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An Empire in the Indian Ocean: the Sakalava Empire of Madagascar

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An Empire in the Indian Ocean: the Sakalava Empire of Madagascar

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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
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Abstract

An Empire in the Indian Ocean: the Sakalava Empire of Madagascar

By Jane Louise Hooper

The dissertation argues that leaders in Madagascar used violence to dominate global trade during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Chapters in *An Empire in the Indian Ocean* describe how coping with new trading opportunities led to increasingly coercive forms of acquisition and domination, as well as the creation of the first expansive empire in the East African region. The dissertation uses maritime records from European trading companies to reveal how the Sakalava monopolized the movement of commodities within Madagascar. In the wake of new resource demands, the shores of Madagascar became important supply stations for European vessels crossing the oceans. Sakalava kings and queens controlled the trade of cattle, slaves, and rice through the use of force. They also formed alliances with other states throughout the island. As European interest in the resources of Madagascar and the Indian Ocean increased during the eighteenth century, the Sakalava Empire came under attack by rival empires. These rivals cut off Sakalava expansion on both land and sea. By the close of the nineteenth century, the empire had crumbled and being Sakalava no longer meant subjection to a certain king or ruler. Instead, it represented a way of seeing the world and understanding the past, as well as the future.

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CONTENTS

MAPS

ABBREVIATIONS

Add. MS.	Manuscript, British Library, London
ADM	Admiralty Records, British National Archives, Kew
COACM	*Collection des ouvrages anciens concernant Madagascar*, ed. Alfred Grandidier, *et al.* 9 volumes
COL	Colonial Records, French National Archives, Paris
IOR	India Office Records, East India Company, British Library, London
MAR	Maritime Records, French National Archives, Paris
Rawlinson MS	Rawlinson Manuscript, Bodleian Library, Oxford University
ZNA	Zanzibar National Archives

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] The island is located at the edge of

[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

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

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T. Spear, *The Swahili: Reconstructing the History and Language of an African Society, 800-1500* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985).

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] Sea travel

[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,

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]

Two conclusions stand out when historians study the centuries traditionally seen as a period of European exploration, trade, and settlement. [4] First, early modern globalization was particularly resource intensive, in terms of requiring raw materials to build, fuel, and supply merchant vessels.[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] 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] 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

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see Kevin H. O'Rourke and Jeffrey G. Williamson, "When Did Globalisation Begin?," *European Review of Economic History* 6, no. 1 (2002): 23-50.

[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).

[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).

[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.

[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.

[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).

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]

Modern globalization, by contrast, is marked by economic integration and declining barriers to transnational cultural forms.[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] 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

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[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.

[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.

[10] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

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] 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] The early modern period, according to Subrahmanyam, was a time of massive economic and

[11] Wolf argues against this perspective: Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History*, 24-5.

[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).

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] 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] 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] 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] 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.

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[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).

[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).

[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).

[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).

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] 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] 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] These scholars questioned whether Europeans ushered in a new period of global trade during the sixteenth century.[20]

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[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.

[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).

[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-

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] Prior to 1590, Portuguese made many attempts, but few inroads, in creating a trading monopoly in the Indian Ocean.[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]

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

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Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: the World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

[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.

[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.

[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).

[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.

Asian and Arab commerce throughout this period.[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] 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] During these centuries, European and non-European states interacted to create a new balance of trade and power.[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] By 1744, however, European trading companies came into conflict with non-European states and empires.[29]

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[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

[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).

[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).

[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).

[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*

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] 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]

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] 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

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of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

[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).

[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.

[31] Example: Isaacman, *Mozambique.*

[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).

Europeans.[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]

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] 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,

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[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.

[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).

[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.

increased warfare, and destabilized African communities.[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]

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] 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

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[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).

[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.

[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*.

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]

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] 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.

[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*.

[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).

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] 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] Some historians have argued that large states were necessary for Africans to counteract the divisiveness of the slave trade.[43]

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[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.

[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).

[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*

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] 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]

One way to make sense of the impact of trade in Africa would be to consider the environment surrounding many African ports.[46] Studies of Indian Ocean societies have highlighted in recent years the development of distinctly littoral societies that engaged in

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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>.

[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).

[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."

[46] For a description of the arid environment of East Africa: John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

oceanic trade and mediated the interactions between port cities and their interiors.[47] In locations such as along the Red Sea and the Mozambique Channel, entrepôts lay beside regions poor in natural resources.[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] 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] Yet we lack real understanding about how demands for food in particular influenced coastal African societies on both sides of the continent.[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]

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[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).

[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).

[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*.

[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).

[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).

[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"

To coordinate trade and combat the disorder of the early modern period, centralized states developed in many regions of the world.[53] State centralization became cotemporaneous with economic expansion, although which came first is unclear.[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]

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] 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] 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]

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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.

[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).

[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).

[55] On the impact of the slave trade in state formation and collapse: Akinjogbin, *Dahomey*.

[56] On militarism and its negative impact of trade: Kea, *Settlements*; Searing, *West African Slavery*.

[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).

[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.

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] 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] 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] The expansion of the use of violence accompanied the domination of trade by

[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.

[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).

[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).

elites in these empires.[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]

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] The use of firearms only maintained this dominance. The same could be said for the use of violence in many empires.[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

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[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).

[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).

[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*.

[65] See Dale, who argues against McNeill's focus on gunpowder in the development of Islamic empires. Dale, *The Muslim Empires*, 6.

exports and could coerce their subjects into obtaining such surpluses. [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] Africans, whether merchants or political leaders, asserted their will in these exchanges and became rich and influential.[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] Most importantly, in these exchanges, Sakalava rulers benefited from the recognition of Europeans of their sovereignty.[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

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[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*.

[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.

[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.

[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).

[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).

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]

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] 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] 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.

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[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).

[72] This view is expressed by Randall M. Packard, *Chiefship and Cosmology: an Historical Study of Political Competition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981).

[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).

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] 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] 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]

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] Early European visitors linked Madagascar to Marco Polo's description of an island, "one of the noblest

[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."

[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*.

[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*.

[77] According to a recent children's movie named after the island, Madagascar is inhabited by dancing lemurs and other unusual creatures.

and greatest islands in the world," home to elephants and camels in incredible numbers.[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] 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] 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] 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

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[78] Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, ed. Hugh Murray Giovanni Battista Baldelli Boni (New York: Harper & Bros, 1852). pp. 281-2.

[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.

[80] Barry Bearak, "Self-Proclaimed President Learns a Quick Lesson," *The New York Times*, 2 February 2009.

[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).

pertaining to agriculture and many Swahili terms in the mix.[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]

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] During this century, missionaries focused their energy on converting and educating the Malagasy

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[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).

[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).

[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.

under Merina control.[85] Histories written by Malagasy appeared during this period.[86] The Sakalava remained outside of many of these studies, until the period of French colonization, aside from a few mentions by missionaries.[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] 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] 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]

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[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).

[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.

[87] Mullens, *Twelve Months in Madagascar*.

[88] Grandidier, *et al*., eds., *Collection des ouvrages anciens concernant Madagascar*.

[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.

[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*

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] 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] 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] They have published complex

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(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).

[91] Raymond K. Kent, *Early Kingdoms in Madagascar, 1500-1700* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970).

[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*.

[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).

recreations of Sakalava cosmology and their ritual practices.[94] These inevitably involve lengthy discussions of the Sakalava royalty and their use of ceremonies to communicate with royal ancestors.[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] 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]

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] Raymond Kent

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[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).

[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).

[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).

[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.*

[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

developed an argument about an East African influence on Sakalava political centralization, but most historians have ignored his argument.[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] 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] 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] 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

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Gabriel Rantoandro, "Une Communauté Mercantile du Nord-Ouest: Les Antalaotra," *Omaly sy anio* 20 (1983-4).

[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).

[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).

[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).

[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).

scholarship on the rise of the Merina kingdom and empire, however, provides details about later interactions between the Sakalava and the Merina [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]

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] 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.

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[103] Campbell, *An Economic History*; Larson, *History and Memory*.

[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).

[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.

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.

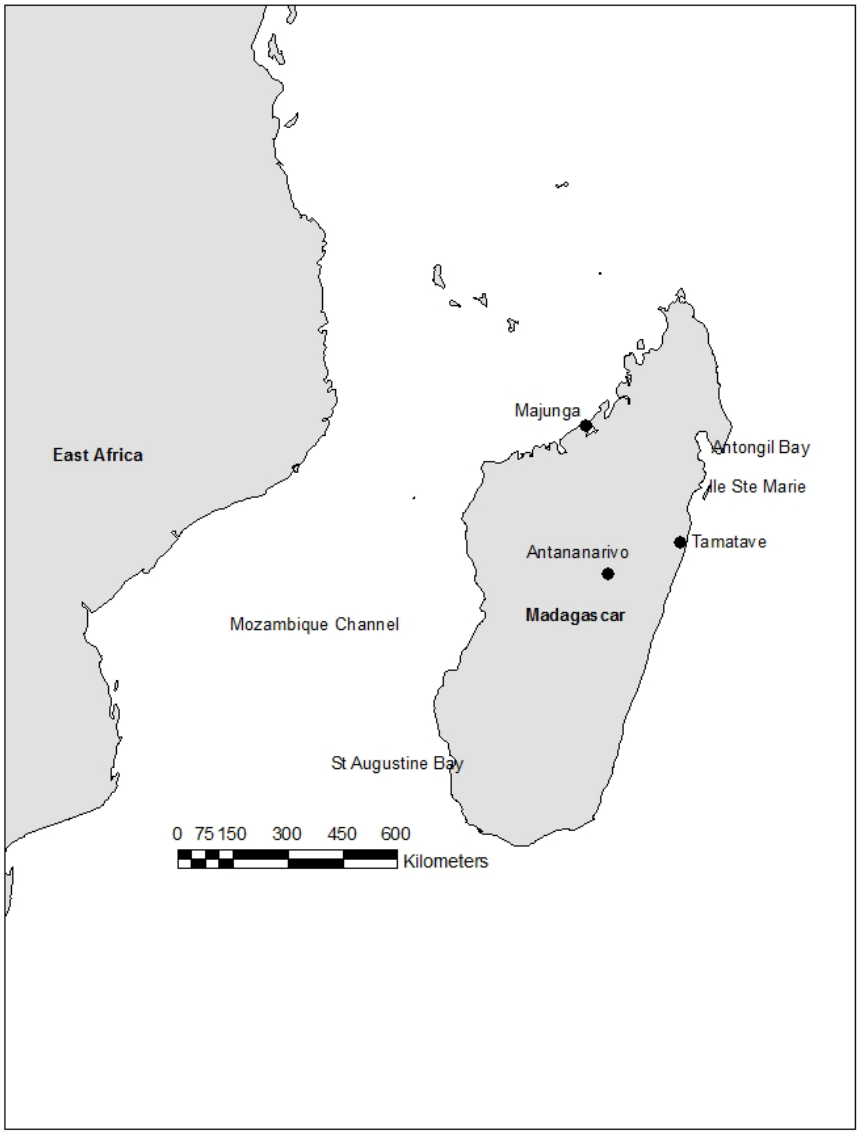
Leaders of the empire could never guarantee supplies of goods and people to European ships and relied upon frequent military expeditions to acquire these goods. Sakalava rulers used military power to obtain commodities for export and had to struggle to gain access to the food items and slaves demanded 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.

Chapter 1

On the Shores of the Onilahy River

Between 1580 and 1680, the people of southwestern Madagascar faced new challenges following to the expansion of global trading opportunities. Prior to 1580, communities in this portion of the island relied upon a combination of cattle herding, fishing, and agriculture for survival, but were primarily pastoralists. They stayed in contact with other Malagasy communities through trade, but large regions of extensive agricultural production were located at least a hundred miles from the coast.[1] When European traders began sending ships to India and Indonesia frequently during the seventeenth century, many of them stopped to purchase food in St. Augustine's Bay, located in southwestern Madagascar. This new trade introduced new political and economic pressures to communities near the bay. These decentralized communities could not dominate exchanges with European merchants. Communities of the southwest lacked the resources to trade and the military to defend themselves from competitors, including the Sakalava. A combination of disorder in the region and new economic opportunities tempted the Sakalava to seize control of the trade in the southwest by the start of the eighteenth century.

In Africa, the introduction of global trade resulted in dramatic political and economic changes, almost from the very beginning.[2] Trade had a similar impact in southwestern Madagascar. The pressures introduced by trade between inhabitants of the southwest and Europeans followed more closely the experience of many African societies

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[1] Small regions of rice production can be found in this region near the population centers, along rivers, most notably near Tulear and Morondava.

[2] For instance, see Donald R. Wright, *The World and a Very Small Place in Africa* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1997).

than societies around the Indian Ocean. Scholars emphasize the engagement of Europeans with pre-existing modes of trade in Asia and describe how Europeans failed to monopolize the movement of commodities across the ocean.[3] In northwest Madagascar, a region with a long history of trading within the Indian Ocean, this was certainly true, as Europeans faced challenges inserting themselves into exchange networks in this region.

The winds that brought yearly storms to the northwest coast carried merchants and migrants to the shores of the island as early as the tenth century and increasingly during the fifteenth century. These traders, sailing in relatively small *dhows*, came in search of food, slaves, cloth, and precious raw materials.[4] They traded with the ports' inhabitants, who usually described themselves as the *Antaloatra*, meaning the people from the ocean, from afar.[5] The Antaloatra were Muslims, spoke some Swahili and/or Arabic, and shared certain cultural practices with the people of the Swahili coast of East Africa.[6] The Antaloatra and their Swahili trading counterparts controlled oceanic trading

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[3] Sinnappah Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies, and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650-1740* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); M. N. Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat: The Response to the Portuguese in the Sixteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India, 1500-1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[4] Cloth exports perhaps from the twelfth century to the Middle East, might have been from the interior of the island. John Baldry, *Textiles in Yemen: Historical References to Trade and Commerce in Textiles in Yemen from Antiquity to Modern times* (London: British Museum, 1982), 17-8. On the trade of northwest Madagascar, see Marie Radimilahy, *Mahilaka: an Archaeological Investigation of an Early Town in Northwestern Madagascar* (Uppsala: Dept. of Archaeology and Ancient History, 1998), 32. On the linkages with elsewhere in Madagascar in, see H. T. Wright and J. A. Rakotoarisoa, "The Rise of Malagasy Societies: New Developments in the Archaeology of Madagascar," in *The Natural History of Madagascar*, ed. Steven M. Goodman and Jonathan P. Benstead (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 114; Pierre Vérin, *The History of Civilisation in North Madagascar* , trans. David Smith (Rotterdam: A. A. Balkema, 1986), 145-151.

[5] Ant- refers to the place, -laut- means ocean. The term is also spelled Antalaotra and Antalaotse. See Gabriel Rantoandro, "Une Communaute Mercantile du Nord-Ouest: Les Antalaotra," *Omaly sy anio 20*, 197. All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

[6] On the early history of Swahili city-states, see Mark Horton and John Middleton, *The Swahili: The Social Landscape of a Mercantile Society* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000); Chapurukha Makokha Kusimba, *The Rise and Fall of Swahili States* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 1999); John Middleton, *The World of the Swahili: An African Mercantile Civilization* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992);

within the southwestern Indian Ocean region. The Antaloatra lived in stone houses, constructed and worshipped in stone mosques, and wore long robes of (usually foreign) cloth.[7] These physical markers served to set them apart from other groups living in Madagascar, as did their economic activity: oceanic trade. Antaloatra used their appearance as both a mark of their social superiority and as an expression of their economic links to Indian Ocean traders. The name Antaloatra signaled their origins from across the ocean, although most spoke Malagasy and married individuals of Malagasy descent.

In many ways, Antaloatra constructed their identity as a trading group much as other groups in Madagascar emphasized their fishing or agriculturalist occupations.[8] As with Swahili merchants, the Antaloatra purported to be uniquely suited to mediate between ocean and land-based exchanges in Madagascar. Pre-modern trade in the southwestern Indian Ocean region was not egalitarian or peaceful. Antaloatra merchants controlled the imports of foreign items and prevented other groups from doing so.[9] Nor was this trade static, as archeologists have shown. Prior to the seventeenth century, no single port dominated trade, nor did a single state rule these ports. Different trading ports experienced varying degrees of success with obtaining the necessary provisions for the coastal inhabitants and for sale to traders.[10] As a result, at least a dozen ports were

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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).

[7] The earliest Portuguese sources describing northwestern Madagascar: Tristan da Cunha, 1506, COACM, 1:15-6; Fernan d'Albuquerque, 1506, Ibid., 1: 20-22.

[8] 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): 165.

[9] Just as the Swahili did: Kusimba, *The rise and fall of Swahili states*, 154.

[10] Around the thirteenth century, the trading city of Mahilaka was abandoned. Scholars suspect the fleas on these rodents may have carried the plague to Madagascar and the plague resulted in the deaths of the city's inhabitants. These animals also damaged, over time, the local vegetation and agricultural crops on

located in northern Madagascar by the late fifteenth century, according to the Arab geographer Ibn Mājid.[11] As in East Africa, powerful merchants probably controlled these ports and had limited control over inland populations, with whom they both fought and traded.[12]

Due to the existence of networks linking northern Madagascar with groups in the Indian Ocean, Europeans failed to dominate trade in this region. Sources attest to Portuguese attempts to establish trading forts, as they had on the Island of Mozambique, and convert the Malagasy to Christianity.[13] Antaloatra first expressed only apathy towards visiting European merchants, but showed concern when the Portuguese tried to become a permanent presence on their coast. The growing antagonism between the two groups resulted in the murder of a Portuguese priest sent to convert the Malagasy towards

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the island, particularly in the north, making it even harder to produce sufficient food supplies locally. See Radimilahy, *Mahilaka*, 210-11. On the black plague, see J. M. Duplantier and J.B. Duchemin, "Introduced Small Mammals and Their Ectoparasites: A Description of their Colonization and Its Consequences," in *The Natural History of Madagascar*, ed. Goodman and Benstead, 1193. On the continuing problem of rats on the island, see Steven M. Goodman, "Rattus on Madagascar and the Dilemma of Protecting the Endemic Rodent Fauna," *Conservation Biology* 9, no. 2 (1995): 452. New port cities filled the vacuum left by the collapse of Mahilaka: Vohémar (northeastern coast) around the fourteenth century, Langany and Kigany along the northwest coast during the fifteenth century and Irodo (on the northeast) around the fifteenth century. Pierre Vérin, "Irodo et la Tradition Vohémarienne: Les decouverts d'Irodo et les Civilisations du Nord-Est" from *Arabes et Islamisés*, XXVII; Vérin, *History of Civilisation*, 151-169.

