out of the port. Protests from the remaining Sakalava reached the Merina court which responded in 1842 by demoting Rainijoro by one grade. However, his full status was restored the following year, and this led to a further exodus of Sakalava from Mahajanga<sup>72</sup>.

Similarly, the peoples of South-East, who from 1825-32 failed in their bid to inflict direct defeat upon, fled from the exploitative policies of their conquerors. Between 1832 and 1838 approximately 50,000 women and children were enslaved and thousands of cattle seized by Merina expeditions to the south-east and attempts were also made to impose *fanompoana*. The reaction was flight. A missionary visiting Taolanaro in November 1830 commented :

*"The inhabitants there, though numerous, appear to be living in a sort of constrained submission to the Hova (Merina) Government, in consequence of which they remove themselves far off and live scattered abroad in the forests at a distance from the garrison in the Fort, to avoid being troubled and harassed (sic) by the military Government"*<sup>73</sup>.

In c. 1847, 20,000 Tanosy warriors spearheaded a mass migration westwards, of Tanosy from the Taolanaro region and of Antaivondro, from Ivondro, in order to escape Merina exploitation ; they dispossessed the Tsienimalala of the territory they held in the region of the source of the rivers Mandrare and Manambolo, and established colonies at Tamotamo and Tsivory, and in the Teheza/Tabeza valley region, close to the northern reach of the Onilahy river<sup>74</sup>. By 1877, the Tanosy emigrants had founded over twelve towns and by the end of the nineteenth century they numbered 50,000<sup>75</sup>. Many Taimoro also migrated from the south-east to seek refuge and work in the west of the island<sup>76</sup>, as did the Andramira from Itomampy who fled the Merina to establish bases in Sakamare , in Voningeza district, and Antandroy country<sup>77</sup>.

72. RA, 451 ; Duhaut-Cilly, "Notice sur le royaume d'Emirne, sur la capitale Tananarivou et sur le gouvernement de Rhadama (1825)", in Jean Valette (ed.), *Deux documents français sur Madagascar en 1825 ; les rapports Duhaut-Cilly et Frère*, BAM XLVI 1-2 (1968), 243 ; Jean Valette, "Le Journal d'Hastie du 14 novembre 1824 au 7 mai 1825", BAM, XLVI (1-2) 1968, 114-8 ; Guillaïn, *Documents*, 214 ; Rasoamiamanana, *Aspects économiques*, 31, 70.

73. Jones to Hankey, Port Louis, 18 Dec 1830, SOAS/LMS MIL B3 F4 JC.

74. Alfred et Guillaume Grandidier, *Histoire physique, naturelle et politique de Madagascar*, vol. IV, T.I (Paris, 1908), 211, 285, 288.

75. Emile F. Gautier, "Western Madagascar : Its Geology and Physical Geography" (trans. R. Baron), AAMM, 146 ; J. Richardson, *Lights and Shadows* (Antananarivo, 1877), 45.

76. A.Walen, *Madagaskars Sydostkys*, Stavanger, 1887, 48.

77. Trousselle, "Renseignements généraux sur le secteur de Mahaly", *Notes, reconnaissances, explorations* (1899). 511



One of the most striking features of the history nineteenth century Madagascar was the formation in regions beyond the effective borders of the empire of large multi-ethnic communities of refugees from Merina rule. Such 'maroon' communities were intrinsically pacific, their ideal being to live an independent existence, but this was virtual impossible to realise. Firstly, the declaration of independence by erstwhile imperial subjects was anathema to the Merina crown which consequently sought to destroy such communities. Secondly, refugees tended to establish bases in the *efitra* which characteristically comprised terrain which could not support large settled groups of people. As a result, most refugee communities were obliged to take up banditry, at least during the dry season, to supplement agriculture. Indeed, the devastation caused by bandits led to the fleeing from border areas of the empire of entire communities, which resulted in a considerable expansion of the *efitra*. For example, by the close of the nineteenth century the *efitra* between the Bongolava and the western slopes of the central plateau were approximately 100 km wide. It extended for the same distance northwards of Imerina<sup>78</sup>.

Although the Sakalava lost large numbers through emigration to the offshore islands in the 1820s, they gained from the influx of refugees from Merina rule from the central imperial provinces of Imerina and Betsileo. The existence of such refugee brigand communities in Iboina was used as the pretext for the 1824 Merina invasion of the region. Merina forces attacked an 'island of brigands', taking 600 captives<sup>79</sup>, and in 1824-26 crushed the notorious 'Manendy' bandits of Valalafotsy origin<sup>80</sup>. Other communities of refugees from Merina rule were the Bemihimpa<sup>81</sup>, the Iboina Christians<sup>82</sup>, a band of imperial army deserters who fled to a rock cave complex in the *efitra*, two days trek north of Valalafotsy, close to the borders of Iboina and Menabe<sup>83</sup>, Betanimena and Betsimisaraka refugees also fled west to seek sanctuary from Merina rule in Sakalava land<sup>84</sup>.

78. Alfred et Guillaume Grandidier, *op. cit.*, 307 ; Raymond Decary, *Coutumes guerrières et organisation militaires chez les anciens malgaches I*, Paris, 1966, 90.

79. Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels (1821-1829)*, James Montgomery (ed.) III (London, 1831), 518.

80. Hastie, 'Diary' (1824) and (1825), PRO CO.167/78 II ; see also the section on the origins of brigand communities in chapter 2.

81. Alfred et Guillaume Grandidier, *op. cit.*, 253, 255, 259-61 ; Adolphe Razafintsalama, "Quelques concepts anthropologiques de base en vue du recueil des traditions orales", Colloque d'histoire, Université de Madagascar (Toliara, 1979), 12.

82. See eg. David Johns to Mary Johns, Nosibe, 18 July 1843, 'Madagascar Odds' Bx.4, SOAS/LMS.

83. Raombana, B2 Livre 13, 35 ; Raombana 'Manuscrit écrit à Tananarive (1853-1854', trans. J.F. Radley, *BAM*, XIII (1930), 14-15 ; Hastie, 'Diary' (1825), 111-2, PRO CO. 167/78 II.

84. Edmond Samat, "Notes : La côte ouest de Madagascar en 1852", *BAM*, XV (1932), 56 ; see also (Jouen), "Explorations du Brick le Victor à la côte-ouest de Madagascar" (1852), Clif, AHH. Nosy Be had also attacked in 1849 by a flotilla of 2-3,00 Antankarana war canoes - Neyraguet au Jouen, Helle-ville, 26 juillet 1849, sect.II, 'Correspondance', C34d, AHH ; *Madagascar Times* (15 Oct 1884).

The typical lifestyle of such refugees is illustrated by members of the large Betsiriry 'republic' which was divided into two segments. The smaller 'Bokarano' group of mainly Merina origin, located between the rivers Betsiriry and Mahavavy, between the Mahavavy and the western foothills of the Bongolava, lived chiefly by launching cattle raids into Imerina<sup>85</sup>. The main 'Betsiriry' community, composed of Sakalava, Bara runaway slaves of both Malagasy and African origin, deserters from the Merina army or *fanompoana*, and political dissidents, was located between the rivers Mania and Mahijilo. It lived almost entirely off the slave trade, raiding the entire western portion of the central plateau, from Mandridrano in the north to Fanjakana in the south, for captives, most of whom were subsequently exported. Under Ratoera, in the late 1880s and early 1890s, the Betsiriry army comprised 10,000 warriors, equipped with modern Snider and Remington rifles obtained in return for slaves from the Karany 'Dalakeimo', whose boats cruised up the Tsiribihina from his base at Tsimanandrafozana. So formidable were the Betsiriry that they constituted 'la confederation la plus puissante de Menabe and most Merina governors in the western provinces were obliged to cooperate with them'<sup>86</sup>.

In addition, a number of 'refugee republics' formed in the eastern forest *efitra*. One such 'republic' was Isaonjo, a fortified hill where many Vangaindrano and Soavinarivo people had fled the Merina. After a series of assaults the hill was eventually taken in c. 1847, though the Merina lost two-thirds of their troops in the attack<sup>87</sup>. The most prominent refugee republic was the mountain fortress of Ikongo, situated 1½ days march from the major Merina garrisons of Fianarantsoa and Ambohimandroso. It was a formidable power, particularly when allied to another 'brigand republic' formed at the source of the Faraoni river by Taimoro slaves of the Merina who fled east coast plantations<sup>88</sup>. Ikongo's jurisdiction extended over the narrow Ikongo basin, between 15 and 20 miles wide, and stretching some 60 miles from north to south, which was surrounded on all sides by high hills and dense tropical rain forest. Whenever invasion threatened, the population fled to the hilltops, many of which formed natural fortresses. The most popular of these was 'Ikongo'. Rising precipitously to over 1,000 feet above the basin, it comprised a table top, five miles long upon which, by 1875, five 'towns' had been built, the southernmost of which was estimated by one

85. Alfred et Guillaume Grandidier, *op. cit.*, 220, 224, 297, 299 ; Raombana B2 Livre 13, 22 ... M.R. Decary, "La population de Madagascar", *BAM* XXVIII (1947-8), 33.

86. Bousserand, "Notice sur les tribus Tanala et Sakalava", in M.E. Fagerend, "Histoire des Maroserana du Menabe", *BAM*, XXVIII (1947-8), 130 ; see also E.O. McMahon, "First Visit of a European to the Betsiriry Tribe", *AAMM*, XV (1891), 280 ; J. Richardson, *Lights and Shadows* (Antananarivo, 1877), 40 ; *GM*, 10-11.

