**Introduction**

**Globalization and the Sakalava Empire**

Between 1650 and 1710, a group known as the Sakalava seized control of western Madagascar between the Onilahy River and Cap d’Ambre. These rulers took advantage of opportunities created by expanding global trade to transform the Sakalava state into an expansive military empire. Promising riches to their soldiers and subjects, Sakalava leaders conquered communities along the coast. They developed complex relationships of interdependency with their subjects, as well as with merchants who frequented their shores. Leaders maintained their power by mediating contact between their subjects and foreign traders, through the threat of violence. By the start of the eighteenth century, resistance from groups on the island encouraged Malagasy soldiers to travel to East Africa in search of new opportunities. It was only during the nineteenth century, a period of increased reliance on French merchants for imports, that the empire began to crumble, leaving memories of Sakalava domination in its wake.

The height of the Sakalava Empire occurred during a period of expanding trade on the coasts of Africa and Asia. Despite being frequently ignored in histories of the Indian Ocean and Africa, the people of Madagascar lived at the crossroads of influences from Asia, the Middle East, and East Africa.[[1]](#footnote-1) The island is located at the edge of monsoonal winds that ferried traders across the Indian Ocean for more than a thousand years. Its first inhabitants probably migrated from Borneo and East Africa. Thanks to proximity and wind patterns, communities on the northern side of the island had close contact with ports throughout the western Indian Ocean. People frequently crossed the waters that separated Madagascar from the Comoro Islands and East African coast. Movements of traders, slaves, and migrants throughout this region ensured that the Malagasy were not isolated from other populations throughout the Indian Ocean, with whom they shared vocabulary, farming techniques, and religious beliefs. Historians have tended to marginalize the place of Madagascar in East African and Indian Ocean worlds, missing the fact that Malagasy have been part of these worlds and their histories for at least a millennium.

Although economic ties already linked Malagasy communities with those along the Indian Ocean littoral, the trade of the early modern period presented new challenges. For the first hundred years of Europeans sailing into the Indian Ocean, few Portuguese, English, Dutch, or French ships visited ports in Madagascar, but, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, portions of Madagascar became part of European plans to create trading monopolies within the Indian Ocean. Coastal communities in Madagascar had participated directly or indirectly in oceanic trade for centuries. The arrival of European sea vessels was less unexpected to people here than it had been in west-central or southern Africa. The sale of slaves to Europeans was not a novelty either, thanks to a long-running slave trade within the Indian Ocean on Arab and African dhows. Despite a long history of exchanges, engagement with seventeenth and eighteenth century trade networks altered patterns of state formation and power structures in Madagascar.

During the early modern period, many political systems around the world transformed due to demands for specific goods that fueled trade networks and their leadership worked to accommodate these demands. The history of Madagascar demonstrates that food and labor fueled global trade and this trade had a significant role in the development of centralized states on the island. By the end of the eighteenth century, global trade had led to the development of stark inequalities between rulers and their subjects, on one hand, and between African and European traders, on the other. These inequalities were rooted in the early period of interaction and interdependence that marked exchanges during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As the eighteenth century wore on, it became clearer that issues of power and sovereignty were not absent from global exchanges. The rituals of cross-cultural trade on the beaches of Madagascar were not empty ceremonies, but rather solidified the monopoly elites held over access to transnational networks.

**Exchanges and Power**

Despite our preoccupation with globalization as a recent process, long-distance trading, migration, and exchanges of beliefs have been occurring for millennia. However, the expansion of European sea routes during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries allowed for direct contact between a variety of communities, states, and civilizations.[[2]](#footnote-2) Sea travel cut out many of the intermediaries that had previously coordinated trade and increased the velocity with which people, goods, and ideas moved throughout the world.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Two conclusions stand out when historians study the centuries traditionally seen as a period of European exploration, trade, and settlement. [[4]](#footnote-4) First, early modern globalization was particularly resource intensive, in terms of requiring raw materials to build, fuel, and supply merchant vessels.[[5]](#footnote-5) Long voyages necessitated large supplies of dry goods to feed sailors. Captains needed to replenish these supplies several times during voyages from Europe into the Indian Ocean. Vessels also carried products in demand by markets throughout Europe and Asia, yet these products were difficult to acquire without harming local ecosystems.[[6]](#footnote-6) The expansion of settler colonies around the world also increased the impact of human populations in previously unpopulated areas or regions of low population density. These colonies required vast supplies of food and labor.[[7]](#footnote-7) Second, global trade resulted in increased wealth discrepancies throughout the world, as some groups of people were able to negotiate with and engage in cross-cultural trade, and others were denied this opportunity. The choice whether or not to participate in exchanges was not available to the majority of people during the early modern period.[[8]](#footnote-8)

Modern globalization, by contrast, is marked by economic integration and declining barriers to transnational cultural forms.[[9]](#footnote-9) According to Arjun Appadurai, the very recent intensification of globalization has been produced through the spread of mass media. Access to mass media has allowed deterritorialized communities to thrive in a period of heightened reliance on nation-state identities.[[10]](#footnote-10) This seeming contradiction is only one of many contradictions of modern globalization and the debates around it. Seen as amorphous and almost constantly penetrating our daily lives, modern globalization is decidedly different from that of the early modern period. This globalization resulted in the development of economically integrated worlds by 1800. In many ways, the most noticeable difference between early modern globalization and our present is that barriers to commodities and ideas, as well as migration, have been reduced in the modern period.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, economic development contributed to the long-distance movement of commodities, the transportation of people across oceans, both voluntary and coerced, and the transmissions of ideas around the world. In many ways, this process simply increased the velocity with which these movements were already occurring. State leaders and elite merchants helped control the pace of globalization. The networks of exchange that connected communities on the shores of Madagascar with those in Europe, the Americas, and West Africa were far from egalitarian, at least in terms of access to foreign goods and ideas among Malagasy. Although similar statements could be made about global flows of commodities and people in other periods, the early modern period began a period of increasing penetration of elites into the control of global networks.

Recent scholarship views the interactions between Africans, Europeans, and Asians during this period as relatively open. Out of necessity or perhaps source limitations, historians have frequently depicted people outside of Europe as reacting to the new opportunities and challenges presented by the arrival of European ships on their shores. According to many scholars, these reactions resulted in political and social upheaval throughout the world.[[11]](#footnote-11) This may not have been the case. Sanjay Subrahmanyam has written persuasively about developments common to European and Asian societies between the middle of the fourteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth. He tries to delink modernity from “a particular European trajectory.”[[12]](#footnote-12) The early modern period, according to Subrahmanyam, was a time of massive economic and political changes that shifted how societies interacted. Many of these changes were due to political centralization and consolidation, the spread of commercialization, and military revolutions in Asian and European societies.

I would argue that African societies, particularly parts of Indian Ocean Africa, were not isolated from these changes.[[13]](#footnote-13) Many of the political, economic, and military shifts in Africa during this period were also occurring elsewhere in the world. By the nineteenth century, in many parts of the world, centralized states gave way to violent empires in which leaders sought to control commerce and the movements of their subjects. This suggests that Africans were not simply reacting to external events but instead trying to make sense of their changing worlds, as were Europeans and Asians.

Despite the similarities between Europeans and non-Europeans during the early modern period, these trading relationships later turned into colonial relationships.[[14]](#footnote-14) Regardless of when scholars see this shift occurring, it is clear that, at some point, European groups began to dominate the interactions between them and other societies in the world.[[15]](#footnote-15) By the nineteenth century, Europeans used violence to secure cheaply priced commodities and technological innovations made them less dependent on food from Malagasy ports.[[16]](#footnote-16) As a result, power relations between the Sakalava and Europeans appeared markedly different by the middle of the nineteenth century than they had during the previous hundred years.

Scholars have struggled to make sense of this shift. Immanuel Wallerstein has described the creation of a modern world system that resulted in the underdevelopment of non-Western economies and heightened their dependence on the West.[[17]](#footnote-17) While many historians have taken issue with his grand thesis, Wallerstein’s arguments set the stage for much of the research on early modern globalization in Africa and Asia.