[11] On various locations visited by Arab sailors in Madagascar, see the remarks of Tibbetts in Ahmad ibn Majid al-Najdi, *Arab Navigation in the Indian Ocean before the Coming of the Portuguese*, ed. G. R. Tibbetts (London: Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1972), 432-5. He lists the following ports on the island of al-Qumr: Haufā, 'Umda, Ra's al-Miḷh, Langānī or Lūlūjān, Sa'da, Mazalājī [Massaleige, Mazalage, Boina, Majunga, in European texts], Banda al-Nūb, Malawīnī, Anāmil, Bandar Sha'bān, Bandar Kūrī, Bandar Qāsim, Bandar Hait, Ghubba Kūrī, Bandar Banī Ismā'īl, Bīmārūh, Jazīrat al-'Ain, Naitam, Nusim, Mankāra. Various smaller islands around Madagascar are also mentioned. Ibn Majid, however, identifies ports in Madagascar also described in Portuguese sources. On identifying these ports, see Jean-Claude Hébert, "Sur des ports esclavagistes de la côte nord-ouest de Madagascar dont le nom est devenu obsolète : Maringado ou Moringambo et Lulangani/Langany/Morumgany," in *Navires, ports, itinéraires*, ed. Claude Allibert (Paris: Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales, 1999).

[12] Swahili political leadership was held by elites who also controlled trade: Kusimba, *The Rise and Fall of Swahili States*, 180-2.

[13] A good source for this history: *The Mombasa Rising Against the Portuguese, 1631: from Sworn Evidence*, ed. and trans., G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville (London: Published for the British Academy by the Oxford University Press, 1980).

the end of the sixteenth century.[14] Following several more conversion attempts, Portuguese appear to have traded occasionally in the Malagasy ports of the northwest and halted efforts aimed at forming a more lasting relationship.[15] The Portuguese blamed an implacable hatred of Christians and the strength of the "commercial sphere of the Arabs" for discouraging the Muslims on the island from trading with Christians.[16]

Southwestern Madagascar, however, was not a part of these Indian Ocean trade networks during the sixteenth century. Communities lacked direct contact with oceanic trade until the arrival of European ships. The communities, reliant on their cattle for survival, supported themselves by herding livestock and trading for goods from neighboring communities. Despite being isolated from direct contact with global trade networks on the island, they were engaged in long-distance land-based trade. When Europeans arrived in the region, however, they introduced new pressures, as more and more ships entered the ocean and visited new ports and regions.

The arrival of new commodities on the ships had less of an impact than the arrival of European sailors and soldiers in southwestern Madagascar. Feeding and provisioning the crews of these ships placed new pressures upon local communities and their environments, even though Europeans failed to form colonies on Madagascar. Enticed by access to oceanic trade, new leaders began to violently seize control of littoral regions by

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[14] "Histoire de la revolte des musulmans de Madagascar contre les Portugais, et martyre du P. Thomas," 1587, in COACM, 1:153-9. The culprits were "Arabes" or "Mores de l'isle de Saint-Laurent."

[15] Since there are sporadic references to the importation of food from Madagascar into Mozambique during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, it seems likely that small ships frequently crossed the Mozambique Channel. Thus far, the sources have not been examined in depth. Alpers has tracked the nineteenth century movement of food from Madagascar into Mozambique: Edward A. Alpers, "The Western Indian Ocean as a Regional Food Network in the Nineteenth Century," in *Africa and the Indian Ocean* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, Princeton, 2009).

[16] Luis Mariano, Portuguese Jesuit priest, visiting Madagascar in 1619, COACM, 1: 319-21.

developing centralized states within Madagascar. Global trade and the instability that accompanied it allowed the Sakalava to invade and conquer the people of the southwest.

The story therefore begins in the southwest of Madagascar. Our knowledge of this region comes from only a few sources: mythic histories, archeological studies, and European observations of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Europeans described the diversity of the inhabitants of the island and their participation in trade networks, both internal and external to the island. They referred to Malagasy beliefs and political practices as primitive and baffling. The mythic beginnings of the Malagasy communities were collected as oral traditions during the nineteenth century. These traditions were also found in Arabico-Malagasy manuscripts known as the *sorabe*.[17] Archeological studies have bridged these two sets of sources and supported stories of migrations and exchanges connecting various groups on the island.[18] With these sources, we can try to understand the negotiations that occurred between Malagasy and Europeans during the first half of the seventeenth century.

The Land and the People

When Europeans first visited the shores of Madagascar, they were struck by the differences between the Antaloatra-controlled, cosmopolitan ports of the northwest and

[17] For examples of sorabe and myths of origins in the southeast of the island, see the collections of Ferrand, especially Gabriel Ferrand, *Les Musulmans à Madagascar et aux îles Comores* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1891). The sorabe mostly date from the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries

[18] These include: Georges Heurtebize, *Histoire des Afomarolahy (Clan Tandroy, extrême-sud de Madagascar)* (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1986); Barthélémy Manjakahery and Chantal Radimilahy, "Archaeology of St Augustine's Bay, Lower and Middle Onilahy Valley, Southwestern Madagascar," *Studies in the African Past* 5 (2006); Wright and Rakotoarisoa, "The Rise of Malagasy Societies."

the seemingly isolated communities elsewhere on the island.[19] European merchants that stopped in Madagascar were unaware that the first Madagascar settlers probably arrived along the southwestern coast during the first centuries CE.[20] They likely sailed across the ocean in outrigger sailing canoes. The first migrants may have taken a direct route from present-day Borneo, but some scholars suggest that they first visited East Africa before deciding to explore the large island of the moon, Madagascar, to their south.[21] The settlers, first arriving in the early centuries CE, found a land uninhabited and home to strange and unusual wildlife.[22] The island had broken away from East Africa around 160 million years ago, and then from India. During the last 88 million years, the island's environment had developed in relative isolation, at least until the arrival of the Malagasy.[23]

Europeans also did not know that the Malagasy were aware of the wider world. The first settlers of the island had sailed across the ocean and likely arrived at southwestern Madagascar. In coming to the island, the Malagasy brought beliefs and material objects to remind them of their origins in Southeast Asia and East Africa.

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[19] On the distinctions between the Antaloatra and the Malagasy "Bouki," see Ramusio, 1550, COACM, 1: 99-100.

[20] It seems likely, given archeological findings, that the first visitors to the island visited the north. Wright and Rakotoarisoa, "The Rise of Malagasy Societies," 112-3. On the earliest evidence of habitation in the southwest, see Manjakahery and Radimilahy, "Archaeology of St. Augustine's Bay," 65-7.

[21] The location of the "island of the moon" – *al-qumr* – recorded in Arabic sources is a subject of debate. The close commercial ties between East Africa, the Comoro Islands, and northern Madagascar may have meant the whole region of southwest Indian Ocean, home to several trading islands, was referred to as one place, the island of the moon. Frequent visits by ships to all of these three places meant the Arabs possessed extensive knowledge of the entire region.

[22] For a good summary of archeological studies completed in Madagascar, see Wright, "The Rise of Malagasy Societies," 112-6; David A. Burney and others, "A Chronology for Late Prehistoric Madagascar," *Journal of Human Evolution* 47, no. 1-2 (2004): 25-63.

[23] Jonathan P. Benstead and others, "Conserving Madagascar's Freshwater Biodiversity," *BioScience* 53, no. 11 (2003): 1101. The Seychelles islands were also continental, which explains their unique wildlife. By contrast, the flora and fauna of the Comoro and Mascarene islands came from either Madagascar or East Africa, and then developed in isolation into animals like the dodo bird. See Robert J. Whittaker, *Island Biogeography: Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 45.

Historians, anthropologists, and linguists debate the origins of the Malagasy and their cultural practices.[24] Attempts to uncover the origins of the Malagasy began as an effort to categorize the islanders. Many historians now wish to understand how the proto-Malagasy managed to cross the Indian Ocean during the first centuries C.E. They also describe the Malagasy as having absorbed beliefs and material objects from locations around the ocean's littoral.[25]

Malagasy called the ocean *ranomasina*, meaning salty water, and being salty, *masina*, took on a religious significance in their communities. Masina meant the inseparable power and strength that certain beings and things possessed.[26] Saltiness, therefore, signified power.[27] The water itself, in rivers and along coasts, enabled the trade and migration that linked disparate populations on the island.

Following their arrival, the settlers spread throughout the island and began shaping the landscape. The indigenous flora and fauna of the island had never experienced any threats from humans before. The southwestern portion of Madagascar was much damper at this time and was home to giant tortoises, the elephant bird (the largest bird ever recorded), at least fourteen species of lemur, and the pygmy hippo. Many of these animals were extinct by the time Europeans arrived at the shores of

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[24] Øyvind Dahl, *Meanings in Madagascar* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999); Alexander Adelaar, "The Indonesian Migrations to Madagascar: Making Sense of the Multidisciplinary Evidence" (paper presented at meeting on the Austronesian Diaspora and the Ethnogensis of People, 2006), http://www.santafe.edu/events/workshops/images/6/6d/IndonesianMigrations.pdf (accessed 6 March 2009); Otto Christian Dahl, *Migration from Kalimantan to Madagascar* (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1991), 20-34.

[25] This history is summarized in Solofo Randrianja and Stephen Ellis, *Madagascar: A Short History*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 17-19, 24-34. This book gives a good summary of the state of historical and anthropological research concerning Madagascar.

[26] For a discussion of *hasina*, see Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 43.

[27] Chantal Radimilahy, "Sacred Sites in Madagascar," in *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*, ed. David L Carmichael, et al. (London: Routledge, 1994), 82.

Madagascar.[28] Hunters targeted these animals and farmers eliminated their habitats through the introduction of new species of animals and the cultivation of new plants.[29] Cattle ate the plants previously consumed by the indigenous animals. Introduced crops such as rice took away land from indigenous plants. The land also dried up during this time, producing the arid landscape to which the Malagasy living in the southwest adapted.

Prior to the seventeenth century, the Malagasy hunted, bred animals, and worked iron, all activities that shaped their landscape.[30] The growing population on the island produced slow but steady changes to the natural landscape of Madagascar.[31] Most scholars studying environmental history do not examine the impact of non-European societies and their surroundings prior to European colonization.[32] Yet Madagascar provides a striking example of a non-European "settler colony" interacting with and changing its environment.[33] Many scientists have begun to examine the long history of environmental change on the island, perhaps because Madagascar is currently home to a

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[28] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar,* 22-4.

[29] Ventura R. Pereza and others, "Evidence of Early Butchery of Giant Lemurs in Madagascar," *Journal of Human Evolution* 49, no. 6 (2005): 722-72; P. Binggeli, "Introduced and Invasive Plants," in *The Natural History of Madagascar*, ed. Goodman and Benstead, 227. Their extinction was probably similar to that of the dodo bird in the Mascarenes – a mixture of human hunting, the introduction of new predators (especially dogs) and elimination of the dodo's habitat. In reference to Madagascar, see David Quammen, *The Song of the Dodo: Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinctions* (New York: Scribner, 1996), 49-53.

[30] Ibid., 66.

[31] Radimilahy and Manjakahery, "Archaeology of St. Augustine's Bay," 66-68; M. R. Jury, "The Climate of Madagascar," in *The Natural History of Madagascar*, ed. Goodman and Benstead, 75-84. On dramatic environmental shifts in Madagascar, see J. Carter Ingram and Terence P. Dawson, "Climate Change Impacts and Vegetation Response on the Island of Madagascar," *Philosophical Transactions: Mathematical, Physical and Engineering Sciences* 363, no. 1826 (2005): 57; Jörg U. Ganzhorn, "Cyclones over Madagascar: Fate or Fortune," *Ambio* 24, no. 2 (1995): 124.

[32] This is due to the rise of environmental history to study frontier and colonial societies. See William Beinart and Peter A. Coates, *Environment and History: the taming of nature in the USA and South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1995).

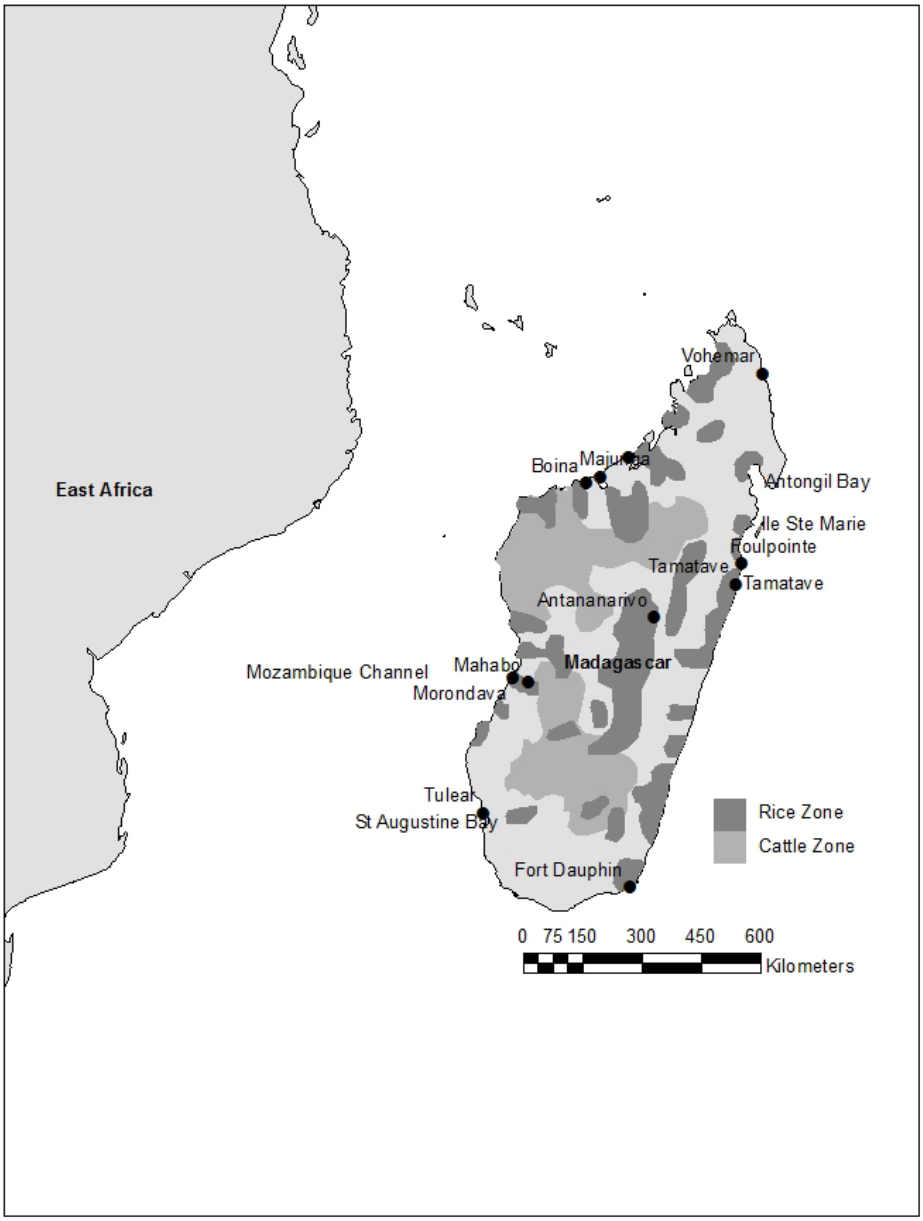
[33]Randrianja and Ellis remind us that "The ecology of the island was already 'dynamically changing' before the arrival of the first people." Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar,* 22.

number of endangered species.[34] Meanwhile, many advocates would benefit from a study of the historical basis for practices such as slash-and-burn agriculture now seen as environmentally harmful.[35]

[34] R. E. Dewar, "Relationship between Human Ecological Pressure and the Vertebrate Extinctions," in *The Natural History of Madagascar*, ed. Steven M. Goodman and Jonathan P. Benstead(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Quammen, *The Song of the Dodo*; Whittaker, *Island Biogeography*. It must be remembered that under French colonialism, far more land was cleared for agricultural production. Lucy Jarosz, "Defining and Explaining Tropical Deforestation: Shifting Cultivation and Population Growth in Colonial Madagascar (1896-1940), *Economic Geography* 69, no. 4, (Oct., 1993): 366-379.

[35] On the more contemporary attempts to restrict the use of fire for agriculture in Madagascar, see Christian A. Kull, *Isle of Fire: The Political Ecology of Landscape Burning in Madagascar* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 81-4.

Environmental problems have had a severe impact on poverty in Madagascar. The people of Madagascar used to supply food for the southwestern Indian Ocean but have recently imported food. The food shortages are even worse in southern Madagascar. A 2010 report by the "Global Information and Early Warning System" on food and agriculture concluded that, despite good rice harvests in 2009, the people of the south are "chronically food insecure" due to dry conditions near Tulear impacting not just rice production, but also cassava (manioc) and maize. These problems, combined with the impact of a powerful cyclone in southeastern Madagascar, mean that people will have problems during 2010 purchasing food in southern Madagascar. The report also reminds us that "Madagascar as a whole has the highest level of acute malnutrition (15 percent) and chronic malnutrition (53 percent) in Southern Africa." From the GIEWS Country Brief on Madagascar, 20 March 2010, "Global Information and Early Warning System," found online
http://www.fao.org/giews/countrybrief/country.jsp?code=MDG, <accessed 1 April 2010>.



Map 2: Approximate zones of cattle herding and rice growing, based upon twentieth century practices

Archeologists have concluded that southwestern communities herded cattle by the eleventh or twelfth centuries CE, allowing for the expansion of human populations in this region by the following century.[36] The cattle, known also as zebu, could survive in tropical environments. The cattle came from Southeast Asia on ships much like the ones that carried the settlers of Madagascar. Migrants imported zebu, distinguished by a large hump on their shoulders, to East Africa, where they interbred with indigenous cattle breeds. [37] These cattle subsequently came from East Africa and spread throughout Madagascar by the twelfth century.[38]

Some scholars suggest the Malagasy reliance on cattle herding demonstrates their common ancestry with communities in East Africa, with whom they may have maintained trading links from the ninth century onward.[39] Trade networks within Madagascar, however, were more important for the pastoral communities of southern Madagascar.[40] Archeologists have shown that the Malagasy of southwestern Madagascar even possessed commodities obtained from the northern ports of the island. These commodities included imported Islamic and Chinese ceramics, such as celadon, glass,

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[36] Burney and others, "A Chronology for Late Prehistoric Madagascar," 30, 34; R.E. Dewar and H.T. Wright, "The Culture History of Madagascar," *Journal of World Prehistory* 7 (1993): 417-466. On the long-term impact of this cattle herding and the environment, see Jeffrey C. Kaufmann, "Prickly Pear Cactus and Pastoralism in Southwest Madagascar," *Ethnology* 43, no. 4 (2004): 347.