87. Raombana, B2 Livre 13, 6.

88. A. Walen, *Madagaskars Sydostkys* (Stavanger, 1887), 25-6.

missionary visitor to be the size of Fianarantsoa. As there were two perennial springs on the mountain top, which also contained sufficient level and fertile ground for its inhabitants to cultivate crops, Ikongo could survive a siege indefinitely, and it quickly gained a reputation for being impregnable<sup>89</sup>. In 1831, 2,000 troops, amounting to 50 per cent of the Merina assault force under Ramahafadrahova, were killed attempting to storm it. This defeat was considered a national humiliation by the Merina who launched a second expedition under Rainiharo, only to find that the Ikongo had fled to Ankarana, another fortified mountain. The following year, Ankarana was besieged ; Rainiharo duped the defenders into signing a truce and surrendering their arms, the slaughtered 8,000 Ikongo warriors, and seized as slaves 20,000 women and children<sup>90</sup>.

Ikongo had certainly fully recovered by the mid-nineteenth century, due to a constant influx of refugees from Merina rule, and an alliance with the Sakalava. With the change of imperial policy under Radama II, Ikongo sent a delegation to Antananarivo to acknowledge Merina sovereignty provided the imperial court did not interfere in domestic Ikongo affairs. However, the republic continued to attract dissidents, deserters and runaway slaves<sup>91</sup>. Such was its standing that in 1873, when the Merina court paid a state visit to Betsileo, Ikongo refused to send a delegation to meet them until Ranavalona II had first sent an envoy to them<sup>92</sup>. In 1875, Ikongo comprised a community of between 8,000 and 10,000, settled in small hamlets comprising from twelve to thirty houses, and who, although described as a republic, were said to possess 'a king, Prime Minister, Governors, and Judges of their own'<sup>93</sup>.

Refugee communities continued to form in the eastern forest until the French takeover. For instance, in c.1889 the Andrarivo slaves of the Zafindravola of the Ionaivo valley fled to the high valley of the river Sahanony, an affluent of the Vorokatsy. Pursued by their erstwhile owners, they sought and were granted protection by chief Zoromanan, who placed them at 'Barbaria'<sup>94</sup>.

At a conservative estimate, by the mid-nineteenth century, a minimum of 120,000 people voluntarily migrated to avoid Merina conquest and exploitation. To place this in a comparative context, Isaacman estimates that in the twelve

89. Finaz, 'Mémoire sur le commencement de la mission dans la Province de Betsileo, (1876), p. 21, Diaires, sect.II no. 24, AHH ; Georges Shaw, "Notes on Ikongo and its People", *AAMM* (1875), 65-6 ; *idem*, *From Fianarantsoa to Ikongo - Notes of a Journey* (Antananarivo, 1875), 13-14.

90. RA, 279-80, 285-6 ; see table on slaves captured

91. Finaz, 'Mémoire sur le commencement de la mission dans la Province de Betsileo' (1876), p.21, Diaires, sect.II no.24, AHH.

92. *Ibid*.

93. George Shaw, *From Fianarantsoa to Ikongo - Notes of a Journey* (Antananarivo, 1875), 4, 13-14.

94. Trousselle, "Renseignements généraux", 510.

years from 1895 to 1907, 50,000 people fled Portuguese rule in the Mozambique provinces of Tete, Milange and Massingire to seek refuge in neighbouring British territory, and that a further 7,000 refugees fled Sena every year for Southern Rhodesia in the early years of colonial rule<sup>95</sup>.

## (ii) Guerrilla Defence

The south and west of the island possessed excellent natural defences in the form of forests and other intractable terrain, including desert in the extreme south, floods, and malaria<sup>96</sup>. The latter was an extremely significant factor in the lack of Merina success in these regions for the plateau peoples, unlike the other tribes of the island, did not carry the sickle cell immunity. The south and west was also sparsely populated, inhabited in the main by itinerant, pastoral peoples who possessed a strong tradition of cattle raiding which adapted them well for a guerrilla existence, as the Merina found to their cost. Their raze and burn tactics deprived Merina expeditions of local sources of provisions, often resulting in famine and increased vulnerability to disease amongst imperial troops, who also became easier targets for the enemy. Even major Merina advances were halted by such tactics : Imperial expeditions sent against Menabe in 1815 and 1820 were defeated, as were those of the reorganized Merina army in 1821 and 1822, despite Radama I's promise of a \$9 reward for every Sakalava head delivered to him. In Ambongo, king Tsolovola was attacked by Radama I in 1824 but despite Merina military superiority and the refusal by Tsolovola of assistance from the Menabe Sakalava, the guerrilla tactics of the Ambongo Sakalava forced a Merina retreat after only one Ambongo chief, Monita, had submitted<sup>97</sup>. In 1827, the Ambongo Sakalava repulsed a two-pronged naval and overland attack by the Merina. 98 per cent of the 10,000 strong imperial army, comprising 'crack' troops, perished in the campaign, mainly from famine and disease which resulted from the scorched earth tactics employed by the Ambongo<sup>98</sup>.

A massive Merina expedition into the Menabe in 1834 led to the construction of a chain of garrisons but failed to establish more than nominal sway in the province<sup>99</sup>. The following year, a 40,000-50,000 strong Merina force was halted in

95. Allen Isaacman, *The Tradition of Resistance in Mozambique. Anti-colonial Activity in the Zambesi Valley, 1850-1921* (London, 1976), 107-8.

96. See eg. Bernard Schlemmer, "Conquête et colonisation du Menabe : Une analyse de la politique Gallieni", in Gilles Sautter et al. (eds.), *Changements sociaux dans l'ouest malgache*, Paris, 1980, 120.

97. Anon, "Notice sur les Sacalaves du Boény et de l'Ambongo" (n.d.), sect.II C8, AHH ; Jean Valette, *Etudes sur le règne de Radama Ier*, 16-17, 54-6 ; Hastie, 'Diary' (1820), 477, PRO CO. 167/50 ; William Ellis, *History of Madagascar*, 252 ; RH, 112-4 ; Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels (1821-1829)*, James Montgomery (ed.), III (London, 1831, 511, 514.

98. RA, 217-9; RH, 131.

99. Prud'homme, 'Observations on the Sakalava', AAMM XXIV (1900), 418-20.

Fiherena, in the south-west of the island, by guerrilla defence<sup>100</sup>, as were similar expeditions against Ambongo in 1836<sup>101</sup>, and Menabe in 1837, 1838, 1845, and 1846. In that latter year, a 3,000-4,000 strong imperial force was defeated near Mahabo and from that time the Merina abandoned their policy of belligerent aggression towards the Sakalava who were not only 'encore presque entièrement indépendante de l'empire des hovas'<sup>102</sup>, but were launching raids of their own against Merina garrisons. So successful were the latter that the Merina court despatched ambassadors to sue for peace. From 1846 there were very few expeditions against the Sakalava, so strong were the latter and so war-weary were the Merina<sup>103</sup>. In mid 1853 a Merina army attacked King 'Rabouky' of Baly Bay, but Merina losses were greater than those of the defendants and the Merina were forced to retreat<sup>104</sup>.

Similarly, Merina influence in Ibara remained tenuous. Ivohibe, the Merina military headquarters there was under constant siege from mosquitoes and Bara warriors who eventually forced the garrison to move to Ambohimandroso, on the Betsileo border, which enjoyed a healthy climate, was secure, and could summon Betsileo *fanompoana*<sup>105</sup>. Although the country between Ambohimandroso, in southern Betsileo, and Ihosy was described as tranquil and under nominal imperial sway, the most populous regions of Ibara to the west were independent and largely hostile to the Merina. For example, no Merina could travel beyond Ivohimara without a special pass from Rainibaha of Iantsantsana who was not even the paramount Bara chieftain<sup>106</sup>. Also, one of the few communities in the south east to retain independence was the Tanala of Ivohitrosa, to the south-east of Fianarantsoa who in 1876 numbered about 2,000 and controlled the route from the plateau to the coast via the Matitanana valley. Sibree was informed that no Merina would dare, upon pain of death, enter Tanala country without a military escort<sup>107</sup>.

100. RA, 369-71.

101. Anon, *op. cit.*

102. Neyraquet au Jouen, Nossi-bé, 10 août 1849, Carton sect. I C28d, AHH.

103. Raombana, B2 Livre 13, 34-5 ; Raombana, Annales Livre 12 C1, 488 ; RA, 473-4 ; Edmont Samat, 'Notes : La côte ouest de Madagascar en 1852', BAM, XV (1932), 74-5 ; M.E. Fagering, 'Histoire des Maroseranana du Menabe', BAM, XXVIII (1947-8), 128.

104. (Jouen), 'Journal' (1853), pp. 3-4, 6, 11, C28f, AHH ; Jouen, 'Rapport sur la Mission de Baly' (1854), C28h, AHH.

105. Finaz, 'Mémoire sur le commencement de la mission dans la Province de Betsileo' (1876), pp.18-19, Diaires, sect.II no.24, AHH.

106. The most powerful Bara king was Ivoatra of Barabe - J. Richardson, *Lights and Shadows* (Antananarivo, 1877), appendix 1 ; George Shaw, 'Rough Sketches of a Journey to the Ibara', AAMM (1876), 102, 109.....

107. James Sibree, 'South East Madagascar' (1876), ms., FJKM X52, 28.

### (iii) Alliance

A common hatred for the Merina developed amongst the non-Merina peoples of Madagascar which ensured amongst the latter community loyalty and which occasionally forged a rare unity between different lineages<sup>108</sup>. For instance, in 1825 the Iboina and Menabe Sakalava rose as one against Merina attempts to colonize their land<sup>109</sup>. Again, in the 1850s, the Sakalava of Baly Bay, with a total estimated population of 20,000-25,000, formed an army of 3,000-4,000 men armed with 3,000 muskets, that every two to three months would unite with the Ambongo Sakalava to launch combined raiding parties, 4,000-5,000 strong into Imerina. One such raid in 1852 lasted 5-6 months, during which time 400 Merina soldiers were killed and 600 cattle seized<sup>110</sup>. Such inter-Sakalava unity was reinforced by the *fatidra* or blood-brotherhood<sup>111</sup>, and the occasional harsh treatment of collaborators with the Merina. Thus in 1823 a group of Sakalava led by Bano and Ramarofahitra, who collaborated with the Merina and expressed a desire to send their children to the mission-state schools in Antananarivo, were assassinated as traitors by their compatriots<sup>112</sup>.