Historians have struggled with the concept of the early modern period as simply a stage in the larger narrative of the rise of the West. To make sense of the early modern period, scholars of Indian Ocean history have highlighted the economic interdependence between regions in the world both prior to, and during, European oceanic trading.[[18]](#footnote-18) What European merchants accomplished during the early modern period had begun centuries earlier by people crossing the Indian Ocean, travelling yearly between Indonesia, India, the Arabian Peninsula, and East Africa.[[19]](#footnote-19) These scholars questioned whether Europeans ushered in a new period of global trade during the sixteenth century.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Instead, they have called attention to several distinct periods of interaction between European and non-European merchants and states following the entry of Portuguese ships into the Indian Ocean. Historical works by scholars such as C.R. Boxer and Holden Furber have drawn our attention to the rivalries, competition, and divisions between European merchants during the early modern period.[[21]](#footnote-21) Prior to 1590, Portuguese made many attempts, but few inroads, in creating a trading monopoly in the Indian Ocean.[[22]](#footnote-22) Between roughly 1590 and 1650, European rivalries for access to the spice trade meant groups such as the Dutch and English fixated on spices and little else. They did not threaten pre-existing trade networks in the ocean. From roughly 1650 and 1700, the French began to compete with the Portuguese, Dutch, and English for access to valuable trading goods, a competition that led to the consolidation of merchants into monopoly trading companies such as the English East India Company (EIC). [[23]](#footnote-23)

During this entire period, most non-European traders ignored Europeans or coexisted with them. Studies on local ports and coastal states highlight the vibrancy of Asian and Arab commerce throughout this period.[[24]](#footnote-24) Both European and Asian merchants interacted and cooperated, as Europeans inserted themselves into centuries-old trading patterns. Indian Ocean trading networks developed common systems of labor, coordinated trade, and shared ship navigation technology.[[25]](#footnote-25) The success of various European attempts at colonization, in locations as diverse as Mozambique, the Red Sea, and Southeast Asia, depended on negotiations with the local inhabitants.[[26]](#footnote-26) During these centuries, European and non-European states interacted to create a new balance of trade and power.[[27]](#footnote-27) It is clear that new worlds and centers were created in the Indian Ocean during this time, worlds that Europeans were involved in but not always the central force.[[28]](#footnote-28) By 1744, however, European trading companies came into conflict with non-European states and empires.[[29]](#footnote-29)

In Africa, the nineteenth century also ushered in a new period of change to the communities on the continent, as states and empires struggled to maintain power in the face of European imperialism and aggression. Before 1800, however, Europeans had to contend with pre-existing modes of exchange.[[30]](#footnote-30) A history of long-distance trading, albeit over land, not water, influenced how African societies received European merchants and their chances of success on the African coastline. Europeans who sought to settle on the coast or interior of Africa had to engage with African ideas about the relationship between state and trade.[[31]](#footnote-31)

Efforts to look at early modern trade without privileging European actors has led anthropologists and historians to describe the flexibility of early exchanges in Africa, exchanges in which Europeans rarely had the upper hand. Coastal areas of Africa became centers for interaction and beaches were the setting for elaborate rituals between recognized trading partners.[[32]](#footnote-32) In these rituals, both parties created a sense of trust and excluded other parties from participating in the negotiations. Merchants in coastal Africa frequently crossed and recrossed boundaries that later separated Africans and Europeans.[[33]](#footnote-33) Equiano’s famous narrative of enslavement described the transformation in communities he encountered as he approached the Atlantic coast. In this liminal zone, people spoke new languages, lived on and near the rivers and ocean, and survived in ways not typically thought of as African.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Through trading, Sakalava leaders and Europeans entered into relationship of interdependence. Europeans piloted the ships that visited ports in Madagascar. A Sakalava king had little control over when and how many vessels entered his port, yet he could decide whether to provide Europeans with supplies and for what prices. He could also forego trade entirely, although he ran the risk of future ships avoiding his domains. Sakalava leaders made complicated assessments in deciding to participate in cross-cultural trade.[[35]](#footnote-35) Eventually the leaders came to depend on certain foreign imports. European sailors and merchants, on the other hand, would die without food from Madagascar. Although European captains could choose to visit other ports, they faced risks due to disease, storms, and security threats.

The relationship between Europeans and Malagasy leaders changed during the nineteenth century. To explain the shift towards European domination of exchanges in Africa, many scholars have examined the influence of the trans-Atlantic slave trade on African societies. They argue that the slave trade drained laborers from the continent, increased warfare, and destabilized African communities.[[36]](#footnote-36) According to some, European pressures transformed and led to an expansion of the slave trade, a form of commerce already in existence in many parts of Africa.[[37]](#footnote-37)

Similarities between political and economic developments in Asia and Africa suggest that the slave trade may not have been entirely to blame for changes in West Africa or Madagascar. In fact, the experience of early modern globalization in coastal Asia and Africa was similar in several key ways. The early period, prior to the mid-eighteenth century, was marked by cooperation and interaction between European and non-European merchants and leaders.[[38]](#footnote-38) Europeans and non-Europeans grew dependent on each other for exchanges of valued items, both prestigious, like silk and spices, and practical, like food and labor. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, societies around the world began to face new challenges in maintaining the trade they had grown to depend on, due in part to the toll global trade took on local environments and communities. These challenges arose in both Africa and Asia, suggesting the slave trade was only a part of several threats to stability that societies faced during this period.

Gradually, attempts to regain power prompted political leaders to seize direct control of trade. During the nineteenth century, European states asserted their military might and tried to dominate exchanges throughout the world. Despite the common pressures and challenges facing societies during the early modern period, inequalities between regions of the world had emerged by the nineteenth century.[[39]](#footnote-39)

**States and Empires**

Early modern globalization did not just transform relations between disparate communities. It also transformed the relationship between rulers and subjects within them. In interactions between foreign traders and local communities, elites increasingly prevented their subjects from participation. This development occurred within the Sakalava Empire in Madagascar, as Sakalava rulers monopolized trade between Malagasy and Europeans, while rarely intervening directly in other forms of exchange. When the Sakalava assumed control of trade on the west coast of the island, they did not formally take control of this trade and instead demanded tribute from merchants. Arab or African traders visiting Madagascar exchanged goods with Malagasy traders not directly controlled by the Sakalava state. This practice echoed the separation between states and traders in many communities along the northern Indian Ocean littoral.[[40]](#footnote-40) In this region, state-controlled trade was rare and states in the hinterland rarely oversaw the merchants in their domains. In northwestern Madagascar as well, the Sakalava leaders did not intervene in these networks.

The Sakalava state controlled exchanges when vessels from Europe or the Americas arrived on the shores of the island. These merchants, as with those arriving in dhows, desired to purchase large quantities of slaves and food from the Malagasy. These foreigners brought cargoes of firearms, coins, and manufactured commodities far in excess of those transported on dhows. This reason alone tempted the Sakalava to seize control of the trade. More importantly, these trade networks were still new and lacked established leaders, unlike networks that crisscrossed the Indian Ocean. Perhaps for these reasons, the Sakalava leaders and their designated trading representatives oversaw the exchange of goods in the western ports. They forcibly prevented their subjects from exchanging valued items with the merchants and jealously guarded their monopoly from rival groups. The Sakalava could only do so by creating an expansive empire that controlled coastal regions, as well as portions of the interior.

Identifying external causes for state centralization or criticizing this effort has consumed much of the literature on the formation of pre-modern and early modern states in African history.[[41]](#footnote-41) Africans frequently chose to form centralized states to benefit from trade and take advantage of new opportunities. Scholars have fixated upon the impact of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in particular. [[42]](#footnote-42) Some historians have argued that large states were necessary for Africans to counteract the divisiveness of the slave trade.[[43]](#footnote-43) Other scholars have challenged the direct correlation between state formation and the expansion of trade in Africa, pointing to the existence of independent long-distance traders in regions not controlled by centralized states.[[44]](#footnote-44) Due to the focus on the slave trade, scholars have tended to downplay the importance of external influences on the history of African coastal regions that did not engage in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This is despite the fact that global trade challenged African power structures and this challenge was present even in societies not engaged in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. [[45]](#footnote-45)

One way to make sense of the impact of trade in Africa would be to consider the environment surrounding many African ports.[[46]](#footnote-46) Studies of Indian Ocean societies have highlighted in recent years the development of distinctly littoral societies that engaged in oceanic trade and mediated the interactions between port cities and their interiors.[[47]](#footnote-47) In locations such as along the Red Sea and the Mozambique Channel, entrepôts lay beside regions poor in natural resources.[[48]](#footnote-48) Exports therefore were brought a long distance to the coast and this transportation required either coordinated independent traders or state-controlled trading routes.[[49]](#footnote-49) Leaders could participate in global trading, whether in slaves or rice, if they controlled both ports and interiors of a region.