[37] Dewar, "Relationship between Human Ecological Pressure," 122.

[38] On cattle in Madagascar, see Charles Ravoajanahary, "The settlement of Madagascar: two approaches," in *Historical Relations across the Indian Ocean* (Port Louis, Mauritius: UNESCO, 1974), 85; Pierre Vérin, "Cultural influences and the contribution of Africa to the settlement of Madagascar," in Ibid., 107.

[39] Radimilahy, "Archaeology of St. Augustine's Bay," 62-8. Horton posits a presence of pastoralists and zebu cattle in Shanga, a Swahili port. Mark Horton, *Shanga: The Archaeology of a Muslim Trading Community on the Coast of East Africa* (London: The British Institute in Eastern Africa, 1996), 392, 411.

[40] This was also the case in East Africa: Helge Kjekshus, *Ecology Control and Economic Development in East African History* (London: James Currey, 1996)

and glass beads prior to the sixteenth century.[41]It appears that humped zebu cattle, along with sheep and goats, constituted a form of moveable wealth in southern and western Madagascar. Malagasy exchanged this livestock for pottery or food sources with neighboring groups.[42] By the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, simultaneously a mark of status and source of food, the possession of livestock allowed herders to support their families in arid regions and supplement their riverside agriculture.[43]

The agriculturalists grew rice in the more fertile and temperate center of the island.[44] Rice farming may have arrived in Madagascar with these first settlers, who grew it on land cleared by human-set fires, or *tavy*.[45] Pastoralists probably rarely used fires to clear plant life in the south and west, where they used different strategies to make use of the land.[46] The burning of wood to heat iron and allow the cultivation of rice in central and eastern Madagascar, however, created expanses of deforested grassland by the time Europeans arrived.[47]

The people of the highlands began storing their rice harvests in silos around the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This period was also marked by an increase in social

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[41] Radimilahy, "Archaeology of St. Augustine's Bay," 66-67. Life in an arid region meant small populations, not that the pastoralists lacked a surplus for engaging in exchanges. Rather than seeing the local economy as underdeveloped, this study presents their perceptions of value predicated on an understanding of survival in an environment foreign to the European traders. Sahlins argues against the idea of a " 'mere subsistence economy.'" Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (Hawthorne, New York: Aldine Transaction, 1972), 2-3, on mobility and moveable wealth, see 11-12.

[42] Radimilahy, "Archaeology of St. Augustine's Bay," 67-8.

[43] See, for instance, Heurtebize, *Histoire des Afomarolahy* ,77-9; Kaufmann, "Prickly Pear Cactus," 347.

[44] On the spread of rice farming: Burney and others, "A Chronology."

[45] On early rice growing, see the conclusions of archeologists: Wright and Rakotoarisoa, "The Rise of Malagasy Societies," 114.

[46] Kaufmann, "Prickly Pear Cactus," 350-1.

[47] On sites of iron working in southern Madagascar, see Chantal Radimilahy, *L'ancienne métallurgie du fer à Madagascar* (Oxford: BAR International Series, 1988), 66-72, 122-157.

differentiation in the interior of Madagascar.[48] Traders sold surplus rice to other communities, such as the herders of the south in return for cattle. [49] They also sold the food to the northern ports of the island that would buy the rice with prestige goods obtained through Indian Ocean trading.[50] Elites who could export rice and other commodities used their wealth to build elaborate tombs by the seventeenth or eighteenth century.[51] These centuries also marked an increased in irrigated agriculture in the center of the island. The highlands supported a relatively higher population density elsewhere on the island.[52] In addition to retaining or exchanging war-captives, communities in the highlands appear to have sold slaves to northern ports, where traders sold the slaves to passing Indian Ocean merchants.[53]

Traditions gathered on Madagascar have described "intense internal population migrations."[54] For instance, these histories tell of several groups who passed through the southwest on their way elsewhere in the island. These groups included the *tompon-tany* (original owners of the land), the Tandavake (those who lived in caves), and the Masikoro of the valleys. More contemporarily, besides the pastoralists, groups in the southwest have included the Vezo fishermen, the Mikea forest foragers (perhaps related

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[48] Wright and Rakotoarisoa, "The Rise of Malagasy Societies," 116.

[49] On elites on the highland before the Merina Empire, see, Charlotte Liliane Rabesahala-Randriamananoro, *Ambohimanga-Rova: approche anthropologique de la civilisation merina, Madagascar* (Paris: Le Publieur, 2005), 21-2.

[50] Dahl, *Migration from Kalimantan to Madagascar*, 67; Rabesahala-Randriamananoro, *Ambohimanga-Rova*, 290-1.

[51] Ramilisonina, "Topographies religieuse d'un terrior et relations entre Vivants et Ancestres á Madagascar: Les Bezanozano Zandroandrena et Tsimifahy (Mandialaza-Moramanga), in *Ancestralité et Identité à Madagascar* (Paris: Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, 2001), 100-116.

[52] Gerald M. Berg, "Riziculture and the Founding of Monarchy in Imerina," *The Journal of African History* 22, no. 3 (1981): 291-2.

[53] "A Voyage in the ship Frances from Mossambique for St. Lawrence", 1640, reproduced in 1700?, in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334," Memoirs of East India, Bodleian Library, Oxford University Library, ff. 54-7.

[54] Radimilahy and Manjakahery, "Archaeology of St. Augustine's Bay," 63-64.

to the mythical Kimosy in oral traditions), and the Bara who were agriculturalists in interior.[55] All of these groups intermarried with the pastoralists of south and western Madagascar. They had common cultural practices and religious beliefs. Migration and trade, these traditions seem to suggest, tied various populations of Madagascar together, even as the disparate landscapes they inhabited separated them.

Malagasy traditions, collected during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, may have overstated the importance of these connections, due to the pressures of Merina and French colonization. Historians studying pre-colonial African societies have written about the challenges in using oral histories and traditions, particularly those collected during the colonial period.[56] These traditions represented a way of understanding not the past, but how the Malagasy perceived their history. Malagasy traditions described the mythic beginnings of communities on the island. Almost all Malagasy groups preserved a story of their arrival on the island and clashing with an already resident people, the *tompon-tany*, the *Vazimba*. Traditions described the Vazimba as lacking rice, cattle, and iron-working technology.[57] Rice cultivation gradually encroached into Vazimba land, according to oral traditions. While respecting the deep connections between the Vazimba

[55] On the connection between identity and economic livelihood, especially as it pertains to the Mikea, see Poyer and Kelly, "Mystification of the Mikea," 164-6.

[56] Randrianja and Ellis. *Madagascar*, 10-11. On the use of oral histories, see J. F. Ade Ajayi and Michael Crowder, *History of West Africa*, 3rd ed. (London: Longman, 1985), 259; Peter R. Schmidt, *Historical archaeology in Africa : representation, social memory, and oral traditions* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2006), 225-243; Jan Vansina, *Oral tradition as history* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

[57] In fact, contemporary hunter-gathers on the island are equated with the Vazimba and treated as either mythical or relics of a distant past. See Poyer and Kelly, "Mystification of the Mikea,"170-1.

and the island environment, agriculturalists took control of land previously held by the Vazimba, expanded their rice fields, and supported large numbers of dependents.[58]

For a long time, scholars treated such stories with incredulity, yet recent research has given credence to these traditions. Archeological studies note the expansion of rice farming began around the fourteenth century, suggesting a decisive shift towards agriculture occurred.[59] Linguistic studies also confirm that different populations mingled in Madagascar.[60] The Merina may have been more recent arrivals, suggests Otto Dahl, and introduced new agricultural practices, iron-working technologies, and vocabulary to the populations already on the island.[61] Dahl even argues there may have been a distinct Vazimba language prior to the arrival of the proto-Merina.[62] Furthermore, archeological studies seem to confirm the gradual settlement of various parts of the island, thanks to technological innovations that allowed for waves of migration throughout Madagascar.[63]

Merina may have used the conquest tradition, even it were rooted in historical events, to assert their superiority over the "African substratum" known as the Vazimba.[64]

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[58] François Callet, *Histoire des rois, traduction du Tantaran'ny andriana*, 5 vols. (Tananarive: Éditions de la Librairie de Madagascar, 1953), 1: 15. For current and past traditions involving the Vazimba, see, for instance, Charles Guillain, *Documents sur l'histoire, la geographie et le commerce de la partie occidentale de Madagascar* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1845), 8-15; Jørgen Ruud, *Gods and Ancestors: Society and Religion among the Forest Tribes in Madagascar* (1948; reprint, Oslo: Solum Forlag, 2002), 40.

[59] Wright, "The Rise of Malagasy Societies," 113.

[60] Despite the persistence of scholars arguing that the Malagasy all spoke a commonly recognizable language prior to the nineteenth century, it seems unlikely that people from southern and northern Madagascar, for instance, could understand one another clearly. Due to oceanic connections, groups on the coast incorporated more Swahili and Arabic words, producing a dialect that other groups would find hard to understand. It is likely, however, that neighboring groups in Madagascar could communicate with ease.

[61] Otto Chr. Dahl, *Migration from Kalimantan to Madagascar* (Oslo: The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1991), 117-8.

[62] Its worth nothing that the term Merina is derived from the name of the ruler, Andrianampoinimerina, who united the highland kingdoms in Madagascar during the late eighteenth century. The term was not previously in existence.

[63] Radimilahy and Manjakahery, "Archaeology of St. Augustine's Bay," 68.

[64] Dahl, *Migration from Kalimantan*, 73, 87, 115.

This tradition of conquest over technologically inferior groups has found its way into the myths of the Sakalava and other Malagasy in the southeast of the island.[65] This early myth has also blended with Malagasy ideas of the divinity of the natural world.[66] As settlers, the Malagasy represented their migrations to visiting Europeans as choices. These choices allowed those who led communities on the island to assert themselves as foreign and possessing ties elsewhere in the Indian Ocean. Leaders in southeastern Madagascar, the *Andriana*, claimed Arab ancestry from an Arab migrant named Darafify.[67]

The following tradition from southern Madagascar neatly summarizes the choices made by the settlers of the island. The protagonist, Darafify, was originally from Mecca and travelled along the eastern coast of Madagascar in search of a home.[68] Darafify boarded a ship in northern Madagascar, with his wife Ramaliavaratra and a red cow. He may have been from the Middle East but the shores of Madagascar attracted his interest. He decided to settle in the south of the island and the origin history traced how he reached this decision. Darafify and his companions sailed along the east coast of Madagascar and when they arrived at Sakaleona, the cow bellowed but “Darafify said, 'We will not stop here, for the kings who reign in this region cannot care for their people, as the Sakaleona is a river with two mouths.' At Fanantara, the cow bellowed again, but

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[65] Example: E. Birkeli, "Folklore Sakalava: recueilli dans la région de Morondava," *Bulletin de l'Académie Malgache* VI (1924): 192.

[66] Ramilisonina, "Topographies religiouse.”

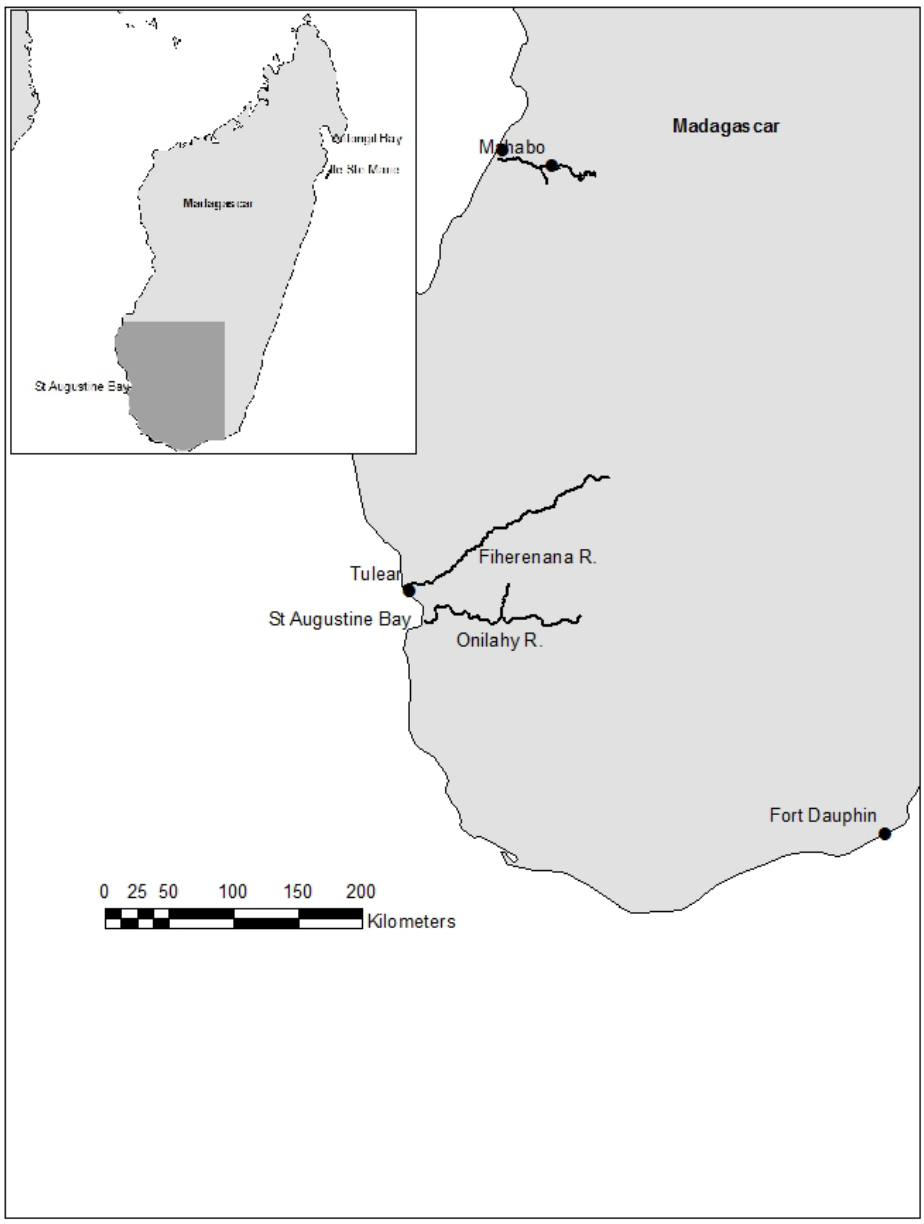
[67] Or Ramina, depending on the oral tradition. On sorabe traditions, see Jacques Dez, “De l'influence arabe à Madagascar a l'aide de faits de linguistique,” in *Arabes et Islamisés à Madagascar et dans l'océan Indien* (Revue de Madagascar, distribué par Hachette-Madagascar, 1967), 4; Gabriel Ferrand, *Les Musulmans a Madagascar et aux iles Comores* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1891), 1: 36. For a different perspective, see N. J. Gueunier, *Chemins de L'Islam A Madagascar* (Paris: L.'Harmattan, 1994), 42. Andriana has been translated as lord in Malagasy.

[68] This sorabe tradition traces the migration of a migrant (literate in Arabic) from Mecca to the southeastern coast of Madagascar.

Darafify said, 'The Fanantara is a river of which the mouth is too close to the source, so the inhabitants will be not easy to govern.'" Darafify continued his criticisms of various coastal villages as they sailed along the southeastern coast of Madagascar. At one spot, a bank of rocks prevented the inhabitants along the river from trading. The site of the next town near a small river opening would encourage its inhabitants to revolt. In another region, profitable trade encouraged the rich to fight constantly with each other. Finally, Darafify, his wife, and cow arrived at the southern tip of the island, "the country of cattle *par excellence*," and the three decided to settle there.[69]

This history described the appeal of living in southern Madagascar for the settlers. This tradition gained popularity in Madagascar because it spoke to the way people viewed their worlds and judged the value of their landscapes. Throughout southern Madagascar, communities survived through herding cattle and used rivers to trade and travel before Europeans first arrived in the 1580s. Darafify noted that the location of a community could mean the difference between success and failure. The history of Darafify mirrored the experience of the Malagasy in southwestern Madagascar, as they had chosen to settle in the south and developed methods for surviving in the region. European visitors failed to understand how they lived in this region, seemingly surviving with very little. Europeans did not understand the interactions between the Malagasy and their surroundings, as their early interactions with the people of the southwest make clear.

[69] The story of Darafify, found in Andre Dandouau, *Contes populaires des Sakalava et des Tsimihety de la region d'Analalava* (Alger: Jules Carbonel, 1922), 380-392.



Map 3: Southwestern Madagascar

The Arrival of the *Vazaha*[70]

Vazaha first visited the large southwestern bay during the mid-sixteenth century and then more regularly during the following century, as European monopoly companies entered into Indian Ocean trade. Their ships came into the round bay of Antantsoňo at the end of the Onilahy River. The vazaha probably came with translators from northwestern Madagascar. These translators would have called the merchants Portuguese, English, Dutch, or French. The vazaha began to refer to the bay as St. Augustine's Bay and the island as St. Laurence, Laurenço and Madagascar. Its people were the Malagasy or *Malgache.*[71] The vazaha also devised new names for the prominent features of the land in the bay: the hill to the north became Westminster Hall (or "Abbey"), the river, Dartmouth, and the tiny islands in the bay included Tent Rock, where European sailors buried their deceased. Future ships used these landmarks to enter the bay safely.[72]

Globalization transformed the region around St. Augustine's Bay into an oceanic trading center. The Europeans they sought to barter for food and, occasionally, slaves all along Madagascar. European ships began visiting St. Augustine's Bay around 1575, but then almost annually after 1614.[73] The crews of these ships found themselves in an

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[70] *Vazaha* means, in contemporary usage, "foreigner," but usually the term describes people of white European descent. Terms such as *Karana* (Indian descent), *Chinois* (Chinese descent) and *Silamo* (of Arabian descent or a Muslim) are used to designate other non-Malagasy. On the term for non-Muslim Malagasy (probably an Arabic term), *Bouki*, see the records of the Jesuit Priests Mariano and Freire, in 1613-4, in COACM, 2: 26.

[71] I have been unable to uncover the derivation of the term and have not seen a satisfying explanation in the secondary literature.