Another demonstration of the remarkable degree of communication and cooperation that was sometimes achieved between peoples opposed to Merina rule was in the mid-nineteenth century, when imperial forces invaded the Mandrare basin in the south of the island. The Tsienimbalala migrated to Mahafaly country to the south-west where they contracted a defensive alliance with the Antaivondro, their former foes. After the Merina army retired to Betsileo, both groups pushed back towards the Mandrare region where they maintained their alliance<sup>113</sup>. A further example is provided by the revolt of 1853 when 3,000 Ikongo warriors, supplied with arms by the Sakalava, attacked Fianarantsoa, the chief Merina garrison in Betsileo. At the same time as seizing many cattle, and women and children as slaves, they attempted to recruit local Betsileo in the fight against the Merina :

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108. A. Walen, "Two Years Among the Sakalava", *AAMM* X 5 (1881), 12.

109. Although the Menabe Sakalava later took advantage of the weakened polity in Iboina following the suppression there of the revolt, to raid the province for cattle and slaves. Also, it wasn't until the 1840s that the Ambongo Sakalava succeeded in shedding all vestiges of Boina Sakalava rule in their region. Ambongo Sakalava bands regularly raided Iboina at the commencement of every dry season. Mayeur, "Voyage au pays des Séclaves, côte Ouest de Madagascar" (1774), 91, *BM* Add.18128 ; Jörg Meinken, "Quelques remarques au sujet du 'journal du voyage au pays esclaves' de Nicolas Mayeur (1774)", *BAM* LIII 1-2 (1975), 51-7 ; Hastie, 'Diary' (1825), 89, PRO C0.167/78 II.

110. (Jouen), "Explorations du Brick le Victor à la côte-ouest de Madagascar" (1852)CIII, AHH ; Edmont Samat, "Notes : La côte ouest de Madagascar en 1852", *BAM*, XV (1932), 61.

111. Edmont Samat, "Notes : La côte ouest de Madagascar en 1852", *BAM*, XV (1932), 71.

112. William Ellis, *History of Madagascar*, 307.

113. Trousselle, "Renseignement généraux", 507-8.

*"Ils ont fait dire aux habitants que le pays n'appartient pas à la Reine, que, sous peu, ils feront une attaque en deux bandes pour prendre la ville, et qu'ils gouverneront le pays beaucoup mieux que la Reine... L'offier qui me raconte ces chose m'assure que depuis notre visite à Fianarantsoa, le pays est dans une insécurité complète et qu'il est à craindre que les habitants de la Région du Vakinankaratra ne se révoltent tant ils sont irrités par les corvées et par l'oppression des fonctionnaires"*<sup>114</sup>.

The Ikongo also attacked foreign "collaborators" of the Merina crown. In 1865 a visitor commented of the region of Mananjary on the east coast, the most southeasterly point of the main block of the Merina empire, separated from Taolanaro by a stretch of *efitra* which contained the independent refugee republic of Ikongo :

*'on the north bank of the river, about five miles below the town of Mananjary, there is a good-sized village which had formerly been situated on the south bank, but has been moved bodily over to escape the attacks of the hostile tribes living to the southward. These tribes had also caused M. Ligie to discontinue working his sugar-mill on account of their predatory excursions. Their head-quarters was reported to be a large city about 200 miles south-west of Mananjary, situated on the top of a very high steep hill, the sides of which they had cut quite perpendicular, thus rendering their stronghold impregnable against an enemy unprovided with artillery. It is said to contain 30,000 inhabitants, and though the Hovas (Merina) had repeatedly attacked it they had always been repulsed with great loss. The garrison was assisted even by the women, who rolled down large boulders and logs of wood upon the assailant'*<sup>115</sup>.

Foreign alliances were also sought in the fight against the Merina, especially in the period of greatest imperial military offensive, 1835-61. In 1837, a number of chiefs from the south east appealed to Nicolay, the governor of Mauritius, for British military aid against the Merina<sup>116</sup>. On the west coast the queen of Ambongo despatched an envoy with a similar request to the Sultan of Zanzibar with whom a treaty was signed, although the conditions proved so onerous for the Ambongo that the agreement fell into abeyance<sup>117</sup>. Wastell claims that Nicolay, governor of Mauritius, also entertained an alliance with the Sakalava against the Merina in the late 1830s ; certainly the Sakalava of the south west offered to cede land to the British in return for military aid, but the latter, preoccupied with problems in the Near East, took no action<sup>118</sup>. In 1838, an

114. Raombana, "Manuscrit écrit à Tananarive (1853-1854)", trans. J.F. Radley, BAM XIII (1930), 17-18 ; see also *ibid*, 14.

115. W.Rooke, "A Boat-Voyage along the Coast-Lakes of East Madagascar (11 Dec 1865)", *Jnl Roy Geog Soc*, XXXVI (1866), 62 ; see also S.P. Oliver, *Madagascar I* (London, 1886), 377.

116. William Ellis, *History of Madagascar*, 521; A resident, *Madagascar, Past and Present* (London, 1847), 65.

117. Anon, 'Notice sur les Sacalaves', *op. cit*.

118. R.E.P. Wastell, *British Imperial Policy in Relation to Madagascar, 1810-1896*, Ph. D (University of London, 1944), 258, 260-1.

unsuccessful attack was launched against the Merina garrison port of Anorontsangana, in Iboina, by a Sakalava band led by a small group of Europeans who wished to force the Merina to adopt free trade<sup>119</sup>. In 1838, the Iboina Sakalava obtained some military assistance from the Muscat of Oman, but this was short-lived. In 1839 they turned to the French to whom in 1840, a year of general revolt against the Merina<sup>120</sup>, queen Tsiomeko and king Tsimandroho signed over Iboina and the islands of Nosy Be and Nosy Faly as protectorates. Similarly king Andriantsoly ceded Mayotta to the French in 1841<sup>121</sup>. The French fleet arrived to take possession of the islands in 1842, only just in time to prevent the population of Nosy Be from accepting the protection of Zanzibar. They later added Nosy Cumba and Nosy Mitsio to their Malagasy island possessions<sup>122</sup>.

In 1847 an Ambongo Sakalava king (possibly 'Taficandre' ?) accepted the assistance of a British military officer named O'Connor in planning to attack and subjugate the Merina in order that imperial ports, which had been closed to foreign commerce since 1845, might be re-opened. However, internecine rivalry amongst Sakalava princes led to the assassination of O'Connor and the abandonment of the planned subjugation of Imerina<sup>123</sup>. Again, in c.1848, following the refusal of the Merina court to permit a group of Mascarene merchants to purchase land in the empire, foreign traders concluded treaties with king Lahimerisa of St. Augustin in which the latter was to be supplied with foreign arms and ammunition. The authorities on Réunion refused to ratify the agreements with Sakalava envoys in 1849 although they did send the French corvette 'L'Infatigable' under Lelieu to negotiate a treaty with Lahimerisa offering French protection in return for ceding the 'Sarout-Rano' peninsula to the Jesuit missionaries. However, that accord also lapsed because no French warships appeared off St. Augustin for a number of years<sup>124</sup>. In 1852, the Jesuit mission tried to prod the French authorities into action by presenting them with a plan of attack to depose Ranavalona I. They recommended that the French invade from the west rather than east coast as the Sakalava could proffer greater assistance than could the demoralized Betsimisaraka, although they argued that most provincial tribes would welcome the French as liberators :

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119. RA, 467-8.

120. A Former Resident of the Island, *Madagascar and the United States* (New York, 1883), 7.

121. R.E.P. Wastell, *op. cit.*, 277-8.

122. Guillaïn à M. L'Ordonnateur de l'île Bourbon, Nosy-Be, 1842, C8e, AHH ; Prud'homme, "Observations on the Sakalava", *AAMM*, XXIV (1900), 424 ; R.E.P. Wastell, *op. cit.*, 271.

123. Edmond Samat, 'Renseignements sur la côte ouest de Madagascar depuis Nossi bé jusqu'à Crosker Cap Ste Marie' (Nossy-bé, 6 mai 1852), in A. Boudou, "La côte ouest de Madagascar en 1852", *BAM* XV (1932), 59.

124. J.A. Biartrate, 'Mémoire en faveur de l'immigration Malgache partie sud de Madagascar, adressé à l'Empereur' (Bordeau, Jar.v., 1859), AHH ; R.E.P. Wastell, *op. cit.* 296-7.



*"Près de la Moitié ou peu-être les 2/3 des Populations Malgaches reconnaitrons notre Pouvoir aussi-tôt la prise de Tananarive. Elles le feront sans aucune arrière-pensée préfèrent notre Joug fort léger à celui des Hovas"*<sup>125</sup>.

In 1855, a well-armed French party patronized by Lambert established a camp at Vavatoby/Ambavatoby to exploit its coal reserves, but was expelled by a Merina force<sup>126</sup>. 'Rabouky', the old king of Baly, claimed that if the French chose to attack the Merina, they would be joined by the Sakalava chiefs of the west coast and in 1859, the kings of Iboina and Ambongo ceded permanent settlements to the French in the bays of Bombetoc and Baly in return for French protection against the Merina. However, the same year the Jesuit establishment in Baly Bay was pillaged by the Sakalava and in retaliation, the French navy burnt 'Mattagolon', the headquarters of 'Outzinzou', daughter 'Rabouky'<sup>127</sup>. The French also signed a treaty of protection with the king of St. Augustin, on the strength of which a Jesuit mission established itself there, but as within two months no French ships arrived to fulfil their offer of protection, the missionaries were expelled<sup>128</sup>.