In addition, scholars have described the struggle for the control of natural resources in Africa during the early modern period, as well as the link between this struggle and state formation.[[50]](#footnote-50) Yet we lack real understanding about how demands for food in particular influenced coastal African societies on both sides of the continent.[[51]](#footnote-51) Early modern trade, due to its increased demands for scarce resources, likely intensified the divide between littoral and interior in places such as East Africa.[[52]](#footnote-52)

To coordinate trade and combat the disorder of the early modern period, centralized states developed in many regions of the world.[[53]](#footnote-53) State centralization became cotemporaneous with economic expansion, although which came first is unclear.[[54]](#footnote-54) States provided unifying ideologies to diminish internal conflict. Leaders controlled powerful militaries that could both protect their subjects and maintain trade networks. In the absence of these ideologies and powers, states collapsed during this period.[[55]](#footnote-55)

The growth of these states originated from the rise of a new merchant class in Africa, as some groups of people inordinately benefited from the trade and the use of military innovations.[[56]](#footnote-56) In many African and Asian societies, the development of a rich, privileged merchant class required state support, for stability at the very least, and for access to supplies.[[57]](#footnote-57) Large empires controlled both the interior of the continent and coastal regions. Such empires, whether in Africa, Asia, or the Middle East, proved the most effective at supplying traders and benefiting from imports. Empires also created a social order that restricted access to new sources of wealth.[[58]](#footnote-58)

Most recent studies of imperialism have focused on the formation of European empires during later centuries and tended to ignore the existence of non-Western empires prior to the nineteenth century. Historians have long used the term empire to highlight the similarities between later European empires and earlier non-European ones. The study of empires allows us to question the generally accepted division many scholars place between the pre-colonial and colonial periods in African and Asian history. Imperial leaders ruled over large expanses of land, coordinated trade within this territory, and maintained their dominance over a variety of eco-systems and communities. Both European and non-European empires relied upon violence to intervene in global commercial networks.[[59]](#footnote-59) In fact, the expansion of the use of violence during this period was the most noticeable consequence of globalization in Africa, markedly so by the nineteenth century.

Scholars frequently link political changes to military and economic innovations.[[60]](#footnote-60) The development of violent expansive empires occurred throughout the world just prior to, and during, the early modern period in many parts of Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.[[61]](#footnote-61) The expansion of the use of violence accompanied the domination of trade by elites in these empires.[[62]](#footnote-62) Many of these empires relied upon coerced labor to gain trading items from their subjects, both enslaved and free. Slaves cleared forests, farmed, and fought in imperial armies. Slaves, when sold, could provide supplies of firearms, horses, and manufactured goods.[[63]](#footnote-63)

The Sakalava state likewise used the slave trade to gain access to firearms, which assisted them in subordinating neighboring groups and protecting themselves against enemy states. This trade, however, followed and did not precede the centralization of the Sakalava state. Leaders instead relied upon the ability to control local trade, which also gave them the ability to dominate global trading networks and prevent access to these networks by others.[[64]](#footnote-64) The use of firearms only maintained this dominance. The same could be said for the use of violence in many empires.[[65]](#footnote-65) Violence followed the commercial expansion of empires, but did not precede it.

Through the development of empires possessing commodities for export, imperial leaders could exert power on negotiations with Europeans. In other words, leaders could choose how they confronted globalization, in both Africa and Asia. Leaders chose whether to trade with Europeans and expend precious resources. They decided if they should force the production of surpluses in areas of marginal fertility in order to gain exports and could coerce their subjects into obtaining such surpluses. [[66]](#footnote-66) Leaders also chose whether to export slaves. Africans sold slaves to European slave traders in varying amounts, sexes, and ages according to African imperatives, not European.[[67]](#footnote-67) Africans, whether merchants or political leaders, asserted their will in these exchanges and became rich and influential.[[68]](#footnote-68)

In such cross-cultural encounters, the ability of Africans to make decisions varied greatly due to status. Sakalava kings and princes, for instance, could decide how to interact with traders. They had access to trading goods and could use force to gain more of them. Control of the beaches and the rivers, the primary trading zones on the island, allowed the Sakalava rulers to dominate the import and export of valued commodities.[[69]](#footnote-69) Most importantly, in these exchanges, Sakalava rulers benefited from the recognition of Europeans of their sovereignty.[[70]](#footnote-70)

Despite their access to firearms and large armies, rulers of states and empires in Africa and Asia were dependent on their subjects for food and labor. In return, the leaders provided their subjects with economic and political stability. During periods of expanding slave trade, diminishing natural resources, and increasing pressure from rival trading groups, individuals sought out leaders who could protect their interests. The ritual and military power of certain leaders enabled them to offer their subjects this protection. This relationship became more unequal and hierarchical throughout the eighteenth century.[[71]](#footnote-71)

This was certainly the case in Madagascar. As Europeans steadily eroded Sakalava power, the subjects of the Sakalava found themselves increasingly dependent on their rulers, particularly for protection against rival states and empires. Following the disruptions of the nineteenth century, the Sakalava kings and queens presented their rule as a return to the stability of the past.[[72]](#footnote-72) Their subjects had few options in reacting to the pressures of globalization. By the late nineteenth century, in Madagascar and other places, the merchant elites and rulers of the earlier period continued to control of foreign exchanges, even after the abolition of the slave trade, and, in so doing, remained politically and economically influential.[[73]](#footnote-73) In African and Asian societies, wealth differentials increased by the nineteenth century between subjects and rulers, even as these differentials also increased between Europeans and non-Europeans.

**The Sakalava Empire**

Few scholars study historical developments in both Africa and Asia. Madagascar has fallen between the cracks in a historiography built upon an area studies framework.[[74]](#footnote-74) Although this view has come under fire recently, there is still a danger of simply replacing African studies with an equally limited focus on the history of the Indian Ocean world.[[75]](#footnote-75) Oceans connected disparate regions of the world and it makes little sense to see the early modern history of Madagascar as separate from that of Africa, Asia, or Europe. Rather than viewing Madagascar as minor in the incipient world system, we should see the inhabitants of the island as one of the links that tied together various regions of the world during the early modern period.[[76]](#footnote-76)

One of the challenges in placing the history of Madagascar into other regional histories is that the island has always appeared as a mythical land.[[77]](#footnote-77) Early European visitors linked Madagascar to Marco Polo's description of an island, “one of the noblest and greatest islands in the world,” home to elephants and camels in incredible numbers.[[78]](#footnote-78) This apparent amalgamation of various trading posts along the southwestern Indian Ocean provided sixteenth and seventeenth-century Europeans with proof the island held fabled riches.[[79]](#footnote-79) Even today, Madagascar appears as a curiosity, an island better known for its unusual plant and animal life than its culture or people. During a recent political crisis, a journalist drew connections between the island's convoluted politics and the “biological wonderland” that is Madagascar. In a brief summary of the history of Madagascar, the writer described the arrival of people from across the Indian Ocean two thousand years earlier, followed directly by a description of the “oversized” names of the Merina monarchs who ruled over the island during the nineteenth century.[[80]](#footnote-80) The rest of Madagascar's history was not mentioned, deemed less interesting than these two historical events: the arrival of immigrants in canoes from Borneo to the island and the rise of the Merina kingdoms.

Misperceptions of Madagascar’s history are compounded by an inability to see the Malagasy as African. Just as the people of the island defied European control for many centuries, the Malagasy defy classification.[[81]](#footnote-81) The population, a mixture of Indonesian and African descendents, maintained close ties with the nearby Comoro Islands and East Africa. Linguistic analysis of the Malagasy language reveals strong connections with the Indonesian languages, with words from the Indian subcontinent pertaining to agriculture and many Swahili terms in the mix.[[82]](#footnote-82) Despite the presence of several distinct dialects on the island, forms of Malagasy could be understood over the entire island, even prior to the nineteenth century. The Malagasy themselves fight against an identification with the African continent and prefer to present their culture and language as unique.[[83]](#footnote-83)

Scholars writing about the history of Madagascar struggle with defining and making sense of the Malagasy, difficulties complicated by the lack of sources for the period prior to the nineteenth century. The lack of European permanent settlements on Madagascar meant that knowledge about this island remained superficial until the nineteenth century. The coverage afforded by available sources is patchy for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a period of Sakalava successes and European failures in exerting sovereignty over the shores of the island. Historians rely on a combination of nineteenth-century records of Sakalava rituals and traditions and earlier European documents to make sense of this history.

By the mid-nineteenth century, more Europeans had visited Madagascar.[[84]](#footnote-84) During this century, missionaries focused their energy on converting and educating the Malagasy under Merina control.[[85]](#footnote-85) Histories written by Malagasy appeared during this period.[[86]](#footnote-86) The Sakalava remained outside of many of these studies, until the period of French colonization, aside from a few mentions by missionaries.[[87]](#footnote-87)

During the early years of the twentieth century, the most influential compilations of early sources on Madagascar, *Collection des ouvrages anciens concernant Madagascar* (COACM), were published.[[88]](#footnote-88) The editors of this collection translated a variety of sources, including colonial letters and ship journals, from Portuguese, English, and Dutch into French. Together, the sources fill nine volumes and many historians have relied upon this collection for understanding the history of pre-colonial Madagascar, a dependence that has been criticized by some scholars.[[89]](#footnote-89) Other sources are gaining prominence, particularly ship journals and colonial documents, and these provide the bulk of the evidence used in this dissertation. Letters written at the Mascarene Islands, for instance, or by passing slave traders, provide real insight into events in Madagascar. The challenges involved in using multiple archives, in a wide variety of languages, means that many of these sources will go unexplored in the near future.[[90]](#footnote-90)

Partly because of the difficulties in uncovering sources, histories about Malagasy states have tended to focus on the Merina kingdom. In fact, at least one scholar has accused others of “Merinization.”[[91]](#footnote-91) This imbalance in part reflects the power dynamics within colonial and post-colonial Madagascar, as well as the availability of source material. Primarily, however, scholars have sought to make sense of the European colonization of what appeared to be a strong, centralized state, the Merina kingdom, and the impact of this colonization on the people of Madagascar.[[92]](#footnote-92) In fact, the history of the Sakalava Empire provides real insight into the development of the Merina state and the place of this history in Madagascar.