[72] On navigation into the bay, see especially John Thornton, *The English Pilot: the Third Book* (London, 1703), "Maps 22.d.30," Maps Reading Room, British Library; John Seller, *The English Pilot (Book III)* (London: 1761), "Maps.C.22.d.17," Maps Reading Room, British Library.

[73] One of the earliest visits was in 1575, by the Portuguese, according to André Thevet, in Grandider, COACM, 1: 128. Dutch and Portuguese likely visited the bay earlier. The visits during the early seventeenth century were by the English. Ship journal of the Hector, 1608, "IOR/E/3/1," ff. 9-12, India Office Records, East India Company, African and Asian Studies Reading Room, British Library, London (henceforth IOR); ship journal of the Hector, 1614, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XX"; ship journal of New Year's Gift,

isolated bay, its shore covered with low scrub bushes and crossed with rivers stretching inland. When the starving crews boarded canoes and came ashore, they found a collection of huts and cattle. Communities inhabiting the land surrounding the bay numbered perhaps five hundred inhabitants. They agreed to exchange a dozen cattle in return for brass wire and handfuls of beads.[74] Walking around the shoreline, the Europeans would have found fruit, wood, and sources of fresh water to fill their empty barrels. Recovered and renewed, the crews sailed on to their final destinations in India and the Arabian Peninsula. Over the following decades, encouraged by the safety of the bay and welcoming local communities, more ships began to visit the area. Their crews bought even more cattle and chopped down more trees, took fresh water and fruit, and interfered in local politics. Europeans labeled St. Augustine's Bay on their maps and European ships added a stop in the bay to their itineraries.[75]

The Portuguese were the first to explore, trade with, and attempt to convert the island's inhabitants. Their early ventures, more out of convenience than any other reason, focused on the northwestern Antaloatra-dominated ports, with limited success. When Portuguese ships arrived in St. Augustine's Bay towards the end of the sixteenth century, the people of the southwest had probably already heard of the vazaha. During the seventeenth century, the English became the chief traders in the bay. Starting in 1591 and then in earnest in 1607, English ships arrived in the bay almost annually, sometimes in a

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Hector, Salloman, and Hope, in 1613, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XIX"; the ship journal of the New Year's Gift, in 1614, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XXI."

[74] Walter Hamond, *Madagascar, the Richest and Most Fruitful Island in the World* (London: Nicholas Bourne, 1643), 9.

[75] The best sources for Madagascar during the 16th century are various Portuguese documents in COACM, volumes 1 and 2, as well as *Documents on the Portuguese in Mozambique and central Africa, 1497-1840*, 6 volumes (Lisboa: National Archives of Rhodesia, 1962). For the seventeenth century, English, Dutch, and French documents begin to give evidence about St. Augustine's Bay.

fleet of three or four ships which halted in the bay for a month or more. Officials advised their merchant fleets to aim for St. Augustine's Bay, as it was easily recognizable shortly after entering the Indian Ocean and provided a good meeting place if storms separated the ships. Throughout the seventeenth century, communities along St. Augustine's Bay began welcome the English traders warmly at this "fittest place of refreshing... where you shall find good harbor and plenty of victuals."[76]

In 1614, a fleet of four ships entered "Cape Augustine in St. Lawrence" and they anchored on the south side of the bay.[77] The crew dispatched several canoes to examine the shore. They found the inhabitants reluctant to meet them and most of the Malagasy had fled from the bay. The Malagasy lived a distance inland in small huts made of "bark."[78] The captains focused on securing "fresh victuals and fresh water" onshore and gradually the inhabitants emerged to barter with the English. The master-mate of one of these ships, the Hector, described them as "very friendly" and said they accepted little pieces of metal in return for food.[79] Another sailor in the same fleet described the natives' joy at receiving knives as a gift. Silver also bought milk from the Malagasy.

Despite the warm welcome English traders eventually received, people of the bay would only trade their cattle for small beads or pieces of silver.[80] Locals knew how to trade and demand commodities they found valuable, yet they probably had difficulty in figuring out the relative value of cattle to these Europeans who quickly killed and

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[76] *The Register of Letters etc of the Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies, 1600-1619*, ed. George Birdwood and William Foster (London, Quartich, 1893, reprint 1965), 118.

[77] The ships were: the New Year's Gift, the Hector, the Hope, and the Salloman.

[78] The houses were more likely made of palm leaves: the ship journal of New Year's Gift, 1614, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XXI."

[79] The ship journal of the Hector, 1607, "IOR/L/MAR/A/IV."

[80] The ship journal of New Year's Gift, Hector, Hope, and Salloman, 1613, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XIX."

consumed ten or fifteen cattle at a time. Europeans desired to purchase a large number of cattle, in part due to their belief that fresh meat, especially beef, was the best cure for scurvy.[81] Although many of the inhabitants seemed at ease trading with the Europeans, some of them were on their guard with the visitors and kept their distance during these early years.

Most early descriptions of St. Augustine's Bay revealed that the locals provided Europeans with very few commodities. They had only cattle to sell, in addition to very meager supplies of rice, wood, and fresh water.[82] During years of plenty, people transported trading supplies up the rivers and into the bay.[83] On other years, due to warfare, drought, or floods, groups avoided trading with the Europeans. At first, Europeans interpreted the lack of trading partners as hesitancy, ignorance, or even fear on the part of the Malagasy. When European sailors armed with guns came ashore, Malagasy fled in fear of the gunshots.[84] On other occasions, promises of large supplies of provisions were promptly broken. Even worse, sometimes the ships would arrive and Europeans could not find any huts along the shoreline. Communities may have migrated elsewhere on the island in search of new pastures or sources of water. Malagasy remained in a location for several months and constructed huts from palm fronds and pieces of wood. These huts protected vulnerable populations but only lasted for a season or two.[85]

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[81] See Chapter 5 for more information on the high demand for beef in the French Mascarenes.

[82] See various letters accounting their stays in St. Augustine's Bay: Frederick Charles Danvers, ed. *Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East* (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1896), 1: 215, 252-3.

[83] Ship journal of the New Year's Gift, 1614, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XXI."

[84] "Relâche de Francois Martin de Vitre à la Baie de Saint-Augustin et à Mohely, en 1602" and "Relâche à Saint-Augustin de David Middleton, Commandant le "Consent", en 1607," COACM, 1: 284, 299, and 403.

[85] See description in the ship journal from New Year's Gift, 1614, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XXI."

Despite these challenges, the Malagasy became accustomed to trading with the English and other European groups. Very quickly, those near the bay learned a few words of English and stopped fleeing when the Europeans arrived with their guns. In clashes, spears carried by the Malagasy were usually more efficient and effective than rudimentary European firearms.[86] When news of a ship's arrival spread, inhabitants along the Onilahy River would approach the bay with their herds or in canoes to bring goods for trade. Rather than exporting commodities elsewhere in the island, people now bartered their cattle, rice, callavances, and lemons for metal and red carnelian beads that the Europeans had brought from India or the Persian Gulf region.[87] Malagasy met Europeans with milk and promises of ample provisions, at times taking their canoes up to the ship to sell to the sailors.[88] Due to their increasing knowledge of European trading patterns, the Malagasy began raising their prices, taking advantage the European reliance on food, water, and wood from southwestern Madagascar. As one captain stated in 1614, it appeared that "if we had more [silver] chains, they would have sold us more cattle."[89]

Eventually European merchants also began to make sense of the organization of the decentralized communities of the southwest. According to European observers, the *Andriana*, local leaders, arbitrated disputes within communities and oversaw the defense

[86] One observation of soldiers using spears in northern Madagascar successfully against European guns: Report of a voyage to Madagascar, 1646, Original Correspondence, "IOR/E/3/20."

[87] Examples of early trading, see the ship journal of the Hector, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XX." See also "An account of the present commodities that are imported and exported at Madagascar and the manner of dealing with the natives," late 17th century? in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334: Memoirs of East India," Bodleian Oxford Library, ff. 61-2.

[88] The ship journal of New Year's Gift, 1614, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XXI."

[89] Letter, John Sandcroft to the East India Company, Nov 29, 1614, in *Letters Received by the East India Company*, ed. William Foster (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1897), 2: 212, 250, 255; report from the ship the Hector, 1608, "IOR/E/3/1."

of their subjects.[90] In periods of uncertainty during the seventeenth century, the Andriana likely oversaw the construction of palisades, high wooden fences around a collection of huts, to protect their dependents. In later periods, groups built high *manda* (stone or earthen fortifications). These were named for famous warriors or military leaders.[91] While not complete insurance against attacks, these constructions could protect subjects and supplies while Andriana tried to gather men to drive off enemies.[92] Andriana provided guidance in times of crisis but the communities under their control, judging by European descriptions, were small.

According to the European observers, groups within Madagascar fought frequently for the control of resources along the Onilahy River, especially water and cattle, but these conflicts increased as the seventeenth century progressed.[93] These attacks frequently took the form of cattle raids. During the mid-seventeenth century, Europeans noted the activities of cattle rustlers (*dahalo*), armed with spears and in small groups, waited in the trees or mountains to rush in and steal their neighbors' herds. [94] Cattle thefts occurred regularly for years on end, destabilizing the region as young men stole cattle in retribution for previous cattle thefts.[95] Sometimes warriors seized men, women, and

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[90] On instances of Andriana used for the names of chiefs, see "A booke of consultations belonging to the Plantation of Madagascar," Captain John Smart, 1643-6, "Add. Mss. 14037," Manuscripts Collection, British Library (henceforth Add. Mss.). There are also mentions of "Androa," "Andria," and "Dean" as prefixs for leaders' names. See various letters in Original Correspondence, East India Company, 1646, "IOR/E/3/20"; Robert Drury, *The adventures of Robert Drury* (London: W. Meadows, 1743; reprinted for Stodart and Craggs, 1807), 66.

[91] Some archeologists believe that these structures were for rituals or royal villages, being too small to be used for protection. Mike Parker Pearson and Karen Godden, *In Search of the Red Slave: Shipwreck and Captivity in Madagascar*, vol. 2002 (Stroud, UK: Sutton, 2002), 108, 163-4.

[92]Radimilahy and Manjakahery, "Archaeology of St. Augustine's Bay," 64.

[93] Walter Hamond, *Madagascar, the Richest and Most Fruitful Island in the World* (London: Nicholas Bourne, 1643), 7.

[94] On their skills with spears, see Powle Waldegrave, *An Answer to Mr Boothbies Book, of the Description of the Island of Madagascar* (London: Printed by T. N, 1649), 11.

[95] See description of raids in Drury, *The adventures of Robert Drury*, 120-1.

children as war-captives or slaves. These cattle thefts ensured a balance of power, as periodic thefts guaranteed that a leader could not maintain large herds without the support of many dependents.[96]

Europeans sought trading agreements and alliances with the Andriana. These local chiefs agreed to provide Europeans with trading goods, but had little idea of the implications if they failed to fill trade orders. The Europeans, it seemed, did not mind interfering in local struggles if they thought it could improve their access to provisions. European ships were equipped with much larger crews and larger stores of arms than East African or Arab trading vessels. The communities of St. Augustine's Bay took advantage of European demands for food to request military support and imports of firearms.[97] European captains could send dozens of men to assist in conflicts and these men would easily outnumber opposing forces. In return, leaders would provide Europeans with cattle or slaves obtained in these raids.[98] European military support could give leaders a decisive advantage in battles. Europeans directly intervened in local politics in support of trading allies, which changed the dynamics between communities and increased the frequency of regional wars. As a result, cattle raids into the interior of the Onilahy River probably increased over the course of the seventeenth century, as the Malagasy

[96] On contemporary cattle rustling in western Madagascar, see Jonny Hogg, "Cattle 'war zone' in Madagascar," *BBC News*, June 21, 2008.

[97] For such an appeal for help, see Smart, "Plantation of Madagascar," in "Add. 14037." Also compare to the French experience of interfering in local politics in Fort Dauphin – see various colonial archives, especially "Relation de ce qui s'est passé à l'île Dauphin depuis le 1er Mars 1668," in *Fonds des Colonies, Correspondance à l'Arrivée, Madagascar*, "COL C/5A/1," French Archives Nationales, Paris (henceforth COL). Europeans also interfered in île Sainte Marie and Antongil Bay.

[98] Richard Boothby, *A Briefe Discovery or Description of the most Famous Island of Madagascar or St. Laurence in Asia neare unto East-India* (London: E.G. for John Hardesty, 1646), 11.

developed a new economy around the export of cattle and new military practices involving direct or indirect European assistance.[99]

In fact, the Malagasy appeared so obliging that the English decided to form two colonies on the island in 1645, one based at St. Augustine's Bay, the second on the northwest coast.[100] The English settlers established a fortified camp along the southern side of St. Augustine's Bay, near present-day Soalara.[101] The colonists, expecting a fertile paradise, complained about the "extreme barrenness of the soil" and the difficulty in keeping their cattle safe from thieving Malagasy.[102] The colonists likely exaggerated these difficulties, since Malagasy communities managed to survive by growing crops along riverbanks and herding their cattle. The English, however, were unaccustomed to the landscape and relied upon the Malagasy to herd their "wild cattle." When the

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[99] This intervention also made the Andriana less likely to listen to the supplications of their dependents to cease warfare. See the use of councils of war in southern Madagascar, Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 146-9. For a similar increase in cattle raids in southern Madagascar, see the observations of the French colonial administrators, including the report from 3 March 1670, in "COL C/5A/1."

[100] On the plans for this failed English colony, see Alison Games, "Oceans, Migrants, and the Character of Empires: English Colonial Schemes in the Seventeenth Century" (paper presented at the conference on Seascapes, Littoral Cultures, and Trans-Oceanic Exchanges, Library of Congress, Washington D. C, February 12-15, 2003), http://www.historycooperative.org/proceedings/seascapes/games.html <accessed 17 February 2009>.

On the history of the Courteen company that financed these colonies, see W. Foster, "An English Settlement in Madagascar in 1645-6," *The English Historical Review* 27, no. 106 (1912); Report on the Courteen company, 1646, "IOR/E/3/20." Courteen had trouble settling his debts with the English East India Company, following the failure of the plantation: Details of the hearing, 1650, "IOR/B/23." A short tract was written in defense of the plans and describing how the East India Company thwarted the St. Augustine's Bay colony: John Darell, *Strange New from the Indies, or East India Passages Further Discovered... The Manner and Tenour of East India Trade Hitherto, with Part of the Woefull and Sad Sufferings of William Courten* (London: Printed for Stephen Bowtel, 1652). See also Alfred and Guillaume Grandidier, *Les Anglais à Madagascar: au XVIIe siècle - extrait de la "Revue de Madagascar"* (Paris: 1903), 8-10.

[101] Radimilahy, "Archaeology of St. Augustine's Bay, Lower and Middle Onilahy Valley, Southwestern Madagascar," 64.

[102] Visit to St. Augustine's Bay, 1646, "IOR/E/3/20." On the settlement, see also: Boothby, *A Briefe Discovery*; Powle Waldegrave, *An Answer to Mr Boothbies Book, of the Description of the Island of Madagascar* (London: Printed by T. N., 1649). This manuscript is a collection of letters and orders given by Smart, the leader of the colony: "Add. 14037 - "a Booke of Consultations Belonging to the Plantation of Madagascar", Captain John Smart," British Library.

Malagasy sold the English cattle, however, they stole them back after a short period.[103] The English sent soldiers to recover the cattle but the Malagasy quickly killed the men. The English were close to starvation because of these cattle thefts and their failures with cultivating crops. Tensions grew after the Malagasy set fire to the colony's forge and bellows.[104] When ships sent elsewhere failed to return with food and viable trading goods for the bay, the colonists deserted the island. Of the 140 colonists, men, women, and children, who had left England, only twelve left Madagascar.[105]

Unsurprisingly, the communities of the southwest were considerably less amenable to trading with colonists than with the occasional merchants that stopped on their shores. Inhabitants living along the Onilahy River and St. Augustine's Bay likely had heard of the French colony in Fort Dauphin, which would end disastrously at the end of the eighteenth century due in part to French interference in local politics.[106] The English were intent on creating a permanent settlement and this posed more of a drain on the natural resources of southwestern Madagascar than visiting ships. Following the failure of the colony, the English began establishing temporary settlements instead of permanent trading colonies along St. Augustine's Bay. The Malagasy successfully turned away European colonists by protecting their own food stores.

Dispelling other threats within the island was more difficult for local leaders. Communities in this area could not gain access to enough food to dominate exports from the bay. Attempts to get more cattle for Europeans sparked wars between different groups

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[103] Consultations, "Add. 14037," f. 17;
[104] Ibid., f. 23.
[105] Waldegrave, *An Answer to Mr Boothbies Book,* 4.
[106] 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).

around the bay. The Andriana likely led their subjects into war frequently to gain new food supplies, especially cattle, as well as secure fresh water sources, as these supplies declined throughout the seventeenth century. Despite the size of the bay, the shore itself only had enough wood for "two small boats and two or three houses."[107] European crews cut down wood, which would have exacerbated drought problems and the degradation of the environment. In addition, archeologists have shown that coastal leaders did not sell imported items from European merchants to inland communities.[108] The growing monopoly these leaders had over imports probably increased the jealousy of the neighboring groups. These developments have led historians to conclude that the communities on the shores of St. Augustine's Bay failed to respond quickly to the new demands introduced by global trade.[109]

By the mid-seventeenth century, the inhabitants of the region were under attack by their neighbors. Their neighbors to the south and east led attacks on the communities living along the bay.[110] Around the same time, soldiers of Sakalava state began invading the land near the bay, as the Sakalava sought to gain control of the lucrative trade. When the Sakalava pushed southward during the mid-seventeenth century, these small, decentralized communities could not resist becoming part of the Sakalava Empire.[111] Weakened by internal wars and dwindling natural resources, the Malagasy living near the bay fell under the control of the Sakalava by 1700.[112]

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[107] Waldegrave, *An Answer to Mr Boothbies Book*, 6-7.
[108] Radimilahy and Manjakahery, "Archaeology of St. Augustine's Bay," 65-8.
[109] Arne Bialuschewski, "Pirates, Slavers, and the Indigenous Population in Madagascar, c. 1690 - 1715," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 38, no. 2 (2005): 411.
[110] Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 82.
[111] Guillain, *Documents Sur L'histoire*, 15.
[112] Ibid., 16.

The Consequences of Global Trade

When Darafify decided southern Madagascar would be the perfect home for raising his cattle and building a community, his primary concern was with the landscape. Would it support large cattle herds? How would he rule over his subjects? Would they be able to trade with neighboring groups? The land of Madagascar could naturally support agriculture, Europeans insisted, and only the laziness of the inhabitants on the coasts prevented crops from flourishing.[113] Rather than being "lazy," the inhabitants of Madagascar had learned how to shape their environment to their needs. They grew crops in fertile areas and herded cattle in more arid regions.