In June 1854, the Réunionnais trader, Biarrate, induced them to pledge a cession of land to the French, presumably in return for French protection<sup>129</sup>. He also stressed to the French authorities the Antanosy willingness to fight the Merina, stating the earnings of Antanosy engagés to Réunion was earmarked for the purchase of foreign arms :

*'en les autorisant à s'engager leurs chefs n'ont qu'un but : celui d'avoir en échange des armes et des munitions pour chasser un jour les Hovas de leur territoire, espérant aussi y être aidés par tous les travailleurs repatriés, qui, courant aussi ce projet, convertiront en armes de guerre une partie des salaires acquis pendant leur engagement de cinq ans'*<sup>130</sup>.

Persistent French pretensions to Madagascar pushed the Merina crown into attempting to justify its claim to rule all Madagascar : In 1874, following a revolt the previous year, the Merina launched an expedition against the Sakalava. By this time a climate favourable to political intervention in Madagascar had

125. (Jouen), 'Renseignements pour un plan d'attaque sur Tananarive', (1852), CIIh, AHH ; ; see also Ravisì, 'Projet de système de conquête, colonisation et civilisation de l'île de Madagascar' (août 1852), AHH.

126. The Merina killed the party's leader, Darvoy, and another white, and carried another Frenchman as a prisoner to Antananarivo.

Dalmond, 'Mission Apostolique de Madagascar, 1837-1847', pp.94-5, 105, Diaires, sect.II, 1, AHH.

127. 'Convention passée entre Capitain Fleuriot de Langle et Rois Sakalava' (26 fév, 1859), pp.i-ii, C13b, AHH ; (Jouen), 'Explorations du Brick le Victor à la côte-ouest de Madagascar (1852)', CIIh, AHH ; R.E.P. Wastell, *op. cit.*, 310.

128. Jouen, 'Résumé de quinze ans de Mission à Madagascar adressé à MM les membres des deux conseils de l'œuvre de la propagation de la Foi' (Paris, 1 oct 1860), sect. II, Diaires 8, AHH.

129. J.A. Biarrate, 'Mémoire en faveur de l'immigration Malgache partie sud de Madagascar, adressé à l'Empereur' (Bordeaux, jan. 1859), AHH.

130. *Ibid.*

developed in Paris and in 1883, the French navy dismantled the Merina forts in the bays of Passandava and Bavatombe, in Iboina and occupied the port of Toamasina to start the first Franco-Merina War of 1883-5<sup>131</sup>. The war decided little militarily, but crippled the imperial treasury, and critically weakened the Merina hold on the empire. Criticism mounted overseas that the Merina failed to stem mounting Sakalava attacks on foreign merchants. Imperial expeditions to Fiherenana in 1889 and 1890 seized the port of Toliara, in the extreme south west of the island, but the newly established garrison was immediately besieged by the local Sakalava<sup>132</sup>. At the time of the French conquest of 1895, most of the western portion of Madagascar was effectively independent of Merina rule.

#### (iv) Attack

Given their tradition of brigandry, it is not surprising that the most successful of the 'rebel' peoples of Madagascar in the era of Merina imperialism were the Sakalava and Bara of the west and south of the island. The flexibility and speed of the Sakalava and Bara warriors enabled them to frustrate the more formal military techniques of the Merina army where other peoples failed, and they possessed the ability to launch lightning long-distance forays deep into imperial territory. Moreover, the slaves and cattle captured in such raids guaranteed them ample supplies of arms and ammunition imported through west coast ports<sup>133</sup>. Thus in 1821, as Radama I moved west with his 'new model army' to attack Menabe, Sakalava warbands raided Valalafotsy, carrying off many peasants as slaves<sup>134</sup>. In c.1824-5, a combined Ambongo Sakalava and Antalaotra force attacked Mahajanga, firing the Sakalava quarter and forcing its inhabitants to flee<sup>135</sup>. Again 1828, taking advantage of the general insurrection that followed the death of Radama I, Menabe Sakalava warbands advanced as far as Vonizongo, and in June 1830, were even attacking villages in central Imerina<sup>136</sup>. In 1842-43, the Sakalava again besieged Mahajanga which was only relieved after a 2,000 strong force was despatched from Imerina<sup>137</sup>.

131. Taix, 'Extrait du dnaire de Tamatave', sect. IV 1, AHH ; Wastell, *op. cit.*, 465-467.

132. Käre Lode, Finn Fuglestad and Stephen Ellis, 'The Norwegians and the Fall of Fiherena', in Finn Fuglestad and Jarle Simensen (eds.), *op. cit.*, 95-8 ; James Sibree, *Madagascar, Country, People, Mission* (London, nd), 41 ; James Sibree, 'The Sakalava : Their Origin, Conquests, and Subjugation (a chapter in Malagasy history)', *AAMM* (1878), 64-5.

133. Zélie Colville, *Round the Black Man's Garden*, (Edinburgh, 1893), 197-8.

134. Hastie, 'Diary' (1825), 113, PRO CO. 167/78 II.

135. Under Sakalava chiefs 'Boava Mari', 'Raivala fionana', 'Ananga' and 'Andagatofotra' and the Antalaotra leaders 'Tsimba' and 'Mosa', see Anon, 'Notice sur les Sacalaves du Boény et de l'Ambongo', *op. cit.*

136. Griffiths to LMS, Antananarivo, 12 July 1830, SOAS/LMS MIL, B3 F3 JC; see also Johns to Hankey, Antananarivo, 23 June 1830, SOAS/LMS MIL, B3 F3 JB.

137. David Griffiths, *Hanes Madagascar* (Machynlleth, 1843), 130.

From 1846, the Merina Policy to the Sakalava changed due to high troop mortality in the lowlands, and Merina inability to impose more than nominal sovereignty over the west of the island. The closure of imperial ports in 1845 led to a resurgence of foreign trade on the independent west coast which boosted Sakalava supplies of foreign arms, significantly reducing the superiority of Merina military technology<sup>138</sup>. Merina garrisons in Sakalava land were often so isolated and militarily weak that they were obliged to treat with local chiefs : Tafisandro, one of the fiercest of Sakalava chiefs, kept the Merina garrison of Mahajanga in a constant state of alert because of his raids. His successes helped in undermining one Merina governor there, and forced his successor, Rainimamonjy, to attempt to come to terms with him<sup>139</sup>.

By the mid-nineteenth century, observers noted that the well-armed Sakalava were in open war against the Merina<sup>140</sup>, described as 'les ennemis acharnés des Sakalaves'<sup>141</sup>. From the 1840s, Boina Sakalava bands made constant incursions into the border region between Imerina and Antsihanaka, and regularly raided the north-east coast where the Betsimisaraka capacity for self-defence had been critically undermined by Merina military campaigns in the 1810s and 1820s. At the same time, the Merina maintained an inadequate permanent force in the region and from 1842, following the routing by a Sakalava raiding party of the Merina garrison at Vohimara, such raids became an annual 'dry season' event. Well armed Sakalava bands kidnapped people for slaves, seized cattle, and devastated the entire breadth of country between Diego Suarez and Angontsy. The response of the Merina authorities was to punish the Betsimisaraka for permitting such raids<sup>142</sup> ! At the same time, the valleys of the Tsiribihina and Mangoky formed the major routes for Menabe Sakalava incursions into Betsileo<sup>143</sup>. Throughout the 1850s, Sakalava raiding parties from Iboina, Ambongo and Menabe also regularly penetrated central Imerina, venturing as far

138. (Jouen), *Explorations du Brick le Victor à la côte-ouest de Madagascar* (1852), CII, AHH.

139. However, in 1854 a foreign visitor observed that it was still a universal practise for the Merina at Mahajanga to execute male Sakalava prisoners of war. (Jouen), *Explorations du Brick le Victor* ; Joseph B.F. Osgood, *Notes of travel or Recollections of Majunga, Zanzibar, Muscat, Aden, Mocha and other Eastern Ports* (Salem, 1854), 15.

140. A Resident, *Madagascar, Past and Present* (London, 1847), 243.

141. Edmont Samat, "Notes : La côte ouest de Madagascar en 1852", *BAM* XV (1932), 58.

142. RA. 213-4 ; David Griffiths, *Hanes Madagascar* (Machynlleth, 1843), 120 ; A Resident, *Madagascar, Past and Present*, 152-5 ; *Madagascar Times* (15 Oct 1884).

143. Dubois, *Monographie des Betsileo* ; (Jouen), 'Journal' (1853), pp. 3-4, 6, 11, C28f, AHH ; Jouen, 'Rapport sur la Mission de Baly' (1854), C28h, AHH ; Jouen, lettre 'aux supérieurs en France' (1859), C28i, AHH ; William Ellis, *Madagascar Revisited* (London, 1867), 93-4 ; Edmond Samat, "Renseignements sur la côte ouest de Madagascar depuis Nossy bé jusqu'à Crosker Cap Ste Marie (Nossi-bé, 6 mai 1852), in A. Boudou, 'La côte ouest de Madagascar en 1852', *BAM* XV (1932), 59.