Anthropologists have been much more interested in non-Merina groups and the study of the Sakalava, one of the largest “tribes” on the island, has attracted a lot of attention. Scholars have studied contemporary Malagasy culture and beliefs by examining their rhetoric, art, and burial practices.[[93]](#footnote-93) They have published complex recreations of Sakalava cosmology and their ritual practices.[[94]](#footnote-94) These inevitably involve lengthy discussions of the Sakalava royalty and their use of ceremonies to communicate with royal ancestors.[[95]](#footnote-95) Perhaps due to the prominence of studies focused on spirit possession ceremonies, the bathing of royal relics, and royal slavery, scholars focusing on the Sakalava have linked the early history of the state to the ritual practices of the Sakalava during the twentieth century. Many historians rely upon Sakalava oral traditions to reconstruct the genealogy of the Sakalava monarchy and the development of divine kingship.[[96]](#footnote-96) Most of these scholars have focused on the more recent history of the Sakalava. They have not, for the most part, examined the historical development of Sakalava claims to sacred kingship.[[97]](#footnote-97)

While scholars studying the Sakalava discuss their interaction with Europeans, the impact of global exchanges has been downplayed. When these influences are mentioned, they usually involve the influence of the “Arabs” of southeastern Madagascar on the development and cosmology of the Sakalava and other Malagasy states.[[98]](#footnote-98) Raymond Kent developed an argument about an East African influence on Sakalava political centralization, but most historians have ignored his argument.[[99]](#footnote-99)

In studies of other states on the island, however, scholars have examined the role of external influences in political and social developments on the island. They discuss the complex ways in which smaller polities on the island interacted with larger kingdoms and empires.[[100]](#footnote-100) Stephen Ellis emphasizes the importance of interactions between societies both within and without Madagascar in the formation of the Betsimisaraka Confederation on the east coast during the eighteenth century. Despite the decline of the confederation politically by the mid-nineteenth century, many Malagasy still identify themselves as Betsimisaraka.[[101]](#footnote-101) This development parallels that of the Sakalava. Gerald Berg has written several articles about the early history of the Merina kingdom. Berg highlights the impact of spiritual beliefs in the development of the kingdom and describes how these beliefs influenced the intensification of agriculture in the highlands of Madagascar and the use of firearms.[[102]](#footnote-102) The literature on the Merina state, controlling agricultural regions far from coastal ports, largely focuses on the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and thus proves of far less use for understanding earlier state developments. The plentiful scholarship on the rise of the Merina kingdom and empire, however, provides details about later interactions between the Sakalava and the Merina [[103]](#footnote-103) All of these themes play into an understanding of the early modern history of the Sakalava. The dissertation engages with this growing literature and attempts to use some of their conclusions to understand the influence of early modern globalization on the history of the Sakalava.[[104]](#footnote-104)

What follows traces the rise and fall of the Sakalava Empire of Madagascar, which at its height extended to control almost the entire western coast of Madagascar. The focus is on imperial structures, the use of violence, and understanding cross-cultural contact. At the root of the story, however, are interactions between traders and communities on the western coast of Madagascar. The development of new hierarchal relationships of dependency during this period occurred with the rise of the Sakalava. An outline of the Sakalava Empire provides a background for understanding the encounters of people on the shores of Madagascar with the world. Throughout the centuries, the empire increasingly mediated the interactions between the people of Madagascar and visiting traders.[[105]](#footnote-105) This history is the story of many players: slaves traded to passing European ships, provincial tributary leaders greeting visiting ships, and warriors who raided other communities on the island.

The dissertation begins with the history of people living in southwest Madagascar, a region that eventually became a central part of the commercial empire. By noting the specific challenges presented by global trading to the livelihoods of communities in this region, the chapter provides an explanation for the new pressures that encouraged Sakalava expansion and discouraged the solidification of local states in opposition to the Sakalava. Chapter 1 argues that, to understand the development of empires in Madagascar, we must first look at why pre-existing states and communities were unable to cope with the challenges presented by commercial expansion. This chapter covers the period from roughly 1600 to 1650. The second chapter outlines the early history of the Sakalava state and its growth into an expansive military empire. This chapter focuses on the origins of the Sakalava Empire in a land previously not visited by European and non-European oceanic traders. Oral histories and the records left by European observers allow us to trace the development of the Sakalava Empire, from a small inland state to a large empire encompassing the western coast of Madagascar. Combined, the first two chapters directly connect global trade to the development of the Sakalava Empire and the development of hierarchies within the empire.

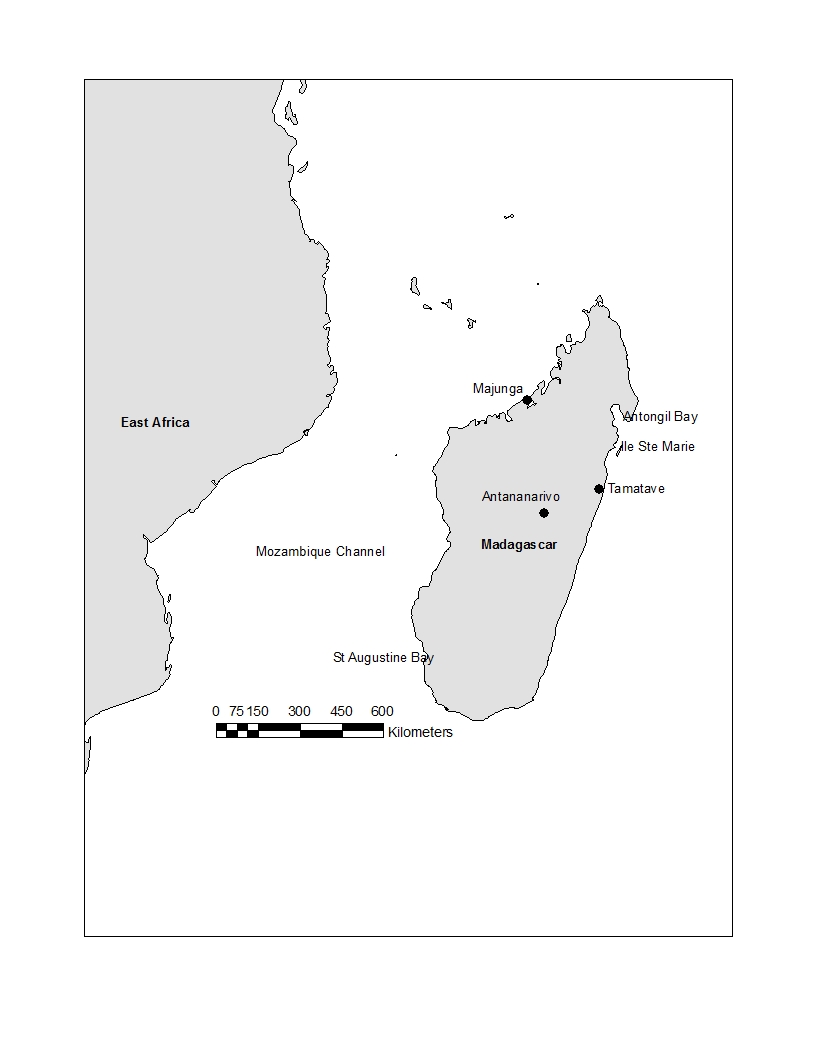
In Chapter 3, the focus is on the trading negotiations between European and Sakalava trading representatives during the first half of the eighteenth century. The chapter describes the ways in which Sakalava leaders made their ports attractive to passing European ships. Data in this chapter, taken from a number of maritime sources, illuminates how the Sakalava rulers understood the demands of the global market. Rulers demanded goods that would enable the further expansion of Sakalava power on the island.

Leaders of the empire could never guarantee supplies of goods and people to European ships and relied upon frequent military expeditions to acquire these goods. Sakalava rulers used military power to obtain commodities for export and had to struggle to gain access to the food items and slaves demanded by Europeans. The fourth chapter pieces together evidence of Sakalava military aggression against other communities on the island. During the mid-eighteenth century, the Sakalava Empire violently extended its power beyond its territories in western Madagascar. The threat of force from the Sakalava provided incentive for weaker groups to acquiesce to Sakalava demands.