European traders visiting the shores of Madagascar made no such calculations. Rather than desiring to trade for commodities in particular locations and seeking only rice from the highlands, chlorite schist from the east coast, and cattle from the south, these new traders desired large amounts of the same commodities throughout Madagascar.[114] Such uniform demands placed new stresses on communities not prepared to provide supplies of water or rice, and certainly not in the desired quantities. Communities all along the coast of Madagascar struggled to meet demands, creating new competition for food and slaves, both usually taken from the interior of the island. Despite a long history of oceanic trade in Malagasy ports, the arrival of European traders slowly and gradually created cracks into pre-existing economic systems.

The pastoralists of southwest Madagascar struggled to control and benefit from trade. Historians have highlighted the impact of controlling natural resources had on state

[113] De la Haye description of "Le Pays D'Anosy près le Fort Dauphin" 1 August 1671, from "COL C/5A/1."

[114] On European ideas of what Africa could provide, see Curtin, "The Environment beyond Europe," 132.

formation in pre-colonial Africa.[115] Early modern trade was resource intensive. The shift in human settlement patterns and trade during these centuries resulted in the intensification of production, agricultural as well as industrial. This production required fuel and labor.[116]

Studies of global trade frequently focus on the exchange of high-value commodities throughout the Indian Ocean. What many studies fail to highlight is the role of African supplies of food and labor in powering global trade in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. With the number of ships circulating the world increasing, the demand also increased for certain food items that could be stored on board and consumed while at sea. On the long trading voyages undertaken by Europeans and non-European traders, prestige goods probably comprised only a small fraction of the cargo carried. Food, water, wood, and lower-value trading goods such as cheap cloth or alcohol probably filled most of the cargo space. In addition, for the completion of successful voyages, ship captains had to identify multiple ports of call around the world to purchase food.

Europeans had trouble obtaining trading goods and guarding ports during the early modern period. As European merchants crossed oceans, they sought to develop colonies and trading posts to provision traders. Even though they failed to colonize Madagascar, Europeans influenced the trade of certain commodities throughout Madagascar, just as they did in southern Africa.[117] The Dutch founded a settlement at the

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[115] For instance, 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).

[116] John Richards, *The Unending Frontier: an Environmental History of the Early Modern World* (Berkely: University of California Press, 2003).

[117] 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*, ed. Stanley Engerman and Jacob Meter (London: Routledge, 2004), 284-7.

Cape of Good Hope in 1652. This settlement was meant to provide provisions to passing ships. For the crews of ships seeking to re-provision before their journey into the Indian Ocean, the location was perfect. Yet the settlers at the Cape quickly realized that pastoralists, not agriculturalists, inhabited the interior of southwestern Africa. These pastoralists, the Khoikhoi, could not provide the Dutch with the food supplies they required. As the Dutch tried to produce their own food in southern Africa, they required large imports of labor.[118] The need for labor and land resulted in wars between the settlers and Africans, as the settlers extended their farming into the interior.[119]

Even though Europeans did not migrate to Madagascar in large numbers, coastal groups of Madagascar likewise struggled to produce commodities to supply the European ships that passed by their ports. These struggles increased the incidence of warfare and the demand for food and labor on the coast. Likewise, when the Sakalava took control of trade on the west coast of Madagascar, they sought to solve to the problem of labor and food production by creating an expansive empire and confederation stretching the west coast of the island.

For communities in Madagascar, the seventeenth century ushered in a period of uncertainty, even for the Antaloatra of the northwest. Unbeknownst to the Europeans, a state was developing the resources and technologies to dominate trade from the west coast of the island. Inhabiting a region not under direct pressure from global trading systems, the Sakalava took advantage of the weaknesses of their neighbors in the face of

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[118] Richards, *The unending frontier*, 274-302. It is worth noting that the Dutch imported slaves and food from Madagascar, especially during the seventeenth century. For instance, see Jan Van Riebeek, *Journal of Jan Van Riebeeck*, ed. Hendrik Bernardus Thom, 3 vols. (Amsterdam: The Van Riebeeck Society, 1952), 1: 191.

[119] Leonard Guelke, "Frontier Settlement in Early Dutch South Africa," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 66, no. 1 (1976).

the pressure and took control of those trading ports as well. Sakalava leaders observed the spread of global trade from a distance and planned their attacks on the ports of Madagascar. They attempted to control trade from the hinterland to the coast to meet the new demands for food, wood, and water.[120] Sakalava rulers exploited the divide between the port cities and the interior to control the circulation of imported goods and dominate cross-cultural exchanges.

[120] Ecological instability presumably led to a need for ritual leaders to help ensure the prosperity of proto-Sakalava communities. Compare with the work done on leadership in East Africa: Steven Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); John Iliffe, *A Modern History of Tanganyika* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Helge Kjekshus, *Ecology*.

There is a new trend towards the integration of environmental history into histories of trade and empire. See 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); Emmanuel Kreike, *Re-creating Eden: Land Use, Environment, and Society in Southern Angola and Northern Namibia* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2004); T. C. McCaskie, *State and Society in Pre-colonial Asante* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Randall M. Packard, *Chiefship and Cosmology: an Historical study of Political Competition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981); Schoenbrun, *A Green Place.*

Chapter 2

Imperial Beginnings

The few Europeans who visited the west-central coast of Madagascar prior to the eighteenth century described the inhabitants of this region as cattle herders.[1] They lived along rivers, taking advantage of the fertility of riverbanks for growing crops, and used the rivers to travel between the coast and interior.[2] European descriptions, however, hinted at a dramatic military revolution within western Madagascar during this century. In 1616, a Portuguese priest described bloody battles between people living in the west-central coastal village of Sahadia and their enemies, the "Suculambes."[3] For the next several decades, few Europeans mentioned the Sakalava, but at the start of the eighteenth century, observers noted that the Sakalava were attacking the northwest and southwest coasts of the island.[4] These areas were centers of trade, located about two hundred miles to the north and south of the original Sakalava state. Following the conquest of these regions, the Sakalava gained control of most of the ports in Madagascar.

Sakalava expansion and aggression on the western shores of Madagascar occurred over a hundred years, from around 1610 to 1710. Prior to the 1690s, few European ships

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[1] During one of first visits of Europeans to west-central Madagascar, the Sakalava king traded cattle for silver chains with the Portuguese. Luis Mariano, letter, 1613, COACM, 2: 24.

[2] Details on the climate of Madagascar come from: M. R. Jury, "The Environment of Madagascar," in *The Natural History of Madagascar*, ed. Steven M. Goodman and Jonathan P. Benstead (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 75-84; Solofo Randrianja and Stephen Ellis, *Madagascar: A Short History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 21-22.

[3] The town is not marked on maps, but the Portuguese described it as located at the mouth of the Manambolo River, which would place it approximately sixty miles north of Morondava. Of course we cannot be certain that the Suculambes were the Sakalava, although the name is comparable. It is perhaps more important that the region was described as subject to "continual" wars during the early seventeenth century. The priest, Mariano, describes the Sakalava acting defensively, building forts, and losing many men in the battles. If this were the case, it would suggest that the early build-up of the Sakalava military was for defensive, not offensive reasons. Luis Mariano, letter, 22 October 1616, in COACM, 2: 224-6.

[4] The ship journal of the Barneveld, 1719, includes a description of a visit to "Macalena Nova" and wars with other groups on the island, in COACM, 3: 23; Robert Drury describes the expansion of the Sakalava towards the south: Robert Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury* (London: W. Meadows, 1743; reprinted for Stodart and Craggs, 1807), 390-5.

visited the west-central coast of the island, yet there was a growth of interest by European captains in purchasing food and slaves there before the turn of the eighteenth century.[5] European observations hinted at the transformation of the region into a Sakalava-controlled export center. The few Europeans passing along the shoreline recorded descriptions of the Sakalava and their military and commercial power. These observers included merchants, Portuguese missionaries, and a shipwrecked Englishman named Robert Drury.[6] Other Europeans passed through neighboring regions of Madagascar and frequently mentioned the movements of the Sakalava, especially in the trading ports of St. Augustine's Bay and the northwestern ports frequented by Portuguese and Dutch traders.[7]

Another body of evidence described the early history of the Sakalava state and its consolidation into an empire. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, European visitors became interested in gathering histories, folklore, and traditions from

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[5] This trade was primarily on Dutch and English ships prior to 1700. On the Dutch trade from Sakalava-controlled ports, see Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 100. See also J. C. Armstrong, "Madagascar and the Slave Trade in the Seventeenth Century," *Omaly sy anio (Université d'Antananarivo)* 17-20, no. (1983-1984). On the trade to the Americas, see the The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces <accessed November 14, 2008)>.

[6] Robert Drury was an Englishman shipwrecked in southern Madagascar in 1703. Over the next thirteen years, Drury was enslaved in southern Madagascar, but then travelled through the west coast of the island, spending time in St. Augustine's Bay and in Mahabo. He published his narrative in 1729 and it has been through several reprints. The version used here is Robert Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury* (London: W. Meadows, 1743; reprinted for Stodart and Craggs, 1807).

Some scholars, most notably Molet-Sauvaget, have argued his book was the work of a novelist such as Defoe. Anne Molet-Sauvaget, "La 'Relation De Robert Everard', Ébauche Probable Du 'Journal De Robert Drury' De Daniel Defoe," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 241 (1986): 1-28.

Arguments that his narrative was fictitious have been put to rest (in my mind) by the recent study by two anthropologists: Mike Parker Pearson, "Reassessing "Robert Drury's Journal" as a Historical Source for Southern Madagascar," *History in Africa* 23, no. (1996); Mike Parker Pearson and Karen Godden, *In Search of the Red Slave: Shipwreck and Captivity in Madagascar*, vol. 2002 (Stroud, UK: Sutton, 2002). They concluded that, despite Defoe or another writer having a hand in the writing of the book, it appears that "to have written such a convincing book someone must have spent a long time out there in southern Madagascar." Ibid., 206. I believe there is a possibility some of the details, names, and dates may be incorrect, but the general narrative and description of life in Madagascar is generally consistent with other available data.

[7] For example: Jacob Granaet, description of war at St. Augustine's Bay, 1666, COACM 3: 334; Jean Ovington, description of Madagascar and Anjouan, mentioning warfare in northwestern Madagascar, 1690, COACM 3:457.

communities in Madagascar. Taken from recognized leaders and their historians, the publications detailed the genealogies of contemporary rulers and their rise to power.[8] A French captain, Charles Guillain, wrote one of the earliest and most influential collections of Sakalava traditions. In 1845, he published *Documents sur l'histoire, la géographie et le commerce de la partie occidentale de Madagascar.* He used oral histories taken from Malagasy he met along the coast, along with earlier observations of Europeans, to write this book as a complete history of the Sakalava. His first chapter was entitled, "The history of the Sakalava from their origins to 1812," and he cited Sakalava traditions as the primary source for this history.[9] Guillain's writing described an "instinct for conquest" and a desire to rule over neighboring groups as the impetus for the expansion of the Sakalava state during the seventeenth century.[10]

Guillian's publication and similar ones written by missionaries and anthropologists have been influential sources for scholars seeking to understand the early history of the Sakalava.[11] Sakalava traditions described the existence of a strong and dominant Sakalava Empire during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For example, according to traditions, one early Sakalava ruler "was ambitious and animated by a desire

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[8] E. Birkeli, "Folklore Sakalava: Recueilli Dans La Région De Morondava," *Bulletin de l'Académie Malgache* VI, no. (1924); André Dandouau, *Contes Populaires Des Sakalava Et Des Tsimihety De La Région D'analalava* (Alger: Jules Carbonel, 1922).

[9] Charles Guillain, *Documents sur l'histoire, la geographie et le commerce de la partie occidentale de Madagascar* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1845), 7.

[10] Ibid., 36.

[11] Scholars tend to use Guillain to consider the more recent, early nineteenth century history of the Sakalava. Historians who cite Guillain include: Marie-Pierre Ballarin, *Les reliques royales à Madagascar: source de légitimation et enjeu de pouvoir, Xviiie-Xxe siècles* (Paris: Karthala, 2000); Jean François Baré, *Sable rouge: une monarchie du nord-ouest malgache dans l'histoire* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1980); Sophie Blanchy, *Karana et Banians: les communautés commerçantes d'origin Indienne à Madagascar* (Paris: Harmattan, 1995); Dandouau, *Contes populaires*; Raymond K. Kent, "Madagascar and Africa: Ii. The Sakalava, Maroserana, Dady and Tromba before 1700," *The Journal of African History* 9, no. 4 (1968). Guillain was very influential among nineteenth century visitors to Madagascar, including: Lyons McLeod, *Madagascar and Its People* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969, originally published 1865); Joseph Mullens, *Twelve Months in Madagascar* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1875).

to develop the growing strength of the Sakalava; he understood, without a doubt, that, for this to happen, he must exercise his absolute authority..."[12] Written during a period of encroaching Merina and European power, these traditions extolled legendary leaders and their exploits in the past. They also confirmed the legitimacy of Sakalava rulers who inherited rule from their ancestors. The European recorders of these traditions were also concerned with identifying legitimate Sakalava rulers, who could work with the French colonial state.[13]

Despite the influence of more contemporary concerns on the traditions, some scholars have relied on them to make sense of the development of the Sakalava kingship.[14] Recently, anthropologists, especially Gillian Feeley-Harnik, have been critical of labeling Malagasy religious beliefs and practices, including divine kingship, traditional. She has argued that many of the important "traditions" of Madagascar were in fact nineteenth-century developments.[15] The nineteenth-century landscape of power and identity in Madagascar was drastically different from that of the seventeenth century and Feeley-Harnik is right to caution against conclusions about past beliefs.

African historians using oral traditions to study pre-colonial African societies have dealt with similar issues and suggest how traditions could be used to interpret the

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[12] Guillain, *Documents*, 14.

[13] This was certainly the case with Guillain, who was trying to convince the French to ally with the Sakalava and colonize the island. During the colonial period, the French attempted to reduce Sakalava leaders to "functionnaires." General Report on the Colony, 1910, in *Section Moderne, Administration générale de la France, Commerce et industrie*, "F/12/6190," Archives Nationales, Paris.

[14] For instance, Lombard uses dynastic traditions, clan traditions, and traditions on representation to understand the ideology of the Sakalava royalty. Jacques Lombard, *Le royaume Sakalava du Menabe, 17è-20è: essai d'analyse d'un système politique à Madagascar* (Paris: Editions de l'ORSTOM, 1988), 7.

[15] Gillian Feeley-Harnik, "Issues in Divine Kingship," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 14 (1985): 297. See also Gillian Feeley-Harnik, *A Green Estate: Restoring Independence in Madagascar* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991).

priorities and beliefs of communities.[16] Despite problems in interpreting traditions, many scholars have insisted, "empirical knowledge of the African past may be derived from close analysis of oral texts and cultural forms associated with them."[17] In the case of the Sakalava, traditions illuminated major themes in the creation of the Sakalava state and empire. Traditions described the travels of the Sakalava leaders from the southeast to the west of Madagascar.[18] They asserted that the Sakalava, through their superior organization and military power, were able to claim sovereignty over the area along the western shores of Madagascar.[19] Sakalava traditions also traced the adoption of certain religious beliefs due to these migrations. These beliefs became significant in the exercise of political authority in nineteenth century Madagascar.[20] According to traditions, the Sakalava learned of religious practices from the southeast of the island, especially divination. These practices were similar to those followed elsewhere on the island and tied to Muslim and East African divination practices as well.[21] The influence of Islam on

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[16] Wrigley discusses how oral traditions reveal beliefs about sacred kingship, genealogy, and myth, but not necessary representing actual events. Christopher Wrigley, *Kingship and State: the Buganda Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Some of the pertinent works also include: J. F. Ade Ajayi and Michael Crowder, *History of West Africa*, 3rd ed. (London: Longman, 1985); Christopher Ehret and Merrick Posnansky, *The Archaeological and Linguistic Reconstruction of African History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Peter R. Schmidt, *Historical Archaeology in Africa: Representation, Social memory, and Oral Traditions* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2006); Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985).

[17] Dennis D. Cordell, "Section Introduction: Oral Tradition: Classic Questions, New Answers," in ed. Toyin Falola and Christian Jennings, *Sources and Methods in African History : Spoken, Written, Unearthed* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2003), 240

[18] Birkeli, "Folklore Sakalava," 186.

[19] For the best presentation of this myth, see Birkeli, "Folklore Sakalava,"171-192. These myths are paralleled by Merina oral traditions, on their conquest of the highlands of Madagascar. See François Callet, *Histoire des rois, traduction du Tantaran'ny andriana*, 5 vols. (Tananarive: Éditions de la Librairie de Madagascar, 1953), 1:8.

[20] African historians have discussed the overlap in spiritual and political authority in Africa. See David William Cohen, *Womunafu's Bunafu : A Study of Authority in a Nineteenth-Century African Community* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

[21] See Pierre Vérin and Narivelo Rajaonarimanana, "Divination in Madagascar: The Antemoro Case and the Diffusion of Divination," in *African Divination Systems: Ways of Knowing*, ed. Philip M.

Sakalava rituals contributed to the belief held by some Europeans that the Sakalava kings were descended from the prophet Mohammed or were, at the very least, of Arab descent.[22]

One way to understand these Malagasy traditions is to compare them with traditions from the East African coast and the Comoro islands. Swahili traditions described the arrival of foreign Shirazi leaders to various port cities throughout the East African coast. Their arrival during the thirteenth century started a new period of Islamization along the coast.[23] Rulers and aristocrats in Swahili port cities began to assert their power through claims of Shirazi ancestry.[24] In the Comorian version, the Shirazi also settled in the Comoro Islands and portions of Madagascar, linking the populations of these islands with those of East Africa.[25] In Malagasy traditions, the migrants also travelled to the southeast of Madagascar.[26] These migration traditions from East Africa,

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Peek (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991), 54-6. Drury appears to describe these practices: Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 100, 113, 224-7.

The ombiasy of the southeast Madagascar knew how to write and read sorabe texts but there is no sign of Arabico-Malagasy writing in the western part of the island. On the religious practices of the southeast of Madagascar, see the report of the French establishment in Fort Dauphin, 1665, *Fonds des Colonies, Correspondance à l'Arrivée, Compagnie des Indes*, "COL C/2/2."

[22] M. Vincent Noel, *Ile De Madagascar: Recherches Sur Les Sakkalava*, Extrait Du Bulletin De La Société De Géographie (Paris: Imprimerie de Bourgogne et Martinet, 1843), 18.