# INSTANCES OF RESISTANCE TO MERINA IMPERIALISM<sup>144</sup>

Year	Agent	Impact
1815	Sakalava (Menabe)	Defeat of Merina military expedition.
1820	Sakalava (Menabe)	Defeat of Merina military expedition.
1821	Sakalava (Menabe)	Defeat of 'new mode' Merina army and raids into Merina province of Valalafotsy.
1822	Sakalava (Menabe)	Defeat of 'new model' Merina army.
1823	Sakalava	Assassination of Sakalava 'collaborators' led by Bano and Ramarofahitra. Again, in
1824	Sakalava (Ambongo) Manendy (Menabe ?)	Defeat of 'new model' Merina army. 'Refugees' attack (Oct) a detachment of imperial soldiers and seized their cattle.
1825	Sakalava (Iboina) " (Menabe)	Major revolt - all Merina military repulsed except at Mahajanga Major revolt - all Merina military repulsed and Sakalava 'collaborators' executed.
?	Sakalava (Ambongo)	Sakalava-Antalaoatra force attack Mahajanga, expelling its Sakalava inhabitants.
	South East	Revolt against Merina occupation
1826	'Sinaouk' (Iboina) South East	Merina military detachment massacred near 'Ampotaka'. Revolt continues against Merina occupation.
1827	Sakalava (Ambongo)	Defeat of Merina military expedition due to scorched earth tactics of Sakalava.
	South East	Revolt continues against Merina occupation.
1828	Madagascar Sakalava (Menabe) South East	Island-wide revolt against Merina rule and imperial pretensions. Warbands advance as far as Vonizongo. Revolt continues against Merina occupation.
1829	South East	Revolt continues against Merina occupation.
1830	Sakalava (Menabe) Ibara South East	(June) warbands attack villages in central Imerina. Revolt - brutally suppressed. Revolt continues against Merina occupation.
1831	Sakalava (Iboina)  South East Ikongo	Andriantsoly's army unsuccessfully raises the banner of revolt at Anorontsangana. Revolt continues against Merina occupation. Repels assault from Merina who lose 50 per cent of their troops.
1832	South East	Revolt continues against Merina occupation.
1834	Sakalava (Menabe)	Resistance limits impact of massive Merina military expedition.
1835	Sakalava (Iboina) South West	Tsimandroho raises banner of revolt. 40-50,000 strong Merina military expedition forced to retreat from Fiherana.
1836	Sakalava (Iboina) Sakalava (Ambongo)	Tsimandroho defeats Merina army before being defeated. Merina military expedition repulsed.

144. References to this table available from author.

Year	Agent	Impact
1837	Sakalava (Menabe) South East	Resistance limits impact of Merina military expedition. South East chiefs appeal to governor Nicolay of Mauritius for military aid.
?	Sakalava (Ambongo)	Ambongo queen signs a treaty of protective alliance with the Sultan of Zanzibar.
?	Sakalava	Sakalava appeal to governor Nicolay of Mauritius for military alliance.
1838	Sakalava (Iboina)	Attack in alliance with small band of Europeans on the Merina port of Anorontsangana.
	Sakalava (Iboina)	Successful appeal for some military aid from the Muscat of Oman
	Sakalava (Menabe)	Resistance limits impact of Merina military expedition.
1839	Sakalava (Iboina)	Appeal to French for military aid.
1840	Sakalava	General revolt against the Merina.
1841	Sakalava (Iboina)	Andriantsoly cedes Mayotta to the French.
1842	Sakalava (Iboina)	Merina garrison at Vohimara routed. Thereafter annual raids on Merina-controlled NE.
1842-3	Sakalava (Iboina)	Siege of Mahajanga (relieved after 2,000 strong force was despatched from Imerina).
1845	Sakalava (Menabe)	Resistance limits impact of Merina military expedition.
1846	Sakalava (Menabe)	3-4000 strong Merina army defeated near Mahabo.
1847	Sakalava (Ambongo)	British officer O'Connor assists in drawing up plan to attack and subjugate Imerina.
1848?	Mahafaly	Mascarene merchants negotiate military alliance with king Lahimerisa of St. Augustin.
1849	Mahafaly	Lahimerisa offered French protection in return for ceding the 'Sarout-Rano' peninsula.
1850	South East	Merina forced to evacuate Vohitsara.
1851	Sakalava (Iboina)	700 strong force from Nosy Be attacks Merina garrison port of Amorontsangana.
	Sakalava	Baly Bay & Ambongo launch 4-5,000 strong warbands each 2-3 months into Imerina.
	Sakalava (Menabe)	Tsiribihina Valley Sakalava maintain spy network in Imerina.
1852	Sakalava	Jesuits offer French authorities plan of attack on Imerina using Sakalava support.
	Sakalava	5-6 months campaign in Imerina (kill 400 Merina soldiers & seize 600 cattle).
	Sakalava (Menabe)	Tsiribihina Valley Sakalava maintain spy network in Imerina early 1850s.
	South East	Major revolt : Vangaindrano & Taolanaro garrisons besieged, Merina army repelled.
1853	South East	Mananjary & Midongy besieged ; all forts in extreme south fall save for Taolanaro.

Year	Agent	Impact
	Ikongo	3000 strong army besieges Fianarantsoa.
	Sakalava (Iboina)	King 'Rabouky' of Baly Bay forces Merina army to retreat with heavy losses,
	Sakalava	Iboina, Menabe and Ambongo warbands raid Imerina.
	Sakalava (Menabe)	Merina garrison of Mahabo under siege by Sakalava warriors from the St. Augustin.
1854	Sakalava	Iboina, Menabe and Ambongo warbands raid Imerina.
	Tanosy ('Emigrants')	(June) cede to the French land in the Onilahy Valley in return for military aid.
1855	Sakalava (Iboina)	French party patronized by Lambert established a camp at Vavatoby / Ambavatoby.
	Sakalava	Iboina, Menabe and Ambongo warbands raid Imerina.
1856	Sakalava	Iboina, Menabe and Ambongo warbands raid Imerina.
1857	Sakalava	Iboina, Menabe and Ambongo warbands raid Imerina.
1858	Sakalava	Iboina, Menabe and Ambongo warbands raid Imerina.
1859	Sakalava	Iboina & Menabe kings cede land to French in Bombetoc & Baly in return for protection.
	Sakalava	Iboina, Menabe and Ambongo warbands raid Imerina.
1860	Sakalava	Iboina, Menabe and Ambongo warbands raid Imerina.
1861	Sakalava	Iboina, Menabe and Ambongo warbands raid Imerina.
1862 ?	Ibara	Ivohibe garrison forced to remove to Ambohimandroso on Betsileo border.
1863	South East	General insurrection, especially marked in the Mananjary region.
1863	Sakalava	Major uprisings in West & SW (Mahafaly).
1873	Sakalava	revolt.
1877	Ibara	Attacks caused Tanandro (Merina and Betsileo) to abandon Ivohibola East (Betsileo).
1881	Sakalava	(Nov) Warbands raze Vinaniampy (N. Betsileo ?) and advance southwards.
1883	Madagascar	Franco-Merina War
?	Ibara	Raids cause Rajapakarivory II of Isandra to call for Merina military protection.
1884	Madagascar	Franco-Merina War
	Sakalava (Menabe)	1,200 'refugee' band raid SW Vakinankaratra, kidnap 60 people & seize 1,000 cattle.
	Sakalava (Menabe)	Warband ravage Ilaka, in Betsileo.
1885	Madagascar	Franco-Merina War
1888	Sakalava (Menabe)	Warbands kidnap 800 women and children in Vakinankaratra.
	Sakalava (Iboina)	Attack Suburbie gold works: 600 troops, machine-guns & artillery sent to defend it.
	Mahafaly	Kill 6 Merina traders in one month.

Year	Agent	Impact
1890	Mahafaly	Uprising in Toliara region against the newly established Merina garrison.
1890s	Sakalava	Attacks on the western provinces of Imerina common.
1892	Sakalava (Iboina)	Warbands threaten Merina installations.
	Ibara	Warbands raid Betsileo, kidnap people & seize cattle.
1893	Sakalava	Warbands raid Imerina
	Ibara	Warbands raid Betsileo, kidnap people & seize cattle.
1894	Sakalava	Warbands raid Imerina
	Ibara	Warbands raid Betsileo, kidnap people & seize cattle.
1895	Sakalava	Warbands raid Imerina
	Ibara	Warbands raid Betsileo, kidnap people & seize cattle.

as periphery of Antananarivo<sup>145</sup>. In the early 1850s, the Sakalava of the Tsiribihina valley, in Menabe, even maintained spies in Imerina<sup>146</sup>.

The weakening of the imperial hold from the mid century was also apparent in the south-west and south east of the island. From the mid-nineteenth century the south west became fully locked into the regional trade of the western Indian Ocean, establishing strong trading links with the Mascarenes, Mozambique and South Africa. From at least the mid 1840s local Sakalava played off British against French traders to obtain the maximum amount of imported arms and gunpowder in exchange for staple exports<sup>147</sup>, that enabled them to raid the plateau interior with increasing impunity<sup>148</sup>. In the south east in 1852, a major revolt erupted in which a 150 man detachment from the Vangaindrano garrison was massacred and the fort besieged by rebels. An 800 strong army from Imerina was rebuffed, and the people around the garrison of Taolanaro also rebelled. In 1853, Mananjary was besieged and by the end of the year all Merina garrisons in the extreme south except Taolanaro had been captured by rebels<sup>149</sup>.