Europeans in the Indian Ocean used similar strategies. The trading monopoly the Sakalava attempted to exert over Madagascar was echoed in the expansion of European commercial networks in the Indian Ocean. European networks relied upon the constant threat of force against rival European and non-European merchant groups to control trade. Due to these expansions, French and English groups increasingly relied upon purchases from Malagasy communities to fuel their ships during the second half of the eighteenth century. As a result, European traders began attempting to control commerce within and without Madagascar. As described in Chapter 5, the actions of Europeans increased disorder on the island and within the southwestern Indian Ocean region.

Facing increasing competition from new states and empires, leaders of the Sakalava Empire turned to the ocean, to the East African coast and Comoro Islands, to support the empire. Chapter 6 marks a shift in policy for the Sakalava Empire. By importing slaves, the Sakalava Empire entered into new relationships with groups throughout the Indian Ocean. During the height of Sakalava power, Sakalava rulers controlled much of the west and north of the island, as well as continuing to monopolize imports. The movement of the Sakalava and other Malagasy into acts of piracy marked the climax of Sakalava power, but these acts of violence brought the state to the attention of European powers. Unfortunately for aspiring Sakalava kings, Europeans turned international law to their advantage and began supporting the Merina state to eliminate the expanding Sakalava Empire.

The final chapter traces the adoption of Sakalava identity as a way of remembering the past in the face of encroaching imperialisms. In reaction to Merina and European challenges, the Sakalava dealt with their failing state by asserting a stronger sense of being Sakalava. The gradual colonization of Sakalava territory continued through the nineteenth century. During twentieth century, the continued worship of Sakalava royal ancestors provided reminders of the role the empire continued to play in peoples’ lives, even after the collapse of formal Sakalava political power.



Map 1: Madagascar, with locations mentioned in the text labeled

Spellings and locations are approximated from seventeenth and eighteenth-century European maps.

1. Chaudhuri, for instance, barely mentions East Africa in his book: K. N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean : an Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).Other literature deals better with Madagascar: Kenneth McPherson, “The Indian Ocean: A History of People and the Sea,” in *Maritime India* (originally published in 1993; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Until very recently, major publications on the Indian Ocean dealt overwhelmingly with maritime Asia, not Africa. Two exceptions: S. Arasaratnam, “Recent Trends in the Historiography of the Indian Ocean, 1500 to 1800,” *Journal of World History* 1, No. 2 (1990): 225-248; R. J. Barendse, *The Arabian Seas: the Indian Ocean World of the Seventeenth Century* (Armonk, N.Y: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), 4-5. These works discussing the history of the Swahili usually limit their study to the East African coast and only mention Madagascar a few times: John Middleton, *The World of the Swahili: an African Mercantile Civilization* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992); Derek Nurse and Thomas T. Spear, *The Swahili: Reconstructing the History and Language of an African Society, 800-1500* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The seminal works on globalization during the early modern period are Alfred Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CN: Greenwood Pub. Co, 1972); William McNeill, *The Rise of the West: a History of the Human Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963). For a summary of recent debates over globalization from an economic perspective, see Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, “When Did Globalisation Begin?,” *European Review of Economic History* 6, no. 1 (2002): 23-50. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. On this distinctive period, see Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-cultural Trade in World History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 136. On the role of long-distance trade in shaping world history, not just during the early modern period, see Jerry H. Bentley, “Cross-Cultural Interaction and Periodization in World History,” *The American Historical Review* 101, No. 3 (1996): 749-770; Gungwu Wang, *The Nanhai trade: the early history of Chinese trade in the South China Sea* (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See, for instance, two very different studies of this period: Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: the Fates of Human Societies* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1997); Eric Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History* (Berkeley: University of California, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. I am using the term “early modern” consciously with reference to the development of a distinct period in history in multiple societies. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia,” *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 736-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. On heightened human impact on the environment during the early modern period, see Edmund Burke III, “The Big Story; Human History, Energy Regimes, and the Environment,” in *The Environment and World History,* ed. Edmund Burke III and Kenneth Pomeranz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 40-42. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. For a good overview of the problems created by settler colonies, see Richard H. Grove, *Ecology, Climate and Empire: Colonialism and Global Environmental History, 1400-1940* (Cambridge: The White Horse Press, 1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. I am not speaking to the issue of access to imported luxury goods but rather unmediated access to foreign imports. On the issue of luxury goods during the early modern period, see the comparative work of Kenneth Pomeranz, who concludes the demand for luxury goods was dispersed about equally throughout the classes of the Chinese, Japanese, and Europeans. Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: Europe, China, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 114-165. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. I am using the term globalization in a manner that combines two definitions (of five that are summarized by Scholte) typically given to globalization. Globalization is being used to “designate a growth of international exchange and interdependence. “ But it also is meant to characterize a deterritorialization, or the “spread of superterritoriality,” in which “social space is no longer wholly mapped in terms of territorial places, territorial distances and territorial borders.” This second process, it could be argued continued without rupture in the Indian Ocean between the pre-modern and early modern periods. The first process, however, increased dramatically during the early modern period. Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization: a Critical Introduction*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 15-6. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Wolf argues against this perspective: Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History*, 24-5. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Subrahmanyam traces the development of millennial beliefs spurring exploration and other innovations in both Europe and Asia, Subrahmanyam, “Connected Histories,” 748-51.

    See also Joseph F. Fletcher, “Integrative History: Parallels and Interconnections in the Early Modern Period, 1500–1800,” in *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Central Asia: Collected Articles of Joseph Fletcher*, ed. Beatrice Manz (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995), 1–35; Victor Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800 - 1830* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Subrahmanyam criticizes Libermann for focusing on separate but equal developments, hence reifying standard divisions between continents and states, instead of connected developments.

    Subrahmanyam is, in part, reacting to the Marxist view is that globalization began when European capitalist states began expanding into non-capitalist spaces. See Vladimir Il'ich Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism, a Popular Outline* (New York: International Publishers, 1933). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. My use of the term, Indian Ocean Africa (IOA) comes from many of the works of Gwyn Campbell: example, *The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia,* ed. Gwyn Campbell (London: Frank Cass, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Wright writes of interactions between Africans and others, says a discussion of the development of relationships of dependence are unavoidable. Donald R. Wright, *The World and a Very Small Place in Africa* (Armonk, N.Y: M.E. Sharpe, 1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. For examples of this idea, see Philip D. Curtin, *Economic Change in Precolonial Africa; Senegambia in the Era of the Slave Trade* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1975). [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. On the use of violence, see Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Immanuel Wallerstein, “Africa in a Capitalist World,” *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 10, no. 1/2 (1980): 26. See also Immanuel Maurice Wallerstein, *The Modern World-system* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).