[23] Mark Horton, *Shanga: The Archaeology of a Muslim Trading Community on the Coast of East Africa* (London: The British Institute in Eastern Africa, 1996), 427; Marina Tolmacheva, *The Pate Chronicle* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1993), 41-2.

[24] On the myths of East Africa, see: John Milner Gray, *History of Zanzibar, from the Middle Ages to 1856* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 26; 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); James de Vere Allen, *Swahili Origins: Swahili Culture & the Shungwaya Phenomenon* (London: James Currey, 1993).

[25] Said Bakari Bin Sultani Ahmed, *The Swahili Chronicle of Ngazija*, ed. Lyndon Harries (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 1977), 4; Alfred Gevrey, *Essai Sur Les Comores* (Pondichery: A. Saligny, 1870), 79.

[26] Gabriel Ferrand, *Les Musulmans a Madagascar et aux iles Comores* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1891), vol. 3.

the Comoros, and Madagascar appear to date from the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries, a period of increasing trade between East Africa and the Persian Gulf region. [27]

Along the East African coast, historians have described how Africans incorporated themselves into the Indian Ocean world, through trade, migration, and religion. Through this incorporation, assertions of foreign origins justified social stratification and the domination of oceanic trade by foreign elites.[28] Archeologists have unearthed trading posts throughout Madagascar, including along the southeastern coast that connected the island with trade routes in the Arabian Peninsula and Indian subcontinent. Malagasy traditions linked coastal Malagasy groups, particularly the Antaloatra, with others throughout the Indian Ocean. Likewise, the Sakalava used traditions to assert their ties to regions in and around Madagascar, especially after the rulers converted to Islam during the nineteenth century.[29]

For this reason, Sakalava traditions are helpful for making sense of the nineteenth-century alliances of the Sakalava rulers, not as much for understanding events further in the past. Therefore, within this chapter, oral traditions are used to help understand the chronology of rulers among the Sakalava.[30] These genealogies were kept carefully by the Sakalava monarchies, thanks to the importance of royal ancestry

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[27] On East African and Comorian migration histories, see G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, *The East African Coast: Select Documents from the First to the Earlier Nineteenth Century* (Oxford,: Clarendon Press, 1962); Jean-François Gourlet, ed. *Chroniques mahoraises* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001); Tolmacheva, *The Pate Chronicle*.

[28] See Chapurukha Makokha Kusimba, *The Rise and Fall of Swahili states* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 1999). For a good description of how Swahili city-state functioned prior to the mid-18th century, see Horton, *Shanga.*

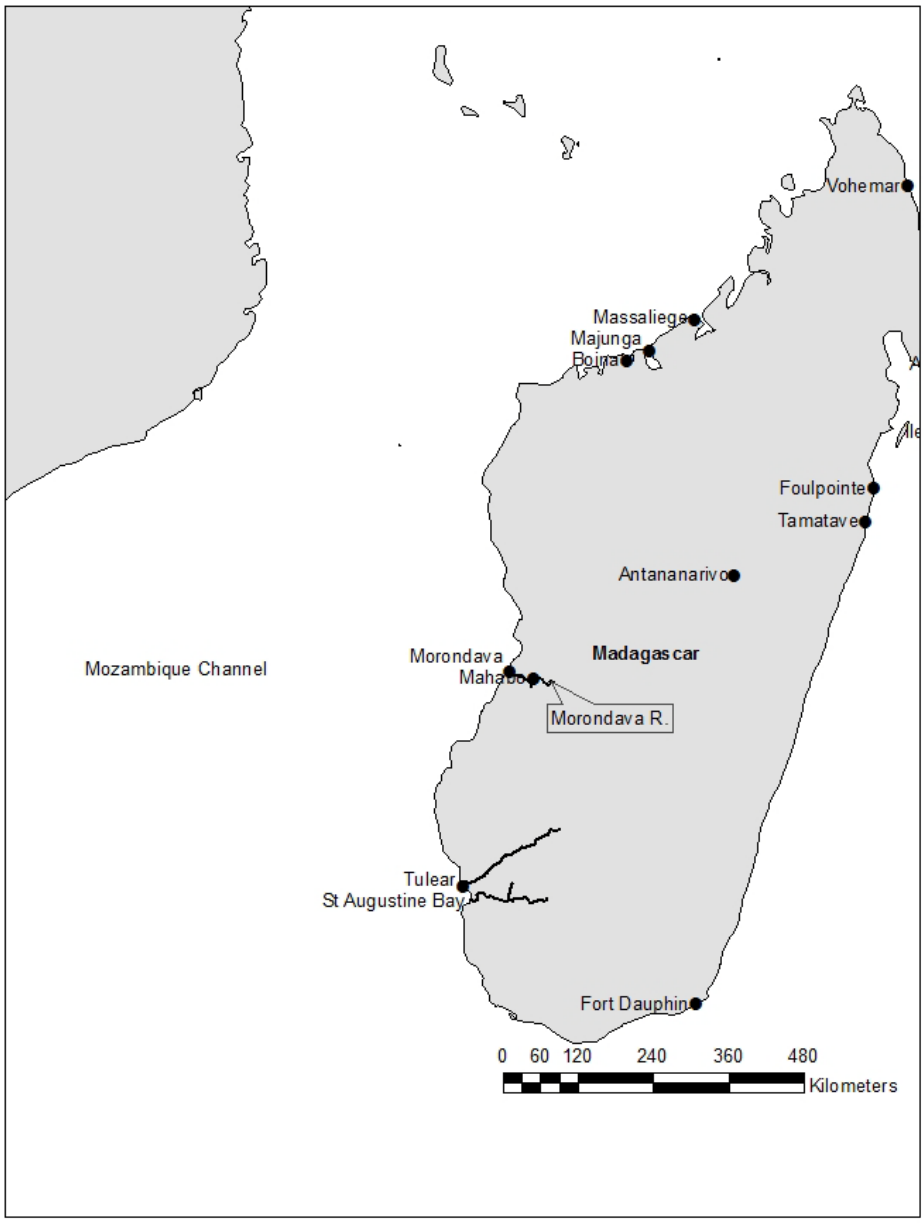
[29] On Indian Ocean migrant networks, see works such as Anne K. Bang, *Sufis and Scholars of the Sea: Family Networks in East Africa, 1860-1925* (London: Routledge, 2003); Linda Boxberger, *On the Edge of Empire : Hadhramawt, Emigration, and the Indian Ocean, 1880s-1930s* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002); Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

[30] Randrianja and Ellis also rely upon the traditions for establishing the chronology of Sakalava rule: Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar: A Short History*, 100-101.

throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[31] This chapter is also based upon European written sources, sources that allow us to examine the seventeenth-century history of the Sakalava state and its development into a recognizable empire. These sources have certain limitations as well, as they reflect European perceptions of statehood and empire.

Despite the difficulties in making sense of the early history of the Sakalava, tracing the beginnings of the empire is important for making sense of how Sakalava leaders dominated interactions on the island and mediated contact with Europeans.

[31] European sources such as Dean and Drury describe the importance of ancestor worship among the Sakalava during the early eighteenth century: John Dean, "Narrative of One of the Crew Belonging to the Ship Sussex, Mss. Eur. B. 2. /K. 11," British Library, ff. 29-30; Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 451-2.



Map 4: West-Central Madagascar

Rivers and Cattle

Traditions described the proto-Sakalava as originating in the southeast of the island and traveling westward, towards the Onilahy and Fiheraña rivers of southwestern Madagascar.[32] The people then moved northwards and reached the Morondava River, where access to fresh water and the green growth in the surrounding environment helped convince the travelers to stay near its shores.[33] To the north was the Tsiribihina River (or, according to one traveler, "Tsijobóhina, which cannot be waded through").[34] Fertile land teeming with wildlife covered the land in between the two rivers. This island of growth contrasted with the drier surrounding environment. Europeans later described the "rich alluvial soil" along these rivers as "remarkably fertile," which probably encouraged people to settle on the shores of the rivers.[35]

The Sakalava renamed this region of west-central Madagascar *Menabe*, or "very red," the red symbolizing power and strength, as well as describing the color of the soil in the region.[36] One tradition describes how the Sakalava founded their kingdom in Menabe. At a chosen location, the Sakalava placed the bodies of "a man, a woman, a magnificent red steer, and a goat" into a deep pit. Then they poured the blood of the steer over the others.[37] The burial of these bodies, blessed with the blood, represented Sakalava's desire to reside in the region. Another tradition described how divine intervention, in the form

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[32] This migration is summarized in Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar,* 100-101.

[33] A description of the river can be found in the ship journal of the Ilchester, 1750, "IOR/L/MAR/B/601 B."

[34] George Herbert Smith, *Among the Menabe; or, Thirteen months on the West coast of Madagascar* (London: 1896), 5-6.

[35] Ibid, 6; Noel, *Ile de Madagascar*, 5.

[36] The region was previously known as "Ansakoua-be." Noel, *Ile de Madagascar,* 18. On the color red, see Arthur Leib, "The Mystical Significance of Colours in the Life of the Natives of Madagascar," *Folklore* 57, no. 3 (1946): 131.

[37] The tradition is recounted in Sherry Olson, "Red Destinies: The Landscape of Environmental Risk in Madagascar," *Human Ecology* 15, no. 1 (1987), 68.

of an enormous red bull descending from the sky, led a Sakalava king to victory over his opponents. Following this victory, the king named the region Menabe, in honor of the red bull.[38]

Traditions also described how the Sakalava founded the *Maroseraña* kingdom in Menabe, along the Morondava River before 1600.[39] According to one interpretation, the term *serana* in Maroseraña referred to medicine and the name of the kingdom meant the rulers had much (*maro*) medicine. The word medicine alluded to the king's domination of ritual power via his priests (*ombiasy*) and their amulets (*ody*).[40] In this interpretation, early leaders had preferential access to the ombiasy and, over time, their spiritual power came to constitute a belief in divine kingship. According to traditional histories, even at this early stage, the Sakalava kingdom rested upon the domination of rituals by its leaders and their legendary feats of strength.

The constant war and conflict in western Madagascar described by Europeans made it more likely that subjects joined the kingdom in search of Sakalava protection.[41] During the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, according to Europeans and Malagasy traditions, Andriamandazoala (Dianmazoto or Andrianmazoto[42]) ruled over the

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[38] Guillain, *Documents*,13. Guillain states that there are several other myths involving cattle sacrifice before battle leading to Sakalava military successes.

[39] Discussed at length in Ballarin, *Les reliques royales*, 53-86. Kent insisted on the Bantu origins of Sakalava divine kingship: Raymond K. Kent, "Madagascar and Africa," 545-6.

[40] Birkeli, "Folklore Sakalava,"190.

[41] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 99.

[42] Andriana means lord or chief. The Portuguese priests Mariano and Freire give the king's name as "Andrianmazoto" or "Diamsuto," letter from 1613, in COACM, 2: 24, although other accounts imply he had died before this date. There is an interesting theory that his name derived from one of the names for the king of Zimbabwe and means "crushing of trees." M. Brown, *Madagascar rediscovered. A History from Early Times to Independence* (London: Damien Tunnacliffe,1978), quoted in Chantal Radimilahy and Barthélémy Manjakahery, "Archaeology of St Augustine's Bay, Lower and Middle Onilahy Valley, Southwestern Madagascar," *Studies in the African Past* 5, no. (2006): 63.

Maroseraña Sakalava kingdom.[43] Portuguese missionaries encountered this leader around 1613, although traditions placed his rule as beginning several years earlier. Traditions described how he convinced his followers it was his divine destiny to rule over west-central Madagascar.[44] He oversaw the centralization of Sakalava power. The Sakalava king led a large number of dependents and used them to extend his power within the Menabe region.[45] Europeans revealed that the king had at least five hundred subjects with him when Portuguese missionaries arrived on the coast in 1613.[46] How did Andriamandazoala manage to gather enough supporters that the Portuguese believed the coast to be well populated?

The king's subjects probably desired stability and protection under his rule during a period of increased danger of enslavement, perhaps due to the expansion of the slave trade in northwestern Madagascar. [47] Around 1665, a Frenchman living on the east coast of Madagascar described the movements of predatory raiders throughout the island to gather slaves for the northwest ports.[48] These attackers likely targeted the Sakalava region of the island as well, which may have prompted the development of a strong

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[43] Ballarin, *Les reliques royales*, 36. An additional source for the chronology of Sakalava rulers and their lineages can be found online: "Généalogie des rois sakalava du Nord de Madagascar," found online at
http://www.zomare.com/sakalava.html <accessed 26 March 2009>
This site provides royal genealogies for Sakalava rulers in the north, with the source listed as Robert Jaovelo-Dzao, *Mythes, rites et transes à Madagascar* (Paris: Karthala Editions, 1996), 392. These chronologies roughly agree with those described within the dissertation, but I am making no effort to present a definitive chronology of Sakalava rulers, as I am more concerned with issues of trade and violence than kingship.

[44] Lombard, *Le royaume sakalava*, 22-3 On Menabe during this time, see Luis Mariano, letter, July 1616 and October 21, 1616, in COACM, 2: 208-222.

[45] It is unclear what preceded the state, but elsewhere on the island people lived in small communities led by chiefs or Andriana. See Chapter 1, as well as: Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 50-2. On French discussions of power in the southeast, see "Mémoire sur l'état présent de l'isle Dauphine," 1668, in "COL C/5A/1."

[46] Mariano and Freire, letter from 1613, COACM 2: 28.

[47] On the expansion of the non-European slave trade, see Thomas Vernet, "Le commerce des esclaves sur la côte swahili, 1500 - 1750," *Azania* 38, no. (2003): 75-88.

[48] François Martin, report of French colonist in east-central Madagascar, 1665-8, COACM, 9:557.

military to defend Sakalava subjects and nearby communities who became part of the state. During periods of ecological stress, communities battled for access to resources.[49] Such stress may have even encouraged the development of the Merina state, as well as the expansion of the Sakalava state.[50] Exports of food items set off small but perceptible waves in Malagasy communities on the east and west coasts of the island. These challenges allowed the new rulers to come to power, rulers that could ally with the powerful Sakalava and other leaders and guarantee the stability of their communities.

In addition, Andriamandazoala's army may have threatened neighboring communities, such as those in Sahadia, in addition to defending Sakalava subjects.[51] Drury stated that Sakalava rulers gained the support of their subjects by providing them with supplies of cattle and slaves gained in wars of expansion. Rulers also tried to maintain good relations with the first occupants of the land.[52] According to Drury, the kings gave people already inhabiting the region of Menabe, the *Vazimba* (the *tompon-tany*, "original land owners"), land along the riverbanks, providing them with a means for survival, even as he instituted a new government for controlling their commerce and labor.[53] To ally with these inhabitants, the Sakalava rulers intermarried with local families and adopted many of their cultural beliefs, including the worship of ancestors who previously had inhabited the land.[54] This practice likely began during

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[49] On violence in East Africa during the pre-modern times, see Horton, *Shanga*, 427; Tolmacheva, *The Pate Chronicle*, 14.

[50] Campbell, *An economic history*, 24.

[51] Mariano does suggest the Sakalava were acting to defend their people. Luis Mariano, letter, 22 October 1616, in COACM, 2: 224-6.

[52] Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 391.

[53] Drury describes the "Virzimbers" as having very different customs from other Malagasy, in addition to speaking their own dialect. Ibid., 376. See discussion in Chapter 1, footnote 57.

[54] Ballarin, *Les reliques royales*, 16.

Andriamandazoala's rule, as he sought to assuage the fears of the groups he conquered and gain additional followers.[55]

By the early eighteenth century, conquests led to the establishment of Sakalava tributaries throughout Menabe. Europeans observed that conquered peoples sent the Sakalava king an annual tribute in the form of silk, rice, sheep, vegetables, and probably slaves, in return for the cessation of war with the Sakalava.[56] Tributary states retained, at least ostensibly, much of their independence and freedom. For instance, Vezo fishermen of the west coast later claimed that while they were tributaries to the Sakalava, they were never subservient.[57] As head of this nascent empire, it was likely that the Sakalava king Andriamandazoala did not possess direct control of all of the provinces, but was gradually asserting his power through the threat of force and integrating new groups through a process of intermarriage.[58]

Andriamandazoala's rule probably coincided with the spread of new agricultural techniques and crops in the region.[59] Around 1527, a Portuguese visitor to southwestern

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[55] The belief in the tompon-tany manifested in terms of the natural environment. During later periods, the Sakalava ritually protected trees in Menabe, especially the tamarind tree. 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), 11.

In fact, the eighteenth-century Sakalava kings of Menabe daily held court underneath a large tamarind tree. Dean, "Narrative," "MSS. Eur. B. 2. /K. 11," f. 24.

The Merina of the highlands had a similar relationship with the Vazimba. Ramilisonina, "Topographies religieuse d'un terrior et relations entre Vivants et Ancestres á Madagascar: Les Bezanozano Zandroandrena et Tsimifahy (Mandialaza-Moramanga), in *Ancestralité et Identité à Madagascar* (Paris: Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales, 2001), 111.

[56] As described in correspondence, 1713, *Fonds des Colonies, Correspondance à l'Arrivée, Ile Bourbon*, "COL C/3/3-4."

[57] Rita Astuti, *People of the Sea: Identity and Descent among the Vezo of Madagascar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 74.

[58] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 99.

[59] On the connection between expansion of food productions and the development of states in Africa, see Jan Vansina, *How Societies Are Born: Governance in West Central Africa before 1600* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2004).

Madagascar described finding little food for purchase.[60] By 1613, Andriamandazoala provided the visiting Portuguese priests with plentiful food.[61] While these Portuguese did not list the food provided by the Sakalava, people in the northwest during this time possessed stores of rice, "millet," "mungo [mangahazo or manioc]," beans, peas, nuts, bananas, ginger, sugarcane, and limes.[62] This description revealed that farmers in Madagascar had begun successfully cultivating crops from the Americas. [63] These new crops, including maize, sweet potatoes, and manioc, became dietary staples on the island, especially in west-central Madagascar.[64] Drier western and southern regions of Madagascar never supported extensive rice farming, but growing crops such as manioc provided insurance in case of drought or other natural disasters.[65] In Menabe, manioc and maize production quickly surpassed earlier rice cultivation.[66] When European traders

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[60] Manoel de la Cerda, report, 1527, COACM, 1: 58.

[61] Mariano, letter, 1613-4, COACM, 2: 28.

[62] Ibid., 2: 12.