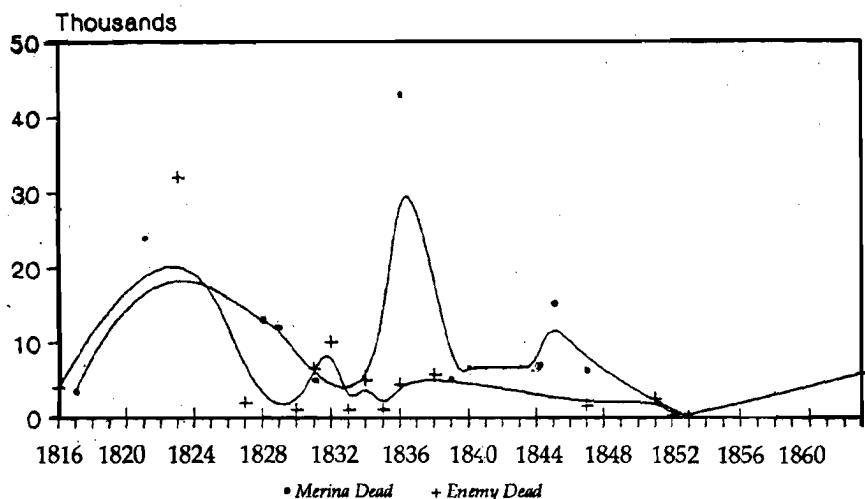
145. (Jouen), 'Journal' (1853), pp. 3-4, 6, 11, C28f, AHH ; Jouen, 'Rapport sur la Mission de Baly' (1854), C28h, AHH ; Jouen, lettre 'aux supérieurs en France' (1859), C28i, AHH ; William Ellis *Madagascar Revisited*, *op. cit.* 59.

146. *Id.*, 57-76.

147. Dalmond à Desfossés, St Augustin, 21 août 1845, Cartons sect. I, 28, C28b, AHH.

148. A. Wallen, *Madagaskars Sydostkys* (Stavanger, 1887), 48.

149. Raombana, B2 Livre 13, 34-5 ; Raombana, 'Manuscrit écrit à Tananarive (1853-1854)', trans. J.F. Radley, *BAM* XIII (1930), 15.



**Merina Military Campaigns :  
Estimated Gains and Losses, 1816-63**

In December 1853, news reached Antananarivo of two attacks on the major Merina garrisons of Midongy, in Menabe, and Fianarantsoa in Betsileo. Mahabo was besieged by Sakalava warriors from the St. Augustin region who, heavily armed with rifles, had already wrested two nearby villages from Merina control. They also supplied arms to the Ikongo, who simultaneously attacked Fianarantsoa<sup>150</sup>. The south east of the island, whilst subject to Merina domination, was never firmly subjected, and revolt simmered throughout the imperial era. Rebels there were supplied with arms directly by European merchants. For instance, in 1855 the Réunionnais crew of the 'Augustine' was caught selling cannon to 'rebels' in the region of Taolanaro<sup>151</sup>.

In 1863, the south-east joined in the general insurrection that followed the death of Radama II. One of the most serious of the uprisings occurred in the Mananjary region<sup>152</sup>. There were also major revolts by the Sakalava and Mahafaly, to which the Merina responded by launching a series of expeditions to the west and south-west<sup>153</sup>. The uprisings were suppressed but Merina influence in the area continued to decline due firstly to the increasing ineffectiveness of the

150. *Id.* 17-18 and 14 ; Dalmond à Desfossés, St Augustin, 21 août 1845, Cartons sect.I, 28, C28b, AHH.

151. Dalmond, 'Mission Apostolique de Madagascar, 1837-1847', pp. 96-7, Diaires, sect.II. 1, AHH.

152. P. Boy, 'Diariium de la Mission de Tananarivo 1861, 1862, 1863', Bk.1.40, sect.II, Diaires no.18, AHH.

153. Jouen au P.H. de Prégnon, 1 août 1863, 'Correspondance P. Jouen, 1859-69', C52, AHH ; James Sibree, 'The Sakalava : Their Origin, Conquests, and Subjugation (a chapter in Malagasy history)', AAMM (1878), 64-5 ; R.E.P. Wastell, 'British Imperial Policy in Relation to Madagascar, 1810-1896', PH.D (University of London, 1944), 348.



Merina army, which stemmed from both the inability to pay for modern arms and steadily decreasing troop morale, and secondly to the increasing military effectiveness of the Sakalava<sup>154</sup>. The south-west particularly gained notoriety for lawlessness, foreign missionaries in 1877 and 1881 describing the immediate hinterland of Toliara, between the swampy coastland and the foothills some two to three travelling days into the interior, as being thick with 'brigands'<sup>155</sup>.

It was noted in the north-west in 1875 that fahavalo or 'enemy' bands had long dominated the region around Mount Andriba stretching from Ampotaka in the north-west to Ambohinaorina and Andriba<sup>156</sup>. In November 1881 it was reported by Dahle, head of the NMS in Madagascar, that Sakalava bands had razed Vinaniampy, (in northern Betsileo?) and were advancing southwards :

*'Ny Sakalava dia sahabo ho 150 ihany ary toa vitsy amin'ireo no matin'ny miaramilantsika (ny sasany manao : 11, ny sasany : 4 ary ny sasany : 1 hiany). Nefa ny tontalin'ny olona matin'ny Sakalava kosa dia sahabo ho 60 ; ary ny lasany ho babo dia olona 120 sy omby 2000.*

*Izany hiany no pentimbentin-kevitra ny reko, ka tsy maintsy ambarako aminareo. Kanefa kosa, raha tianao ho re avokoa ny tantaran'izany ady izany hatrany hatrany arak'izay namotorako azy tany, dia mazoto hilaza aho, na mba tianao hihaona aminao aho na haniraka olona hianao hiresahako izany, fa tonga lavareny loatra, raha ho lazaina avokoa amy ny taratasy'*

*('The Sakalava number only about 150 and it appears that very few of them were killed by our soldiers (some say 11, others 4, and yet others only 1). However, the total number of people killed by the Sakalava is about 60 ; whilst they kidnapped a further 120 people and seized 2,000 cattle.*

*This is the most important part of the intelligence I received and which I had to reveal to you. However, if you wish to hear the entire history of this attack, from start to finish, according to my investigations, or should you wish to meet me, or send officials to hold a meeting with me, please inform me, for it is too much to include all in a letter'<sup>157</sup>.*

There was a considerable increase in Sakalava assaults on Merina establishments in the plateau heartland from the 1883-5 Franco-Merina War. At the start of 1884 an armed band, 1,200 strong, composed of Sakalava, Bara, and refugees from Imerina and Betsileo, raided south-west Vakinankaratra, kidnapping sixty

154. John E. Ellis, *Life of William Ellis* (London, 1873), 280.

155. In 1877, king Rifiay was reported to be leader of the chief Mahafaly 'brigand' band operating to the hinterland of St. Augustin - J. Richardson, *Lights and Shadows* (Antananarivo, 1877), 53 ; see also Walen, "Two Years Among the Sakalava", AAMM X5 (1881), 3.

156. H.W. Grainge, 'Journal of a Visit to Mojanga and the North West Coast', AAMM I (1875), 16-17.

157. Dahle to PM, Antananarivo, 11 Nov 1881, Boks 270.E, NMS/FLM.

people and seizing 1,000 cattle<sup>158</sup>. The same year, a Sakalava band ravaged Ilaka, in Betsileo<sup>159</sup>. In 1888 alone, McMahon, an SPG missionary, estimated that some 800 women and children had been carried off as slaves from Vakinankaratra by the Sakalava<sup>160</sup>. The raids became increasingly daring, Sakalava bands venturing ever closer to the imperial capital. In 1895, on the eve of the French takeover, it was commented :

*'Kidnapping and murder are of terribly frequent occurrence in the Western border of Imerina. Within three or four days of the Capital, Sakalava Raids are common events, cattle and people being captured by HUNDREDS, and carried off into the Sakalava country'*<sup>161</sup>.

In Iboina, a chief target was the newly opened gold mines, for not only did the Merina increasingly depend on gold to finance their regime, but in seizing gold the Sakalava gained another valuable export staple which, alongside slaves and cattle could be exchanged for imported arms and ammunition<sup>162</sup>. Thereafter, Sakalava bands constantly attacked the Suberbie gold works in the Ampasiry region of Iboina. Such were their depredations that in 1888 Rainilaiarivony was obliged to despatch 600 infantry, two machine-guns and two pieces of artillery to protect the works<sup>163</sup>. By the early 1890s there were constant Sakalava attacks upon the villages and traffic of the Mahajanga-Antananarivo route. All such villages had erected defences, but were pregnable as almost the entire male population, particularly in the Maevatanana region, were absent working in the goldfields<sup>164</sup>. During the Sakalava 'rebellion' of 1892 the Maevatanana garrison and gold works were spared only because the swollen river Ikopa blocked the northwards advance of Sakalava warbands<sup>165</sup>.

In Ibara, in the south of the island, the region of Ihorombe was, since the Merina campaigns of the 1830s and 1840s, inhabited only by 'robber bands'. Richardson, who visited the region in 1877, heard reports of gunpowder being stored in caves in the Isalo mountains, in which terrain brigand bands gained easy sanctuary<sup>166</sup>. In 1877, Richardson found that the Tanandro (Merina and Betsileo) colonists of the Betsileo village of Ivohibola East had fled due to Bara

158. Raymond Decary, *Coutumes guerrières et organisation militaires chez les anciens malgaches I*, Paris, 1966, 89.

159. Anon, *Tantara fohiofihy milaza ny Distry Ilaka sy ny fitandremana Ila*, 57F, no. IX, NMS/FLM.

160. McMahon, "Slavery in Western Madagascar", *The Childrens' Friend of Madagascar* IX (1891) ; McMahon, "The Sakalava and their Customs", *AAMM* IV (1890).

161. Quoted in Francis Maude, *Five Years in Madagascar* (London, 1895), 155-6 ; see also *ibid*, 50.

162. Zélie Colville, *Round the Black Man's Garden* (Edinburgh, 1893), 197-8.

163. Raymond Decary, 'L'ancien régime de l'or à Madagascar', *BAM* XL (1962), 90.

164. Zélie Colville, *op. cit.*, 182, 190-206.

165. *Ibid*.