    For a different view of world systems, see Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); on the economic bias for world systems, see Martin W. Lewis and Kären Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: a Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 139; using the concept of world systems in East African history: Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices, & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1873* (London: J. Currey, 1987). For a summary of world systems theories and underdevelopment, see Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History*, 22-3. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Noteworthy work includes: James Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); in East Africa, see August H. Nimtz, *Islam and politics in East Africa: the Sufi order in Tanzania* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1980); Randall Lee Pouwels, *Horn and Crescent: Cultural Change and Traditional Islam on the East African Coast, 800-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Patricia Risso, *Merchants and Faith: Muslim Commerce and Culture in the Indian Ocean* (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1995). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Most notably K. N. Chudhuri, *Trade and civilisation,* 3. He has been attacked for attempting to mold the history of the Indian Ocean into a Braudelian model, but by only using European sources and selectively discussing regions of focus. For a less Western-centric attempt at a broad history, see McPherson, “The Indian Ocean: A History of People and the Sea.” Despite the importance of her work, Abu Lughod is guilty of marginalizing African participation in the Indian Ocean world. Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: the World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Although historians of the Indian Ocean have refuted Wallerstein’s claim, there is a danger of substituting an Asian-centric model for his Euro-centric one. Indian Ocean scholars tend to equate Indian Ocean history with Asian maritime history. This is exclusion is acknowledged: Sugata Bose, “Space and Time on the Indian Ocean Rim: Theory and History,” in Leila Tarazi Fawaz and C. A. Bayly, *Modernity and Culture: from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 370-1. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. C. R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415-1825* (London: Hutchinson, 1969); Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976). For a critique of the earlier work, see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, introduction to *Maritime India*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), xi-xvii. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. See, for instance, their experiences on the Arabian Peninsula and East Africa. C. R. Boxer, *Portuguese Conquest and Commerce in Southern Asia, 1500-1750* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1985); M. N. Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat : the Response to the Portuguese in the Sixteenth century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. On various trading companies, see Glenn Joseph Ames, *Colbert, Mercantilism, and the French Quest for Asian Trade* (DeKalb, Ill: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996); Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire*; Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient*; Philippe Haudrère, *La compagnie française des Indes au XVIIIe siècle*, 2 ed, 2 vols. (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2005); Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). The term European is meant to encompass traders also sailing from the Americas. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. See Sinnappah Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies, and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650-1740* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat.* On the emergence of micro-histories, see S. Arasaratnam, “Recent Trends in the Historiography of the Indian Ocean, 1500 to 1800,” *Journal of World History* 1, No. 2 (Fall, 1990): 225-248 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Janet J. Ewald, “Crossers of the Sea: Slaves, Freedmen, and other Migrants in the Northwestern Indian Ocean, c. 1750-1914,” *The American Historical Review* 105, no. 1 (2000). For a fictional presentation of this new maritime world, read about lascars in Amitav Ghosh's newest book: Amitav Ghosh, *Sea of poppies* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. For example, see C. G. Brouwer, *Al-Mukha: Profile of a Yemeni Seaport as sketched by Servants of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), 1614-1640* (Amsterdam: D'Fluyte Rarob, 1997); Allen F. Isaacman, *Mozambique: the Africanization of a European institution; the Zambesi prazos, 1750-1902* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1972); Anthony Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce, 1450-1680*, 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988); André Wink, *Al-Hind, the Making of the Indo-Islamic world*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. For interesting comparisons, see Michael Adas, *Islamic & European Expansion: the Forging of a Global Order* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); Tonio Andrade, *How Taiwan became Chinese: Dutch, Spanish, and Han colonization in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Aniruddha Ray, *Trade, Politics, and Plunder: the Marathas at Cambay, c. AD 1725-1825* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2006); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Improvising Empire: Portuguese Trade and Settlement in the Bay of Bengal, 1500-1700* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Examples include: Barendse, *The Arabian Seas*, 3-4. Studies of migrations support this belief: Edward Alpers, “The Somali Community at Aden in the Nineteenth Century,” *Northeast African Studies* 8, no. 2 (1986); Anne K. Bang, *Sufis and Scholars of the Sea: Family Networks in East Africa, 1860-1925* (London: Routledge, 2003); Linda Boxberger, *On the Edge of Empire: Hadhramawt, Emigration, and the Indian Ocean, 1880s-1930s* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002); Ashin Das Gupta, *Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat: c. 1700-1750* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1994); Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. These commercial empires gradually led to European empires in Africa and Asia. Philip D. Curtin, *The World and the West: the European Challenge and the Overseas Response in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 3-5. On the debate over continuity versus rupture in the historiography, see John E. Wills Jr., “Review: Maritime Asia, 1500-1800: The Interactive Emergence of European Domination,” *The American Historical Review* 98, no. 1 (1993), 83-105. The best interpretation of periodization for Indian Ocean history I believe to be Sugata Bose, “Space and Time on the Indian Ocean Rim.” See also Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: the Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. This point of view is voiced in the introduction of a new textbook on pre-colonial Africa: Christopher Ehret, *The Civilizations of Africa: a History to 1800* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2002), 1-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Example: Isaacman, *Mozambique.* [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. My understanding of cross-cultural encounters has been influenced by Greg Dening: Dening, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land, Marquesas, 1774-1880* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1980); see also M. N. Pearson, “Littoral Society: The Case for the Coast,” *The Great Circle* 7, no. (1985); M. N. Pearson, “Littoral Society: the Concept and the Problems,” *Journal of World History* 17, no. (2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Joseph C. Miller, “A Theme in Variations: A Historical Schema of Slavery in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean Regions,” *Slavery & Abolition* 24, no. 2 (2003): 169-94. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano...* (London: 1794), 43-44. On transformations in coastal Africa, see also George E. Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa: Commerce, Social Status, Gender, and Religious Observance from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth century* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2003); Joseph Calder Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730-1830* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988). [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Limitations in making decisions were in part created by social structures, as many Marxists have argued, although this explanatory framework is not sufficient. For an overview of the issue of agency and common perspectives on this issue, see Alex Callinicos, *Making History: Agency, Structure, and Change in Social Theory* (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2004). Wright states, “Just as Europeans, people in Niumi made rational decisions about trading one body of commodities for another. No European merchant on the river believed otherwise.” Wright, *The world and a very small place in Africa*, 89. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Albert van Dantzig, “Effects of the Atlantic Slave Trade on some West African Societies,” in *Forced Migration: the Impact of the Export Slave Trade on African Societies,* ed. J. E. Inikori (New York: Africana Pub. Co., 1982), 187- 200; Patrick Manning, *Slavery, Colonialism, and Economic Growth in Dahomey, 1640-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: a History of Slavery in Africa*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff, *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977). In the case of Madagascar, Larson argues that the slave trade placed the Merina in a position of involvement with the French, a position they could not easily extricate from. Pier Martin Larson, *History and Memory in the Age of Enslavement: Becoming Merina in Highland Madagascar, 1770-1822* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000), 116-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Many African historians would agree with this statement. See, for instance, two very different engagements with the idea of European and African interaction and cooperation: Brooks, *Eurafricans*; Lovejoy, *Transformations in slavery*. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. I view the shifting power relations of the nineteenth century as originating in a complex series of economic, cultural, and political changes. I have been particularly influenced by: Andre Gunder Frank and Barry K. Gills, *The World System: Five Hundred Years or Five thousand?* (London: Routledge, 1993); Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence*. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Example: Sudipta Sen, *Empire of Free Trade: the East India Company and the Making of the Colonial Marketplace* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. I. A. Akinjogbin, *Dahomey and its Neighbours, 1708-1818* (Cambridge: University Press, 1967). On the transition from stateless to state without “external” influences, see Jan Vansina, *How Societies are Born: Governance in West Central Africa before 1600* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004), 261-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Meillassoux focused on early states formed through contact with the trans-Saharan slave trade. Claude Meillassoux, *The Anthropology of Slavery: the Womb of Iron and Gold* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 45. For some of the debates: D. N. Beach, *A Zimbabwean Past : Shona Dynastic Histories and Oral Traditions* (Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1994), Jack Goody, *Technology, Tradition, and the State in Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971). [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Sylviane A. Diouf, *Fighting the Slave trade: West African Strategies* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2003). J. E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: a Study in International Trade and Economic Development* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Warren Whatley and Rob Gillezeau, “The Impact of the Slave Trade on African Economies,” available online http://lw.lsa.umich.edu/UMICH/econ/Home/Events%20and%20Seminars/History/history091509.pdf <accessed 3 January 2010>. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Examples: Toyin Falola, “The Yoruba Caravan System of the Nineteenth Century,” *International Journal of African Studies* 24, no. 1 (1991); A. G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (London: Longman, 1973). See the discussion in Steve Feierman, “African Histories and the Dissolution of World History,” in Robert H. Bates, V. Y. Mudimbe, and Jean F. O'Barr, *Africa and the Fiscipline : the Contributions of Research in Africa to the Social Sciences and Humanities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. On other trading goods, see George E. Brooks, *Kola Trade and State-building: Upper Guinea Coast and Senegambia, 15th - 17th centuries* (Brookline, Mass: African Studies Center Boston University, 1980); Paul E. Lovejoy, *Caravans of Kola: the Hausa Kola Trade, 1700-1900* (Zaria, Nigeria: Ahmadu Bello University Press Ltd, 1980); Paul E. Lovejoy, *Salt of the Desert Sun: a History of Salt Production and Trade in the Central Sudan* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986). This is particularly true for East Africa, where historians primarily study the issues of trade and state development during the nineteenth century. See Edward A. Alpers, *Ivory and slaves: Changing Pattern of International Trade in East Central Africa to the Later Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); Norman Robert Bennett, *Arab versus European: Diplomacy and War in Nineteenth-century East Central Africa* (New York: Africana Pub. Co, 1986); Jonathon Glassman, *Feasts and Riot: Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856-1888* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1995); Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, spices, & ivory.* One exception: M. N. Pearson, *Port Cities and Intruders: the Swahili Coast, India, and Portugal in the early modern era* (Baltimore; Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