[63] The first mention of manioc in Madagascar I have found are from the beginning of the seventeenth century. See Portuguese descriptions of "mungo," mangahazo or manioc, in the northwest ports for sale: Ibid., 2:12. Manioc was probably spread via Portuguese traders in Mozambique and East Africa, from Brazil, as the term for manioc is very similar in Malagasy and Swahili. As far as I can tell, manioc cultivation did not spread to the southern tip of Madagascar, to Fort Dauphin, until the eighteenth century: anonymous account of Madagascar in "Sloan MS. 3392, Campaign of 1704 - 1709," British Library, ff. 84-7. Manioc was spread throughout the island by the early 19th century: see anonymous source in Barthelemy Huet de Froberville, *Index de la geographie de Madagascar* (1816), microfilm of MS. in British Library, f. 202; R. N. Captain Colomb, *Slave-Catching in the Indian Ocean: A Record of Naval Experiences* (1873, reprint London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1968), 297. Manioc and other American crops were also popular in the Comoros: see Claude Chanudet and Jean-Aimé Rakotoarisoa, *Mohéli: une île des Comores à la recherche de son identité* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), 24. There are early (1506) mentions of maize but probably incorrectly identified indigenous grains: Barros, trading account, 1506, COACM, 1: 30.

[64] Now these crops have become staple crops, especially for the poor, as they grow in more marginally fertile soil and provide a quick source of calories. Mabrouk A. El-Sharkawy, "Drought-Tolerant Cassava for Africa, Asia, and Latin America," *BioScience* 43, no. 7 (1993): 443-5.

[65] On rice growing practices in Madagascar, see Campbell, *An Economic History*, 23-4.

[66] The expansion of rice farming had a strong impact of state formation elsewhere in Madagascar. According to Kottak, highland states developed from "Population growth, an increasingly sedentary way of life, resource concentration, the need for defense, external trade, and hydraulic agriculture were interrelated aspects of the process of sociopolitical transformation in Lalangina between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Because these variables interacted synergistically, it would be misleading to assign prime mover status to any one of them." Conrad P. Kottak, "The Process of State Formation in Madagascar," *American Ethnologist* 4, no. 1 (1977): 151.

purchased rice from Sakalava ports, much of this rice was imported from the interior of the island, and the Sakalava fed their families manioc, maize, callavances (a white bean), and milk.[67]

Andriamandazoala likely benefited from the introduction of new plants around this period to increase agriculture in Menabe, especially on royal fields perhaps worked by slaves.[68] The Sakalava king captured and enslaved men, women, and children in raids on his neighbors, as well as purchasing slaves from other groups throughout the island. Andriamandazoala, according to Portuguese reports, owned slaves originating from other regions of the island and one slave told them that she had been transported across three countries (*pays*).[69] The slaves may have also been used in Sakalava military campaigns.[70]

Despite these innovations, Andriamandazoala did not create the expansive empire that later defined the Sakalava kingdom, as the kingdom's borders barely extended beyond Menabe during his lifetime, but his heirs completed the process of Sakalava expansion. Andriamandazoala had many children, but it appears that, traditionally, the eldest male would take his throne. His son, Andriamandréci, reportedly ruled the Sakalava state but died without any male heirs. After his death, the son of his brother received the throne.[71] This king, Andriandahifotsy (ruled from 1610-1685, according to

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[67] The west coast was the only region consuming milk during the nineteenth century: Gwyn Campbell, "The Structure of Trade in Madagascar, 1750-1810," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26, no. 1 (1993): 8.

[68] Later Sakalava kings used slaves to grow crops and herd cattle. Gillian Feeley-Harnik, "The King's Men in Madagascar Slavery, Citizenship and Sakalava Monarchy," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 52, no. 2 (1982). On the use of slaves to farm in southern Madagascar, see Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 68, 110-111.

[69] Mariano and Freire, letter, 1613-4, COACM 2: 25-6.

[70] In the south, however, slaves were not used in warfare. Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 94,194.

[71] Guillain, *Documents*, 11-2.

traditions[72]), reportedly inherited the rule over a considerable number of other claimants.[73] Andriandahifotsy's name referred to his contact with whites according to some later observers (*fotsy* means white in Malagasy), or perhaps to his "white" "Arab" origins in the southeast of the island.[74] This Sakalava king supposedly enlarged the Sakalava state beyond the Menabe region and expanded towards the south by 1685.[75] The Sakalava remembered Andriandahifotsy for creating a Sakalava commercial monopoly across much of west-central Madagascar and for being perhaps the first Sakalava ruler to sell commodities to Europeans.[76]

According to traditions, Andriandahifotsy established a permanent center of power along the shores of the Morondava River and near the burial site of his ancestors. Andriandahifotsy installed his Sakalava capital at the village of Mahabo, located in the Menabe region.[77] Mahabo was a convenient base for controlling long-distance trade in the region. From Mahabo, Andriandahifotsy extended his reach to the west, along the shores of the Morondava River and the coast of the Mozambique Channel. He founded a trading port at the mouth of the Morondava River, also named Morondava. Andriandahifotsy not only established an administrative capital in the interior of

[72] This long of a reign seems unlikely. These dates were estimated from the description of genealogy given in oral traditions, probably to overemphasize the impact of Andriandahifotsy on the history of the Sakalava state. The basis for dates is usually Guillain, *Documents.*

[73] Guillain, *Documents*, 12.

[74] On the origins of this name, see Lombard, *Le royaume sakalava*, 24.

[75] Ballarin, *Les reliques royales*, 32.

[76] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 100.

[77] Originally, he installed the capital at Maneva, to the southeast, but later moved to this more profitable location. See various descriptions of Sakalava kings and their descendents at Mahabo: Dominique Ranaivoson, *Madagascar: Dictionnaire des personalités historiques* (Saint-Maur-des-Fossés, France: Sépia, 2005), 8, 37, 42, 122.

Madagascar, but also oversaw the development of the first Sakalava port city intended to attract global trade.[78]

Morondava, however, was not as easy to locate as St. Augustine's Bay and few seventeenth-century Europeans visited it in search of trading goods. The port did not become an important entrepôt until the Sakalava had solidified their hold on western Madagascar. It was hardly surprising that Europeans failed to locate Morondava on maps or travel guides prior to 1700.[79] It was not until 1703, after the extension of Sakalava power along the west coast, that the English East India pilot guide described Morondava. One English guide stated, "Youngoule or Mandeota, alias Morondava, is a very convenient port for trade," and then gave a description of how to anchor near the port.[80]

European captains began to recognize Morondava (also known as Young Owl or "Séclave") as an importance source for food and slaves in Madagascar during the eighteenth century.[81] By the eighteenth century, the port began attracting Europeans seeking supplies of food and slaves. A century after it was founded, an English captain described the port as welcoming for Europeans seeking provisions for their vessels. There was "a wood very convenient for wooding" and sources of fresh water nearby the anchorage.[82] The location of the port also allowed foreign traders easy access to the Sakalava capital of Mahabo where the king resided. The city was just a few days' trip up

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[78] The meeting between Andriamandazoala and the Portuguese, however, implies the Sakalava were already living near the coast decades earlier. See Luis Mariano, letter, 1613, COACM, 2: 24.

[79] See, for example, William Hacke, "A chart of the north-west coast of Lorinso (Madagascar), with the islands of Mayotta and Joanna", 1680, "Maps 9.Tab.37.(8.)," Maps Reading Room, British Library.

[80] John Thornton, *The English Pilot: the Third Book* (London, 1703), "Maps 22.d.30," Maps Reading Room, British Library, 24.

[81] In 1733, the region was called "Séclave." See the ship journal of the Vierge de Grace, 1733, *Fonds de la Marine, Séries modernes, Service Hydrographique*, "MAR 4 JJ/86," French Archives Nationales, Paris (henceforth MAR).

[82] See descriptions of trading at Morondava during the eighteenth century in the ship journal of the Dragon, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598D."

the river. When ships arrived, the king could easily travel towards the coast with his soldiers and oversee trading negotiations.[83] By creating the port of Morondava, Andriandahifotsy successfully linked trade from the interior of the island to the west coast port and cemented the control of Sakalava monarchs over exchanges in this region.[84]

Subsequent generations remembered Andriandahifotsy for being the first to attack coastal communities in southwestern Madagascar and the first to arm his soldiers with firearms.[85] In fact, his warriors more likely carried only spears. Until around 1700, it does not appear that Sakalava monarchs imported firearms from Europeans for use in battle, although guns may have been fired on ceremonial occasions.[86] Later pictures and descriptions of the Sakalava leaders provide a representation of the link between firearms and power.[87] The first appearance of guns to Madagascar began during the seventeenth century, as the French provided them to the Malagasy in the southern part of the island. European slave traders also bought slaves with guns in eastern and northwestern Madagascar. Andriandahifotsy began exporting slaves on Dutch vessels during this

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[83] The king lived at "Moabo town," described as 30-40 miles into the interior. The ship journal of the Hertford, 1734, "IOR/L/MAR/B/656 E-G."

[84] On early Sakalava trade with the nascent Merina state by 1700, see Callet, *Histoire des rois*, 1: 455.Eighteenth-century European ship captains complained this port was still hard to find along the west coast of Madagascar, a region protected by offshore reefs and dangerous currents, and frequently missed the anchorage there. The rough surf dissuaded some Europeans from stopping at Morondava. See the following ship journals: the Discovery, 1700, "IOR/L/MAR/A/CL"; the Harcourt, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/558 C"; the Brittania, 1754, "IOR/L/MAR/B/285 GG"; the Fly, 1763, "IOR/L/MAR/B/597 B"; the Prince Frederick, 1722, "IOR/L/MAR/B/663 C"; the Griffin, 1759, "IOR/L/MAR/B/603 D."

[85] Lombard, *Le royaume sakalava,* 26.In 1613, Portuguese visitors said the people of this west-central coastline always fought with the people of the interior. See the accounts of Freire and Mariano around 1613, in COACM, 2: 22.

[86] Dean, "Narrative," "MSS. Eur. B. 2. /K. 11," f. 30.

[87] See the illustration of the visit of the Barneveld to "Sadian Bon Porte," in "De Reyze Van Het Oostindisch Schip Barneveld, Uyt Holland Tot Aan De Kaap Der Goede Hoope, in 'T Jaar 1719," in *Tweejaarige Reyze Rondom De Wereld*, edited by T. de Haze and J. Roggeveen (Dordrecht: Hendrik de Koning, 1758), 15-6.

period, but Sakalava soldiers do not appear to have used guns in warfare as a result.[88] It was unlikely that access to these technologies helped the Sakalava warriors, who appear to have focused on quick victories and the rapid seizure of slaves and goods.[89]

Traditions probably mentioned the use of firearms in order to emphasize the military prowess of Andriandahifotsy, an emphasis confirmed in European sources.[90] In 1665, a group of forty-five Frenchmen sailed to the west-central coast of Madagascar, a region seldom visited by Europeans.[91] The French commander found a welcoming river inlet and went ashore to negotiate with a local ruler, named "Lahe Foutchy" [Andriandahifotsy]. The French narrator described "Lahe Foutchy" as not only one of the richest lords of this region, but one of the greediest. After the chief refused to sell the Frenchmen cattle for cheap prices, the French commander led his troops inland, into a region rich in cattle and, the French hoped, possibly gold. The French forces met an army numbering 12,000-15,000 men, armed with spears. The Malagasy, led by "Lahe Foutchy," massacred all of the soldiers, save one, a Portuguese man who hid and escaped to the small French trading post in the south of the island.[92] According to this description, Andriandahifotsy was willing to trade with passing Europeans but only on his terms. He was determined to prevent Europeans from trading with rival groups on the island, a practice continued by his descendents. The king used his large army (although probably numbering in the hundreds, not thousands) and violence to assert his monopoly on trade.

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[88] Armstrong, "Madagascar and the Slave Trade in the Seventeenth Century," 220.
[89] Ballarin, *Les reliques royales*, 32.
[90] For traditions around Andrianadahifotsy, see Lombard, *Le royaume sakalava*, 26; Guillain, *Documents*, 8, although the sources vary in terms of the date of his death.
[91] Martin, 1665-8, COACM, 9: 479-80.
[92] Ibid., 9: 480.

A few years later, the French sent a ship to explore the west coastline.[93] In passing the region controlled by Andriandahifotsy, the French captain sent a small ship to the beach, where the sailors met with some Malagasy. They appeared peaceful and the French ship came to anchor along the coast. Around four or five hundred Malagasy approached the shoreline with refreshments and several of them asked for permission to see the ship. About fifty or sixty of them, including, he remarked, the wife of one of the local chiefs, came aboard. The captain remained onshore with some of his soldiers to sign a peaceful trading agreement with the chief.[94]

The people on board suddenly seized the French pilot and fired a canon onboard. At that sound, the locals on the shore fell upon the French, who had not brought their weapons. The Sakalava massacred all of the Frenchmen. On board, the Sakalava killed two French sailors and injured another three or four more. As the sailors reached for their weapons, the Malagasy jumped into the ocean and swam ashore. The woman remained on board, but they quickly discovered she was a slave wearing a chief's clothing as a disguise. The pilot set sail from the coast with only six healthy sailors aboard. He returned to Fort Dauphin with news of the deaths and the French mourned their loss, especially of the captain and the "commis [trading representative]."[95]

The French narrator, Martin, retold these two events to provide an example of the problems Europeans encountered in negotiating with the natives of Madagascar and to serve as a warning to merchants visiting the west coast.[96] In both episodes, the Sakalava ruler demonstrated an increased mistrust of Europeans, perhaps developed from

[93] Ibid., 9: 514-6.
[94] Ibid., 9: 514.
[95] Ibid., 9: 515-6.
[96] Ibid., 9: 605.

knowledge about European conduct elsewhere on the island. The slave girl dressing as a noblewoman also indicated a level of understanding by the Sakalava of European hierarchy, as they even attempted to subvert European ideas of hierarchy. By 1665, the Sakalava ruler was already asserting his power in trading negotiations with Europeans.

Martin provided a peaceful conclusion to these violent events. Shortly after the second massacre, the Sakalava king sent a troop of soldiers to Fort Dauphin, where they had an audience with French colonial officials. Andriandahifotsy made peace with the French and welcomed them as traders into his territory.[97] Despite these early violent encounters, the Sakalava ruler appeared to have decided that he wanted to attract European traders in search of food and slaves. After such exploits, Andriandahifotsy's posthumous name was fittingly "Andrianhaning'ha-Arivou" (lord missed by thousands).[98]

Dynastic Expansion to the South

By 1685, the kingdom of the Maroseraña was powerful, if unstable. When Andriamanetriarivo ("Rer Timmononngarevo" or "Timovareva," ruled from 1680/5 to 1712) inherited leadership, he struggled to defeat his two younger brothers who wanted to control the throne.[99] Previously, traditions seem to suggest a rule of inheritance by male heirs, but following the death of Andriandahifotsy, there appeared to be no firm rule of succession firmly in place. Some traditions suggested this was due to the practice of

[97] Martin, 1665-8, COACM, 9: 605-6.

[98] It was usual for Sakalava kings to receive a new name after death.

[99] Guillain states that the name, Andriamagnéti-Arivou, was his posthumous name. Guillain, *Documents,*14. Drury repeats this history of Sakalava expansion that he heard from another European in Madagascar, but does not provide any dates. Drury, *The adventures*, 390; the ship journal of the Discovery, 1700, "IOR/L/MAR/A/CL." He was perhaps preceded by his father named Andriamaneniarivo. On dates, see the comment in footnote 43 above.

incest.[100] Historians have suggested that the practice of integrating the leaders of conquered groups into the Sakalava ruling family led to "dynastic in-fighting" and "permanent factionalism among Sakalava ruling elites."[101] To establish his rule, the new king Andriamanetriarivo used military force to expel both brothers from his kingdom. Powerful men in their own right, they both gathered followers and formed their own armies. Rather than continue fighting for control of Menabe, the brothers seized the opportunities presented to the north and south of the Morondava River.[102]

One of Andriamanetriarivo's brothers moved to the south to attack the profitable trading port of St. Augustine's Bay, with a rumored nine thousand soldiers.[103] At the time of his attack, perhaps during the first years of the eighteenth century, another southern group (the Mahafaly?) invaded the region near the Onilahy River.[104] Imports of French arms may have assisted the southerners, who were long-time enemies of the people of St. Augustine's Bay.[105] Simultaneously, the "northern enemy," the "Saccalauvors," invaded St. Augustine's Bay, having travelled over a hundred miles on foot from Menabe. These battles continued into the first decade of the eighteenth century.[106] Drury described in vivid detail the bloody battles fought between the Sakalava and the Malagasy already

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[100] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 101.

[101] Ibid., 101.

[102] Robert Drury is the best source for this history, as he lived on the island during the early eighteenth century and visited both St. Augustine's Bay and Morondava.

[103] Drury states that "one of them... fled to Feraignher, and go posession of part of the country to the southward…" Drury defines "Feraignher" as "Augustine-bay country." Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*,82, 299, 390. Drury says that "Rer Trimmenongarevo" led the army. Ibid., 300. These attacks may have been going on for decades. See Guillian, *Documents*, 15-9.

[104] Drury describes battle between the "Antenosa" (Antanosy), "Anterndroeans" (Antandroy), and the "Merfaughla" (Mahafaly). He states that the Mahafaly possessed the region between Tandroy to the river Onilahy. Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 82, 98-9, 207. See the account mid-seventeenth century account given in COACM, 3: 311-5.

[105] See the complaint of the chief of St. Augustine Bay to the French for assisting the Mahafaly (the people of southern Madagascar) chief, "Relation de ce qui s'est passé á l'ile Dauphin depuis le 1er Mars 1668," 1668, "COL C/5a/1."

[106] Drury, *The adventures*, 349-56.

living in the region, which he called Feraignher.[107] Rather than responding to local pleas for peace and attending a *kabary* (a meeting of local chiefs, the traditional way of ending warfare), the Sakalava warriors pressed onwards until they controlled the western coast from the Morondava River almost to the shores of the Onilahy.[108]

Andriamanetriarivo's brother seized control of various villages between St. Augustine's Bay and Menabe. Afterwards, he established a strong tribute state at Tulear (Toliara). He cemented the ties with the local rulers through the *fati-dra*, a blood brotherhood ceremony practiced by the Sakalava.[109] This custom, referred to as a "blood-covenant" by an English missionary visiting Menabe during the nineteenth century, was also found in Africa. He described it as "an absolute guarantee for safety and assistance from the king or chief with whom it is made..."[110] Thanks to this ceremony, the descendents of the ruler of the region were now part of the Sakalava ruling family and dynasty. After many years of war, peace prevailed between the two regions, according to traditions.[111]

Following the conquest of southwest Madagascar by the Sakalava, European visitors noted a drastic change in the practice of commerce in St. Augustine's Bay. When they visited the bay, they now had to contend with the presence of a Sakalava trading representative in Tulear. The port city, Tulear, was located just to the north of the bay and lay in between the Fiheraña and Onilahy Rivers. Even though St. Augustine's Bay was

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[107] Ibid., 82.