166. J. Richardson, *Lights and Shadows*, 15, 22

attacks<sup>167</sup>. Indeed, all the Bara villages between the southern border of Betsileo and the Merina garrison town of Ihosy were like armed camps, not so much in order to launch armed raids against the Betsileo as to defend themselves from attack by king Raibahy of south-east Ibara, who frequently raided Betsileo and border Bara villages for cattle<sup>168</sup>. In the larger Bara settlements there was usually a skilled gunsmith who could repair and fashion most parts of a gun, except the barrel<sup>169</sup>.

As with the Sakalava, Bara raids into the imperial heartland increased in tempo and impunity from the outbreak of hostilities in 1883<sup>170</sup>. Thereafter, such was the ferocity of heavily armed Bara incursions<sup>171</sup> into Betsileo that Rajoakariivony II of Isandra appealed to the Merina court for protection<sup>172</sup>. Bara and Tsienimbala raiders returned with Betsileo captives whom they sold to slavers in the region of St. Augustin Bay, although in relatively small quantities compared to the Sakalava to their north<sup>173</sup>. The Bara raided the vicinity of Fianarantsoa up to the eve of the French takeover in 1895<sup>174</sup>, and thereafter elsewhere in Betsileo, the last serious raid occurring in 1902 when they razed Mahatsandra to the ground<sup>175</sup>. The Antandroy similarly maintained their anti-colonial revolt into the French era until 1904<sup>176</sup>.

Following the French takeover, attacks were directed against them as the new colonial powers. The Sakalava, for example, continued their raids on Betsileo<sup>177</sup>. In response, Gallieni, governor-general of Madagascar from 1896-1905, applied the strategy he had learned from Indo-China to those areas that had never been firmly subjugated by the Merina. He firstly established a network of outposts to regulate the implementation of policies rather than for any specific military purpose, and secondly implemented informal rule, thus removing Merina

167. *Id.* 8.

168. *Id.* 8-9.

169. *Id.* 9-10.

170. Alfred et Guillaume Grandidier, *op. cit.*, 281.

171. Edward and Emrys Rowlands, *Thomas Rowlands of Madagascar* (London, nd.), 27 ; see also George Shaw, "Rough Sketches of a Journey to the Ibara", *AAMM* (1876), 104.

172. Georges Raveloson, "Présentation d'un manuscrit sur l'histoire des rois de l'isandra (Betsileo)", *BAM* XXX (1951-2), 105.

173. J.A.Lloyd, "Memoir on Madagascar", *Jnl Roy Geo Soc*, XX, (1851) ; FJOD, 'South West Coast', *The Madagascar Times* (27 Nov 1886) ; Stanwood, letter, Andakabe, 12 oct 1882, US3.

174. M. Dubois, *Monographie des Betsileo (Madagascar)* (Paris, 1938), 77.

175. *Ibid.*

176. M. Decary and H. Deschamps, comments, in Philippe Decraene, "Madagascar en avril 1971", *C.R.A.S.O.M.* XXXI 2 (1971), 249, 251 ; Mervyn Brown, *Madagascar Revisited* (London, 1978), 254-5 ; *Le courrier de Madagascar*, 131 (20 fev 1894) and 133 (4 mars 1894) ; see also GM. Ludvig Larsen, *Livret for Døden* (Christiania, 1894) ; Rostvig's correspondence in 'Copibok' (Tolia), FLM/NMS ; Stanwood's correspondence in US.

177. Karl Jakobsen, 'Ny Tantaran'ny Statina Fihasinana, Taona 1875-1943' (Fihasinana, Jan 1944), ms. Boks 57.G, 8, 10, NMS /FLM.

representatives of the previous 'conquering race' from posts of authority<sup>178</sup>. The most serious challenge faced by the French outside the plateau was in Sakalava land where Gallieni could only commence his 'pacification' programme following the suppression of the Menalamba uprising in the highlands. The French advance into Menabe in 1897 was resisted by the Menabe Sakalava king Toera, and his nobles, from their base at Ambiky. However, the king and his supporters were massacred by the French in a night attack which shattered Gallieni's first hopes of a peaceful conquest and provided a martyr to inspire future resistance. Toera's chief rival, Inguerezza, was appointed as a puppet king by the French who, less than a month afterwards, were faced with a massive and unified revolt. Representatives of the Menabe royal houses returned to their traditional capitals, whilst the ordinary Sakalava took to the hills where they were joined by Betsimisaraka and Tsimihety tax refugees<sup>179</sup>. One Menabe 'brigand' band called the Anrambony, who had originally fled Itomampy because of the Merina imperial advance, openly rebelled against the French occupying forces in June 1899, forcing the latter to establish military posts at Ranotsara and Midongy to hold the rebels in check<sup>180</sup>. The Sakalava successfully utilised the guerrilla tactics they had perfected against the Merina to survive the French campaigns of 1899 and 1900. Only when Kamamy, Toera's son, was permitted by the French to claim the Menabe throne in 1900 did the main uprising simmer down, although minor acts of armed resistance to the French persisted until 1905, when it was still noted that 'They have not been conquered, and desultory fighting is now in progress with the French troops'<sup>181</sup>.

In sum, it is clear that the reformist school's assertions that nineteenth century Malagasy history is characterised by the rise to political dominance of a Merina state that not only instituted modernising reforms, but also forged the various peoples of the island into a single nation, requires serious reassessment. It is here argued that the benign 'royaume' of the reformist school never existed. Instead, the Merina crown adopted an autarkic economic policy in which territorial expansion and the economic exploitation of subject areas and peoples was an

178. Leon M.S. Slaweck, *French Policy Towards the Chinese in Madagascar* (London, 1971), 26.

179. Roland Waast, "Développement des sociétés occidentales malgaches au XXe siècle. Le cas de la transition coloniale au Capital dans le Nord-Ouest malgache" in Sautter et al. (eds), *Changements sociaux dans l'ouest malgache*, 56-8.

180. The Zafimanelo from Ranotsara, who were of Antaimoro origin and had risen with the Andrambony, quickly submitted to the French. Trousselle, "Renseignements généraux sur le secteur de Mahaly", 511.

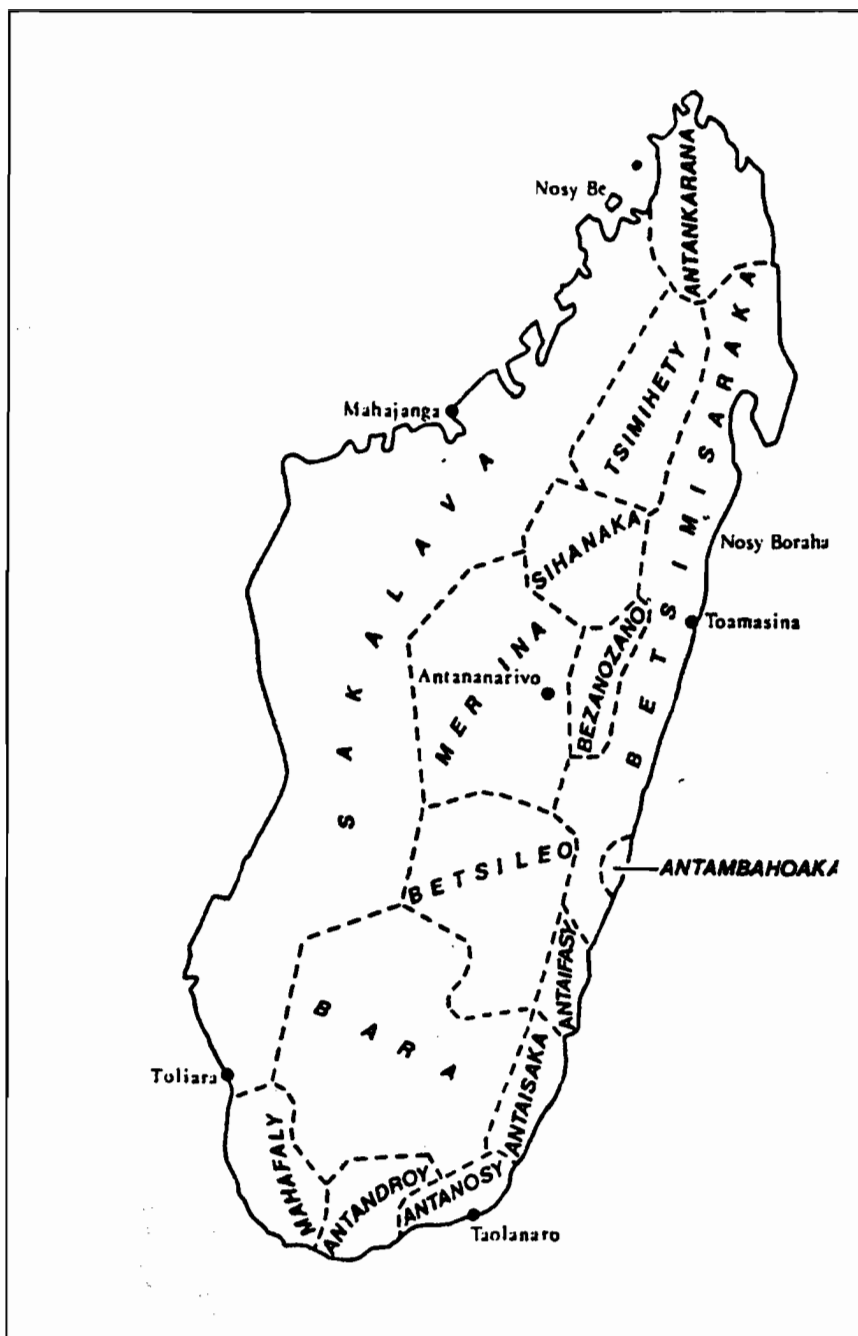
181. Marriot, 'Report (1905), 7 ; see also Prud'homme, "Observations on the Sakalava", AAMM XXIV (1900), 427-8 ; Bernard Schlemmer, "Conquête et colonisation du Menabe : Une analyse de la politique Gallieni" in Gilles Sautter et al (eds), *op. cit.*, 109-14 ; Mervyn Brown, *Madagascar Revisited*, 254-5.

intrinsic part. Moreover, the main symbol of the 'civilized' nature of the Merina state, the state-church, was a central feature of imperial exploitation which was brutal and characterized by primitive accumulation through the plunder of subject provinces.