    On the changes over this period, Austen states that, “Seen in the broadest perspective of world economic development, some form of economic imperialism in Africa appears to have been inevitable.” He attributes this conclusion to the disparities in economic development between Africa and Europe. Ralph A. Austen, *African Economic History: Internal Development and External Dependency* (Portsmouth, NH: J. Currey 1987). Joseph Miller also points to the consolidation of the world economies between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries leading to political and cultural integration. See Miller, “A Theme in Variations.” [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. For a description of the arid environment of East Africa: John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979). [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Barendse, *The Arabian Seas*, 13-70; Kenneth McPherson, “Port Cities as Nodal Points of Change”; Roxani Eleni Margariti, *Aden & the Indian Ocean Trade: 150 Years in the Life of a Medieval Arabian port* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Michel Tuchsherer, “Trade and Port Cities in the Red Sea-Gulf of Aden Region in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth century,” in *Modernity and Culture.* A similar argument has been made recently for the Mediterranean: Henk Driessen, “Mediterranean Port Cities: Cosmopolitanism Reconsidered,” *History and Anthropology* 16, no. 1 (2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. According the McIntosh, states form on the borders of ecological zones, whether in Mesopotamia or the Central Sudan. In his archeological study of Jenne, McIntosh describes how he envisions the development of a stratified society in this location. McIntosh. The development of complex trading networks led to the development of “castes” and, eventually, urbanization and stratification. McIntosh is clear, however, that states did not necessarily accompany this process, as Jenne remained without a centralized power through the period studied by McIntosh. Clearly environmental factors cannot be solely responsible for centralization. Roderick J. McIntosh, *The Peoples of the Middle Niger: the Island of Gold* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Compare the experience in Madagascar with that across the Sahara or the Arabian Peninsula. Falola, “The Yoruba Caravan System of the Nineteenth Century”; Lovejoy, *Caravans of kola*. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. See, for example, David Lee Schoenbrun, *A Green Place, a Good Place: Agrarian Change, Gender, and Social Identity in the Great Lakes Region to the 15th century* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. One notable exception: Kea described the political ramifications of conflicts over the control of agricultural surpluses in the Gold Coast. Ray A. Kea, *Settlements, Trade, and Polities in the Seventeenth-century Gold Coast* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. McPherson, “Port cities,” 87. On the impact of land trade on the profitability of trading in general, see also Niels Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century: the East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974). There is a movement in the historiography of East Africa away from isolating developments among the “Swahili” from those of the interior: Stephen J. Rockel, *Carriers of Culture: Labor on the Road in Nineteenth-Century East Africa* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2006). On urbanization, see James F. Searing, *West African Slavery and Atlantic Commerce : the Senegal River Valley, 1700-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); on the impact of urbanization, see William Beinart and Lotte Hughes, *Environment and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 148-65. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. On depopulation: Manning, *Slavery, Colonialism, and Economic growth*; Whatley and Gillezeau, “The Impact of the Slave Trade on African Economies.” Hawthorne has called our attention to the experience of decentralized communities during the era of the slave trade. Walter Hawthorne, *Planting Rice and Harvesting Slaves: Transformations along the Guinea-Bissau Coast, 1400-1900* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003). [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Edward I. Steinhart, *From Empire to State: the Emergence of the Kingdom of Bunyoro-Kitara, c 1350-1890* (Austin, TX: University of Texas, 1978). [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. On the impact of the slave trade in state formation and collapse: Akinjogbin, *Dahomey.* [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. On militarism and its negative impact of trade: Kea, *Settlements*; Searing, *West African Slavery*. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Richard L. Roberts, *Warriors, Merchants, and Slaves: the State and the Economy in the Middle Niger Valley, 1700-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987). [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Robin Law, *The Oyo Empire, c.1600-c.1836 : a West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 63, 234. See also Robin Law, “Slaves, Trade & Taxes: the Material Basis of Political Power in Precolonial West Africa,” *Research in Economic Anthropology* 1, no. (1978); T. C. McCaskie, *State and society in pre-colonial Asante* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 82. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. This is not to argue with Geoffrey Parker, who describes the “superior military and naval power” of the West during the early modern period. Rather it is to suggest similar trends were occurring in European and non-European states. Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. In the most famous case, see William McNeill, “The Age of Gunpowder Empires, 1450-1800,” in *Islamic & European expansion*. Studies of non-European empires have highlighted the role of competition on borders in prompting commercial or military expansion for a similar argument, see Elizabeth A. Eldredge, *A South African Kingdom: the Pursuit of Security in Nineteenth-century Lesotho* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Janet Ewald, *Soldiers, Traders, and Slaves: State Formation and Economic Transformation in the Greater Nile Valley, 1700-1885* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); J. D. Omer-Cooper, *A History of Southern Africa* (London: J. Currey, 1987). [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Much of literature on these empires focuses on the Ottomans: Patrick Balfour Kinross, *The Ottoman Centuries: the Rise and fall of the Turkish Empire* (New York: Morrow, 1977); Donald Quataert, *The Ottoman Empire, 1700-1922* (Cambridge: Cambrige University Press, 2005). [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. This has been particularly shown in the case of the Islamic empire: Stephen Dale, *The Muslim Empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Mughals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. On the role of firearms in centralization, see Michael Angelo Gomez, *Pragmatism in the Age of Jihad: the Precolonial State of Bundu* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Berg, focusing on the Merina kingdom of Madagascar, avoids attributing firearms with military power and stating that they imbued with ritual significance instead. Gerald M. Berg, “The Sacred Musket. Tactics, Technology, and Power in Eighteenth-Century Madagascar,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 27, no. 2 (1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. McIntosh argues for the role of long distance trade in state formation during the pre-modern period. McIntosh, *The Peoples of the Middle Niger*. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. See Dale, who argues against McNeill’s focus on gunpowder in the development of Islamic empires. Dale, *The Muslim Empires*, 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Helge Kjekshus, *Ecology Control & Economic Development in East African history: the Case of Tanganyika 1850-1950* (London: James Curry, 1996); Hawthorne, *Planting Rice and Harvesting Slaves*. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Rosalind Shaw, *Memories of the Slave Trade: Ritual and the Historical Imagination in Sierra Leone* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 17-20. This was also likely the case in Asia, but few scholars write about the early modern slave trade out of Asia. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. On African initiative: Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika*. This was paralleled in Asia: Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Of Imarat and Tijarat: Asian Merchants and State Power in the Western Indian Ocean, 1400 to 1750,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 37, no. 4 (1995): 774. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. On the link between sovereignty and space, see Jens Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 30-32. For more on the confrontation of European and non-European conceptions of sovereignty and land, see Marshall David Sahlins, *Islands of History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985). On sovereignty and land in Africa, see Gareth Austin, “Sub-Saharan Africa: Land Rights and Ethno-national Consciousness in Historically Land-abundant Economies,” in *Land Rights, Ethno-nationality, and Sovereignty in History,* eds. Stanley L. Engerman and Jacob Metzer (New York: Routledge, 2004). [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Sovereignty, as it is being used in reference to the Sakalava Empire, refers to the claim by Sakalava rulers to exert absolute, unquestioned dominance over people and goods within a circumscribed area. The rulers demonstrated to visiting European traders that they possessed the power to control the live and death of their people and they monopolized the use of violence within their territory. Wars were used to construct dependency, fear, and legitimacy in Madagascar. For more on the use of the term, see Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat, “Sovereignty Revisited,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35, no. 1 (2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. The idea of mutual dependence in relationships between kings and subjects is expounded at length by Newbury. David S. Newbury, *Kings and clans: Ijwi Island and the Lake Kivu Rift, 1780-1840* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991). [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. This view is expressed by Randall M. Packard, *Chiefship and Cosmology: an Historical Study of Political Competition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981). [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. On this idea of continuity:Ralph Derrick and Ralph A. Austen, *Middlemen of the Cameroons Rivers: The Duala and their Hinterland, c.1600-c.1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Robert W. Harms, *River of Wealth, River of Sorrow: the Central Zaire Basin in the Era of the Slave and Ivory trade, 1500-1891* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981); Martin Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa: the Palm Oil Trade in the Nineteenth century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Rather than viewing Madagascar simply as part of the Indian Ocean, I am arguing for a more globalized approach to understanding early modern trade and migrations. See recent contributions to integrating the oceans - Richard B. Allen, “The Constant Demand of the French: The Mascarene Slave Trade and the Worlds of the Indian Ocean and Atlantic During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” *Journal of African History* 49, no. (2008); Miller, “A Theme in Variations.” [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Pressure has come from scholars of the Indian Ocean, although some of this has been in reaction to the success of the Atlantic World model. On some of the various debates, see Allen, “The Constant Demand of the French”; Erik Gilbert, *Dhows & the Colonial Economy in Zanzibar, 1860-1970* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2004); Lewis and Wigen, *The Myth of Continents*. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. For this reason, world systems theories are not particularly useful for conceptualizing the history of Madagascar, as it served as more of a link, than integrated into any particular system. The creation of a singular world system of trade never occurred in Madagascar, instead world “systems” interacted on the island during the early modern period. For example, note the coexistence of European and non-European oceanic trade on the island, led by different merchant groups. It is however helpful to study works on world systems theories, their conclusions, and limitations: Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony;* Frank and Gills, *The World System*; Lewis and Wigen, *The Myth of Continents*; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, “Connected history”; Markus Vink, “A Match Made in Heaven? World-systems Analysis and Dutch Indian Ocean Studies,” in *Rivalry and Conflict: European Traders and Asian Trading Networks in the 16th and 17th century*, eds. Leonard Blusse and Ernst van Veen (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2005); Wallerstein, *The Modern World-system*. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. According to a recent children's movie named after the island, Madagascar is inhabited by dancing lemurs and other unusual creatures. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, ed. Hugh Murray Giovanni Battista Baldelli Boni (New York: Harper & Bros, 1852). pp. 281-2. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. For instance, Sebastien Munster wrote in 1572 of the elephants of Madagascar, citing Marco Polo in his “Description de Madagascar,” in *Collection des ouvrages anciens concernant Madagascar*, eds. Alfred Grandidier, *et al*., 9 vols. (Paris: Comité de Madagascar, 1903-20) (henceforth COACM), 1: 113. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Barry Bearak, “Self-Proclaimed President Learns a Quick Lesson,” *The New York Times*, 2 February 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. On colonial failures, see Pier M. Larson, “Colonies Lost: God, Hunger, and Conflict in Anosy (Madagascar) to 1674,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 27, no. 2 (2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. The best linguistic analysis of Madagascar's early history of population migrations remains Dahl: Otto Chr. Dahl, *Migration from Kalimantan to Madagascar* (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1991). An accessible summary of these migrations is found in Richard Seymour Hall, *Empires of the Monsoon : a History of the Indian Ocean and its Invaders* (London: HarperCollins, 1998). For information on some of the linguistic similarities with Bantu languages, see Christopher Ehret and Merrick Posnansky, *The Archaeological and Linguistic Reconstruction of African History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982). [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Scholars studying the Mascarene Islands face similar challenges placing their work. On various approaches, see Marina Carter, *Servants, Sirdars and Settlers: Indians in Mauritius, 1834-1874* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Richard Allen, *Slaves, Freedmen, and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Many of the English published books of this period were abolitionist literature. One missionary tract states that, without religion, “The slave trade was carried on here till very lately; for not having money, they exchanged their poor people for foreign articles of commerce, with the people of Europe.” See *Joseph Verkee, a Youth from the Island of Madagascar* (Dublin: J. and M. Porteous, 1828), 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Missionary accounts include: William Ellis, *Three Visits to Madagascar during the years 1853, 1854, 1856* (Philadelphia: Bradley & Co, 1867); Robert Kestrell-Cornish, *Journal of a Tour of Exploration in the North of Madagascar* (London: The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1877); Joseph Mullens, *Twelve Months in Madagascar* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1875). [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. See Simon Ayache, “Un intellectuel malgache devant la culture européene: l’histoirien Roambana (1809-1854), *Archipel* 12, no. 12 (1976): 95-119; François Callet, *Histoire des rois, traduction du Tantaran'ny andriana*, 5 vols. (Tananarive: Éditions de la Librairie de Madagascar, 1953). Callet, a French Jesuit priest, collected manuscripts written by highland Malagasy in missariony schools around 1860. See Larson, *History and Memory,* 35-41. Raombana was secretary to Queen Ranavalona I and had studied in Great Britain. He wrote an extensive manuscript on the Merina kingdom in English after 1829. Larson, *History and Memory*, 42. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Mullens, *Twelve Months in Madagascar*. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Grandidier, *et al*., eds., *Collection des ouvrages anciens concernant Madagascar*. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. The compilation has limitations, particularly in terms of the sources included and translations included. See, for example, Stephen Ellis, “Un texte du XVIIe siècle sur Madagascar,” *Omaly sy anio* 9 (1979): 151. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Especially Dutch and Portuguese sources, and perhaps Arabic or Turkish sources that make incidental reference to exchanges. One the first two languages, see comments about sources in Pieter E. Westra and others, *Slawehandel met Madagaskar : die joernale van die Kaapse slaweskip Leijdsman, 1715* (Kaapstad: Africana Uitgewers, 2006); Thomas Vernet, “Le commerce des esclaves sur la côte swahili, 1500 - 1750,” *Azania* 38, no. (2003). Larson is using linguistic evidence to reconstruct the forced migration of Madagascar to the Mascarenes: Pier Larson, *Ocean of Letters: Language and Creolization in an Indian Ocean Diaspora* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Raymond K. Kent, *Early Kingdoms in Madagascar, 1500-1700* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970). [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Gwyn Campbell, *An Economic History of Imperial Madagascar 1750-1895: the Rise and Fall of an Island Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Pier Martin Larson, *History and Memory.* [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Rita Astuti, *People of the Sea: Identity and Descent among the Vezo of Madagascar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Jeanne Dina, “The Hazomanga among the Masikoro of Southwest Madagascar: Identity and History,” *Ethnohistory* 48, no. 1-2 (2001); Sandra Evers, “The Construction of History and Culture in the Southern Highlands: Tombs, Slaves and Ancestors,” in *Ancestors, Power and History in Madagascar*, ed. Karen Middleton (Leiden, the Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1999); Lin Poyer and Robert L. Kelly, “Mystification of the Mikea: Constructions of Foraging Identity in Southwest Madagascar,” *Journal of Anthropological Research* 56, no. 2 (2000); Lee Haring, *Indian Ocean Folktales: Madagascar, Comoros, Mauritius, Reunion, Seychelles* (Chennai: National Folklore Support Centre, 2002); Colleen J. McElroy, *Over the Lip of the World: Among the Storytellers of Madagascar* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999). [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Sophie Goedefroit, *A l'ouest de Madagascar: les Sakalava du Menabe* (Paris: Karthala, 1998); François Raison-Jourde, ed. *Les souverains de Madagascar: l'histoire royale et ses résurgences contemporaines* (Paris: Karthala, 1983). [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Gillian Feeley-Harnik, *A Green Estate: Restoring Independence in Madagascar* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991); Michael Lambek, *The Weight of the Past: Living with History in Mahajanga, Madagascar* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Historians and anthropologists who have published about the Sakalava include: Jean François Baré, *Sable rouge: une monarchie du Nord-Quest Malgache dans l'histoire* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1980); Emmanuel Fauroux, “Les Représentations du Monde Végétal Chez les Sakalava du Menabe,” in *Milieux et sociétés dans le Sud-Ouest de Madagascar*, ed. Jean-Michel Lebigre and Emmanuel Faroux (Bordeaux: Presses Univ de Bordeux, 1997); Goedefroit, *A l'ouest de Madagascar*; Sophie Goedefroit and Jacques Lombard, *Andolo: l'art funéraire sakalava à Madagascar*, Collection “Musées” (Paris: Biro, 2007); Robert Jaovelo-Dzao, ed. *Mythes, rites et transes à Madagascar: angano, joro et tromba Sakalava* (Karthala: 1996); Jacques Lombard, *Le royaume sakalava du Menabe, 17è-20è: essai d'analyse d'un système politique à Madagascar* (Paris: Editions de l'ORSTOM, 1988). [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Feeley-Harnik is the exception. She presents a very useful summary of the anthropological literature on divine kingship in: Gillian Feeley-Harnik, “Issues in Divine Kingship,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 14 (1985): 273-313; see also the first few chapters in Feeley-Harnik, *A Green Estate.* [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. On the “Arab” influence, see Gabriel Ferrand, *Les Musulmans á Madagascar et aux iles Comores*, 3 vols. (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1891). For discussions of interaction with the outside world, see Gabriel Rantoandro, “Une Communauté Mercantile du Nord-Ouest: Les Antalaotra,” *Omaly sy anio* 20 (1983-4). [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Raymond K. Kent, “Madagascar and Africa: II. The Sakalava, Maroserana, Dady and Tromba before 1700,” *The Journal of African History* 9, no. 4 (1968). [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Conrad Phillip Kottak, *The Past in the Present: History, Ecology, and Cultural Variation in Highland Madagascar* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1980); Jørgen Ruud, *Gods and Ancestors: Society and Religion among the Forest Tribes in Madagascar* (Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2002; reprint, 1948). [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. On the Betsimisaraka, see Arne Bialuschewski, “Pirates, Slavers, and the Indigenous Population in Madagascar, c. 1690 - 1715,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 38, no. 2 (2005); Stephen Ellis, “Tom and Toakafo: The Betsimisaraka Kingdom and State Formation in Madagascar, 1715-1750,” *Journal of African History* 48 (2007); Yvette Sylla, “Les Malata: cohesion et disparité d'un 'groupe',” *Omaly sy anio* 21-22 (1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Gerald M. Berg, “Riziculture and the Founding of Monarchy in Imerina,” *The Journal of African History* 22, no. 3 (1981); Gerald M. Berg, “Radama's Smile: Domestic Challenges to Royal Ideology in Early Nineteenth-Century Imerina,” *History in Africa* 25 (1998). [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Campbell, *An Economic History*; Larson, *History and Memory.* [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. An excellent guide to the current state of research has been recently published. It is largely based on the existing secondary literature on the history of the island. Solofo Randrianja and Stephen Ellis, *Madagascar: a Short History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009). [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. The term Sakalava applies to people who were controlled by Sakalava rulers during the early modern period, although there is no evidence that their subjects would have called themselves Sakalava. The empire during this period was only loosely centralized, but it represented a means for elites to dominate exchanges and the use of violence. For instance, elites formalized their inclusion into the Sakalava Empire by ceasing warfare with other Sakalava groups and presenting themselves as blood relatives of the leaders of these groups. Some scholars may argue that this constituted a confederation, but I would argue that diffuse empires of this kind were common in West Africa as well and the use of the term empire remains a conscious choice. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)