The true nature of the Merina regime was clearly recognized by no-Merina peoples, who considered the Merina an alien power to be resisted. The institutions most identified with Merina imperialism were the army and, from 1869, the state-church which included foreign missionaries. In the areas under firm Merina domination, subject peoples reacted to Merina domination by passive resistance or flight. In areas never fully dominated by the Merina, the reaction was more violent. As Merina military power progressively weakened from the mid nineteenth century and, despite the occasional campaign against them, brigand bands and independent chiefs, assisted by arms supplied by foreign slavers, increased their attacks upon Merina installations in the provinces<sup>182</sup>. More ominously for the future of the Merina empire, raiding parties from the independent regions increasingly linked up with brigand bands in the empire to attack trade routes and villages in the imperial heartland. It is significant that state-church property and personnel were amongst their chief targets, as they were of the *Menalamba* rebels in 1895-97.

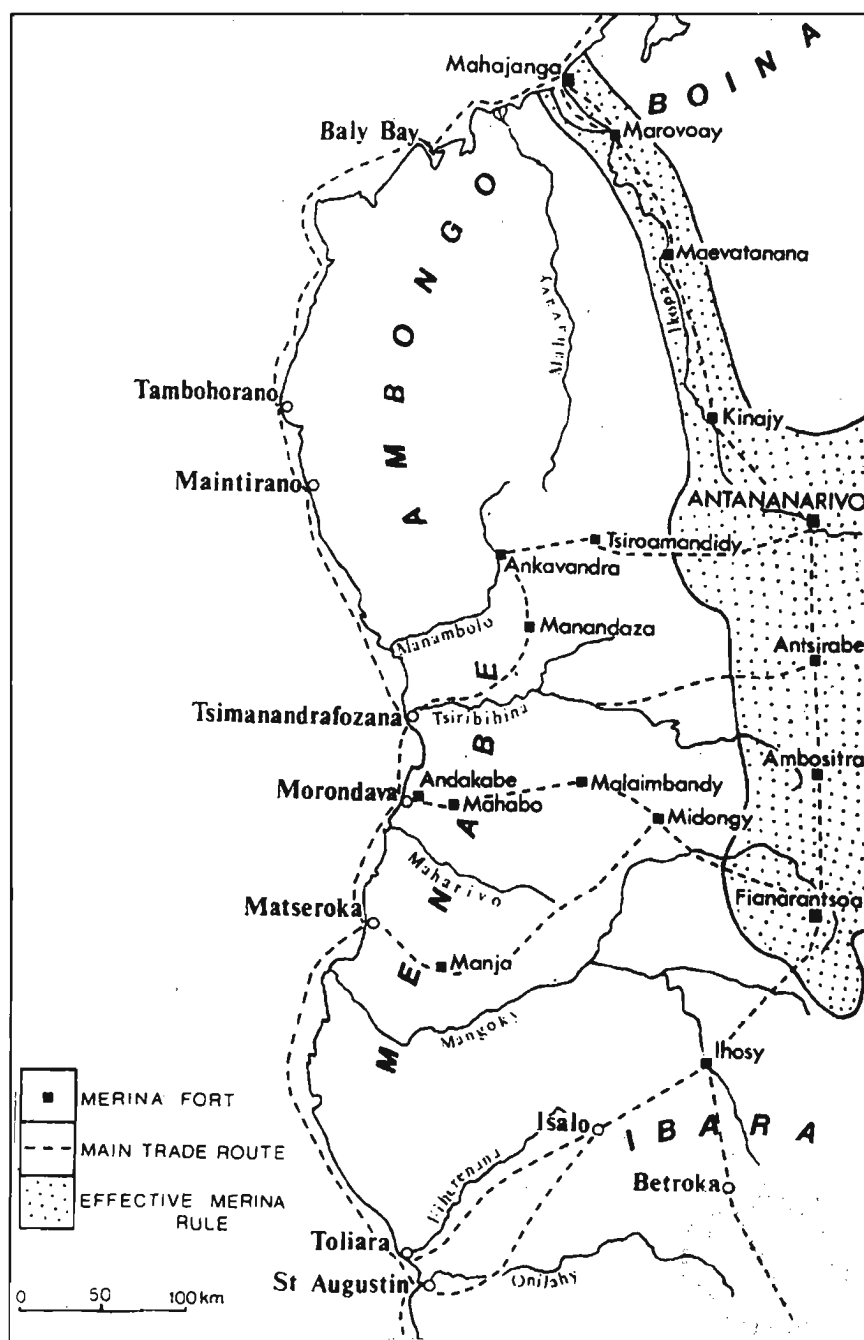
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182. N. Landmark, *Det Norske Missionsselskab* (Kristiania, 1889), 173-4 ; RØstvig's letters in Toila Kopibok (1882), FLM/NMS.



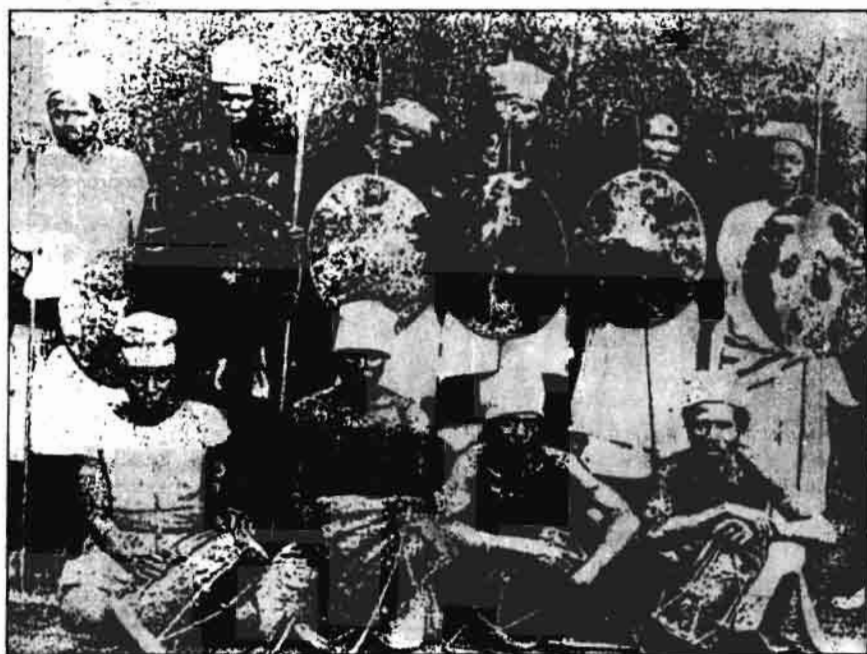
MADAGASCAR - ETHNIC DIVISIONS c. 1830

# MADAGASCAR - WEST COAST c. 1861





*SAKALAVA CHIEF AND ADVISERS*



*TANALA WARRIORS*



## FAMINTINANA

Niezaka hamantatra ny tantaran'i Madagasikara talohan'ny fanjanahan-tany ireo mpandinika tantara niasa taorian'ny fahaleovantena. Ny vokatr'izany moa dia ny filazana fa ny taonjato faha-19 dia taonjaton'ny 'Fanjakana' merina talohan'ny fandrambahana nataon'ny frantsay. Ny finoana misy dia hoe: ny fitondrana merina no nampiray ny mponin'ny nosy teo ambany fahefan'ny mpanjaka iray, izy no namorona ny maha-malagasy tokana ary nahatonga ny fihariankarena sy ny andrimpanjakana malagasy haharaka ny toetrandro. Ity laha-teny ity kosa dia milaza fa izany fijerin'ny ankamaroan'olona izany dia diso sady manamaizina ny tena marina momba ny fiaraha-monina malagasy tamin'ny taonjato faha-19 izay nanjakazakan'ny fitondrana merina, kanefa ny politikany, izay tsy nijery afa-tsy ny soa ho azy, dia nanjakan'ny heri-miaramila sy ny fambotriana feno fanjakazakana, indrindra tamin'ny alàlan'ny asa an-terivozona. Tena novidin-dafo tokoa izany politika izany ary niafara tamin'ny fidarabohan'ny fihariankaren'ny mpanjakazaka merina, fidarabohana izay nanamora ny fandrambahana nataon'ny frantsay. Ny tian-kambara amin'ity laha-teny ity dia hoe tsy ho hita ny tena tantara marina momba an'i Madagasikara talohan'ny fanjanahan-tany raha tsy samy soloin'ny mpikaroka ny hevitra momba ny "fanjakazakana merina" ny hevitra momba ny "fanjakana merina".



## SUMMARY

*Depuis l'indépendance, les historiens de Madagascar ont essayé de redécouvrir l'histoire pré-coloniale de l'île. Le résultat en est, pour le 19ème siècle, l'émergence du concept de 'Royaume' merina qui a unifié tous les peuples de l'île, et qui a fondé une identité nationale sous la monarchie merina. En même temps, le gouvernement merina a adopté des mesures économiques ainsi que des institutions de l'Occident afin de moderniser le pays. Cet article essaie de démontrer qu'au contraire, le régime merina a adopté une politique d'autarcie, y compris un impérialisme contre les peuples non-merina. Cette politique a mis en train une exploitation sans pareille des roturiers malgaches, laquelle a abouti à la destruction de l'économie et à la prise de l'île par la France. En bref, cet article constate que, pour faire progresser l'histoire pré-coloniale de Madagascar, les chercheurs devraient rejeter le concept de 'royaume' et le remplacer par celui de 'l'empire merina'.*