[108] Drury describes the lengthy deliberations between the leaders in southern Madagascar before going to war, being aware that war causes considerable upheaval. He also describes the meeting of a "grand assembly" of leaders to decide. Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 146-7.

[109] Although I can find no early sources recording this practice in Madagascar, this ceremony may have also been practiced in East Africa. See Horton, *Shanga*¸413.

[110] George Herbert Smith, *Among the Menabe; or, Thirteen Months on the West Coast of Madagascar* (London, 1896), 22-3. The Englishman did not participate in the ritual, but agreed to exchange gifts with the Sakalava to form a similar relationship.

[111] Guillain, *Documents*, 17. See description of the fati-dra in Birkeli, *Folklore Sakalava*, 174.

still more practical for anchoring their ships, Europeans now had to conduct trade in the bay and in Tulear. This change in trading patterns occurred very shortly after the expansion of Sakalava warriors towards the south.[112] For example, in 1698, an English captain stated that as he approached St. Augustine's Bay, a Malagasy man boarded his ship and told him to sail to the port of "Tiller," which would be a better harbor and have more supplies for purchase.[113]

As in the more northern port of Morondava, merchants in Tulear relied upon supplies arriving from the interior along the river to sell to Europeans. The Sakalava-appointed representative at Tulear, holding the ceremonial title of "King Baba" (or Baubau, Bawbaw) oversaw trade at St. Augustine's Bay for the next century. The king of Tulear was at peace with the Sakalava king in Menabe, with whom he now shared blood. When ships arrived in St. Augustine's Bay, they had to negotiate with King Baba's representative in the bay, Prince Will (or "Ouil," in French).[114] When European ships

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[112] One of the first mentions of Tulear as a trading port occurs in 1700, in a ship's record that mentions the first visit to Morondava and meeting with the king Timavarevo. The ship journal of the Discovery, 1700, "IOR/L/MAR/A/CL." Compare to French visits in the ship journal of the Astree, 1735, "MAR 4 JJ/86."

[113] The ship journal of the Bedford, 1698, "IOR/L/MAR/A/CXXIV."

[114] The titles of Prince William or Will, and King Baba appear to have been hereditary titles, not proper names. Terms such as "king" and "Prince" were found in French, English, and Dutch sources. Europeans may have been mistaken in understanding the Malagasy, but given the presence of several Malagasy speaking English with some fluency, it seems likely the adoption of these titles was intentional. I have not been able to find any Malagasy word that relates to "Kinne," as the usual term for a political leader during this period would be a variant Andriana, Ra, or Mpanjaka.

The terms Prince and King appear to be used to demonstrate the subservience of the ruler of St. Augustine's Bay to that of Tulear. The French referred to the Sakalava trading representatives in the northwest ports during the 18th century as "Baba." This king was known as Andrian Baba, Adrian being a Malagasy word for Lord (Andriana, see Chapter 1). The ship journal of the Hirondelle, 1731, "MAR 4 JJ/86." A leader on île Sainte Marie in 1745 was also named "Andrian Baba," according to an account by Grenville de Forval, from Charles Grant, The History of Mauritius, 1801, in COACM, 5: 238.

The title of King Baba in Tulear implies a strong cultural influence from the Arabic-speaking populations of the northwestern coast of Madagascar on the ruler of Tulear, probably via the Sakalava Empire. The use of this term is found in European sources of various kings, always in the same form. For instance, Dutch traders visiting Tulear in overheard Malagasy children greeting the ruler with the shout, "Ha kinne baba," despite the ruler giving his name to the traders as "Rammanrasse" previously. The journal of the ship De Brack, sent from the Cape for slaves in Madagascar in 1741, in COACM, 6: 80. A

arrived at St. Augustine's Bay, they first met with Will, who spoke broken English, before being directed to Tulear to the north. When European traders arrived in St. Augustine's Bay, trading representatives instructed Europeans to send presents to King Baba in Tulear to start trading negotiations. When a ship arrived in 1733, Prince Will had to send a messenger to the king at Tulear "to acquaint him of our arrival" and ask the king to send some of the slaves he had gathered in his bloody wars with his neighbors. As one observer stated, the king of Tulear's consent was required for beginning trade negotiations.[115]

King Baba, based at Tulear, controlled this district. This ruler, known under the title "King Baba," used his army to defend his frontier. This title appears to have been hereditary, as the king groomed his male descendants for assuming the role.[116] He had control over a provincial army and did not hesitate to attack in cases of "breach of faith of their neighbors."[117] When King Baba decided to invade the neighboring "mountaineers" (the Bara?), the king prepared at length for the expedition, sending out a "reconnoitering party" and gathering his generals and soldiers.[118] King Baba's army seized food and slaves. The slaves, in particular, were sold to passing European vessels.[119]

Within King Baba's province, the king had ranked "generals," possessing hereditary positions.[120] These men numbered almost fifty, according to some observers,

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nineteenth century visitor to the bay came to the same conclusion about the names: Pascoe Grenfell Hill, *Fifty Days on Board a Slave-Vessel in the Mozambique Channel, in April and May, 1843* (London: J. Murray, 1844), p. 12.

[115] The ship journal of the Anson, 1746, "IOR/L/MAR/B/549 A."

[116] Example, the ship journal of the Diligent, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/320E"; the ship journal of the Dragon, 1758, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598 E."

[117] Blankett, *HOW/3, Ms. 58/102,"* f. 2.

[118] Silas James, *Narrative of a Voyage to Arabia, India, &c.* (London: W. Glindon, 1797?), 161.

[119] Blankett, "HOW/3, Ms. 58/102," f. 2. See the ship journal of the Dutch ship De Brack, 1741, in COACM, 6: 104.

[120] Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 258.

and frequently greeted European ships entering into St. Augustine's Bay. Names such as "Prince of Wales" were adopted by these generals as a mark of recognition by the Sakalava state and their connections to the European traders who frequented the coast.[121] When the nobles and their wives boarded European ships, they expected presents, meals, and entertainment. The men carried guns and spears, and wore luxurious clothing. The most important official was Prince Will, who oversaw the trade within the bay and received large presents from visiting European ships.[122]

King Baba's biggest concern was the kingdom of the Mahafaly. The close proximity of antagonistic neighbors and the need to secure trading routes meant King Baba had to maintain a strong army and fortifications.[123] Controlling the land to the south and east of St. Augustine's Bay, the Mahafaly king also traded with passing Europeans. He ruled the region to the south of the Onilahy "Freshwater" River and attempted to trade with Europeans.[124] The king was a constant nuisance to King Baba and his representatives in St. Augustine's Bay.[125] The Sakalava representative in Tulear coordinated trade in rice and slaves from the interior and established well-regulated trade

[121] Blankett, "HOW/3, Ms. 58/102," f. 2; James, *Narrative*, 146. King Baba was also a hereditary title, also used to describe other leaders in Madagascar, including the king of Massaly "Adrien Baba": the ship journal of the Hirondelle, 1731, "MAR 4 JJ/86"; the ship journal of the Griffon, 1735, "MAR 4 JJ/144 C."

[122] For more details, see Chapter 3.

[123] Chantal Radimilahy and Barthélémy Manjakahery, "Archaeology of St Augustine's Bay, Lower and Middle Onilahy Valley, Southwestern Madagascar," *Studies in the African Past* 5 (2006): 70.

[124] See trading in the ship journal of the King George, 1718, "IOR/L/MAR/B/402 B." The Mahafaly king was called "King John" by the British and he lived on the southern side of the "Freshwater River": the ship journal of the Houghton, 1746, "IOR/L/MAR/B/438 F."

[125] The ship journal of the Oxford, 1751, "IOR/L/MAR/B/588 B."

with Europeans.[126] As a result, the Mahafaly of the south never managed to dominate trade in St. Augustine's Bay throughout the eighteenth century.[127]

The Northern Sakalava Kingdom

Meanwhile, during the expansion of the Sakalava to the south, the king Andriamanetriarivo's youngest brother, Andriamandisoarivo (Tsimanato), moved northwards. [128] He fought for control of the northwestern coast of Madagascar. Andriamandisoarivo's army clashed with multiple groups, including the Antaloatra, on their movement northwards.[129] According to traditions, the Sakalava accomplished these victories thanks to divine intervention. Throughout his march, Andriamandisoarivo relied upon an ombiasy (priest) to advise his every movement and decision and possessed a *vy lava*, a long iron knife, a talisman that empowered his victories.[130] European sources suggest that, when Andrimandisoarivo began to seize ports, he sold his captured enemies to visiting European ships in return for firearms to use in battle.[131]

By the first decade of the eighteenth century, he founded his trading capital at Majunga.[132] He also established the center of his rule at Boina, a prosperous port on the northwest coast. From his bases of Majunga and Boina, Andriamandisoarivo unleashed soldiers on inland raids to obtain rice and slaves for sale to European and non-European

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[126] The ship journal of the Onslow, 1740, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C."

[127] "A Special note to find St Augustin's Bay, and how to go in" states that while St. Augustine's Bay is a good location for "wooding and watering," "Tullea Bay" to the north has "greater trade." Thornton, "The English Pilot, "Maps 22.d.30," 22.

[128] As with all of these chronologies, sources disagree on the role of Andriamandisoarivo, some stating he inherited the Menabe throne in 1680 following the death of Andriamanetriarivo. The clearest description of this ruler is given by: Ranaivoson, *Madagascar*, 33.

[129] See descriptions in Noel, *Ile de Madagascar*, 19; Guillain, *Documents*, 19-21.

[130] Ballarin, *Les reliques royales,* p. 36; Gillian Feeley-Harnik, "Sakalava Royal Work: A Study of Aesthetics in Labor and Government" (PhD diss, New York University, 1976), 95.

[131] Ranaivoson, *Madagascar*, 34.

[132] Ibid. 33-4.See the founding myth of Majunga in André Dandouau, *Contes populaires des Sakalava et des Tsimihety de la région d'Analalava* (Alger: Jules Carbonel, 1922).

traders.[133] Trade also cemented Sakalava power on the northwest coast, while it connected the northern Sakalava branch to Sakalava territories elsewhere on the island. As in the south, Sakalava kings and queens ruled via a tributary system, established through blood brotherhood ceremonies between Sakalava monarchs and leaders in the north. Agreeing to become tributaries within the Sakalava Empire meant a return to peace and prosperity for communities in northern Madagascar.[134] In so doing, the northern Sakalava dynasty came to rival the Maroseraña dynasty of Menabe, in terms of military and economic power.[135]

This strategy of indirect control applied to Sakalava control over the Antaloatra trade. Sakalava monarchs did not try to destroy Antaloatra power.[136] Traditions emphasized the respect the Sakalava held for the communities they defeated. During the march north, the Sakalava armies respected local gravesites and the sacred trees that surrounded them.[137] They granted religious freedom to the inhabitants of their territory. Sakalava kings and queens slowly incorporated Islamic beliefs and rituals into their own practice of divine kingship, eventually converting to Islam during the nineteenth century.[138]

Following some disruption to trade from the northern ports during wartime, the Sakalava reestablished commerce in the northern ports by the first decades of the

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[133] Including hundreds of slaves exported annually to ships sailing to the Americas. On numbers and chronology, see the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database.

[134] On this process, see Chapter 4.

[135] See Guillain, *Documents*, 33-4; Lombard, *Le royaume sakalava*, 32-5.

[136] The term Antaloatra refers to Muslim, Swahili-speaking traders who inhabited the northwest coast of Madagascar. See further explanation in Chapter 1.

[137] Guillain, *Documents*, 19.

[138] Baré, *Sable rouge*, 41.

eighteenth century.[139] The Sakalava, instead of destroying the Antaloatra trade, managed to expand and control the trade by adjusting to pre-existing trade patterns throughout the eighteenth century.[140] By posing little opposition to religious and trading authorities, but exacting tribute, the Sakalava kings encouraged the continuation of trade with non-Europeans and Europeans alike. For example, one European captain described the town of Majunga as a bustling global port in 1764. He wrote that the town, built "after the Indian fashion," held stone buildings and mosques. Inhabited by "native" Muslims and others from "Surate, Johana [Anjouan], Mosembeck, and the Commoro islands," Majunga was a cosmopolitan city, under the control of an inland Malagasy empire. Within the city, the Sakalava king allowed Muslims to practice their religion freely. In return, the Sakalava instituted a series of trading controls over the northern cities, similar to those in the south. Along with the chief living in Majunga, the king also appointed a "purser authorized to carry trade on in the king's name, in conjunction with another purser that comes down from the king."[141]

Andriamandisoarivo and his eight hundred-man army founded the Boina branch of the Sakalava Empire prior to his death around 1710.[142] He named the new Sakalava dynasty *Volamena*, meaning red money or gold (or *Zafibolamena*, children of the Volamena).[143] He died in the northern city of Bezavo, having cemented his name in

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[139] Guillain, *Documents*, 19-21. See the 1751 account of the Queen and her "Moor" (Muslim) husband ruling at Massaleige: the ship journal of the Delaware, 1751, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B."

[140] Some documents hint that trading suspended following Sakalava conquest of the northwest ports but archival documents largely suggest otherwise.

[141] The ship journal of the Fly, 1763, "IOR/L/MAR/B/597 B." See also Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 101-2.

[142] The sources disagree on the exact date. In 1718, according to Ballarin, *Les reliques royales*, 32. Drury describes his march to the north: Drury, *The Adventures*, 390-1.

[143] Birkeli, "Folklore Sakalava," 192; Ballarin, *Les reliques royales*, 44.

Malagasy traditions as the founder of the Volamena kingdom.[144] By the end of the eighteenth century, this Sakalava kingdom extended from the bay of Massaly on the west coast of Madagascar to the southwest, although it was differentiated from the "former country of the Sakalava" (the Menabe Maroseraña dynasty) which extended further to the south and was not subject to the same chief.[145] His kingdom contained the port of Mazalagem Nova, or Massaliege, formerly a center of trade in the northwest.[146]

Consolidation

While Sakalava armies travelled to the north and south, Andriamanetriarivo, king of Menabe, focused on consolidating the rapidly expanding influence of the Sakalava. After expelling both of his brothers, Andriamanetriarivo underwent a change of heart. To gain the forgiveness of his deceased father, Andriandahifotsy ("Deaan Lohefute"), the Menabe king reportedly decided to enter into a treaty of friendship with both his brothers.[147] At this point, the Sakalava, or rulers now related to the Sakalava after completing blood brotherhood ceremonies, controlled all of the west coast of Madagascar. These rulers appeared to have adopted the identity of Sakalava.[148]

Most importantly, the creation of this Sakalava confederation meant the ease of trade within the empire and the assurance of peace among various groups viewed as Sakalava. Land reaching to St. Augustine's Bay entered into the Menabe dominions, so Sakalava tributary states ruled over all of the land between the Morondava and Onilahy

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[144] Ranaivoson, *Madagascar*, 34.

[145] Maurice-Auguste Benyowsky, "Description du royaume des Seclaves appelle Boyana," in *Voyages et Memoirs de Maurice-Auguste, Comte de Benyowsky*, 2 vols. (Paris: F. Buisson, 1791), 2: 386.

[146] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 101-2. It is difficult to uncover the location of some of these ports. See Ibid., 14.

[147] Drury, *The adventures*, 390-1.

[148] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 101.

Rivers. While under separate leaders, the kingdoms of Menabe (Maroseraña dynasty) and Boina (Volamena dynasty) united under the Sakalava Empire, as all rulers claimed to be related by blood. This coalition facilitated movement, trade, and defense throughout the western portion of Madagascar.

After declaring an alliance with his brothers, Andriamanetriarivo dealt with increasing trade not just from St. Augustine's Bay, but also from Morondava itself.[149] He controlled trade and monopolized the import of firearms into this port.[150] The possession of firearms allowed the king in Menabe to defend his borders against insurgents in the interior.[151] His control of trade routes required thousands of soldiers to secure the movements of merchants throughout the empire and into the interior. Malagasy living in the interior of the island claimed that, during the time of Andriandahifotsy, Sakalava warriors lacked firearms and did not conquer them. They claimed that, under Andriamanetriarivo, the Sakalava possessed guns but would not allow supplies of guns to reach them. [152] Another Malagasy tradition described the purchase of three thousand slaves by the Sakalava from the highlanders, in return for three thousand guns.[153] These people could only purchase guns from the Sakalava through exports of slaves.

Andriamanetriarivo lived at Mahabo, when not concluding trade agreements with passing Europeans. From his palace conveniently located only a few days travel to the port of Morondava, the Sakalava king oversaw trade and military campaigns run by his nobles. When a European shipwrecked sailor visited his court at the start of the

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[149] Guillain, *Documents*, 15.
[150] The king would not allow other groups to buy firearms. Drury, *The adventures*, 296-7.
[151] Ranaivoson, *Madagascar*, 33.
[152] Drury, *The adventures*, 296-7. Likewise, the French complained the English provided the people of southern Madagascar with firearms, which were used against them. La Bretache, letter, 28 February 1674, "COL C/5A/1."
[153] Kottak, "State Formation in Madagascar," 146.

eighteenth century, the king sat under a large tamarind tree, where he held court and sat surrounded by armed warriors. The king's favorite peacetime diversion consisted of making small clay bulls and then crashing them into one another.[154] Although the king appeared to the European to live a life of leisure, in reality, he was likely frequently at war with his neighbors. Later Sakalava rulers had an army of three thousand men under their control and Andriamanetraivo also probably had access to a large army.[155] During the reign of Andriamanetriarivo, the Sakalava took advantage of their military dominance to force neighboring groups into submission.[156] Following the conquest of other groups, the Sakalava king exacted tribute in the form of fish, honey, wild animals, and rice.[157]

He also established his power and dominance over his people and he became great, perhaps too great according to some traditions. The Sakalava complained to Drury that the king was no longer subject to traditional laws and did not have to listen to the decisions of local *kabary*, or meetings of local leaders.[158] The Sakalava monarchs presented themselves as rulers with unchecked power over their subjects, since "time immemorial," according to European visitors.[159] As authoritarian rulers, the kings appeared to enslave all of their subjects, probably due to the prevalence of royal work and tribute.[160] Sakalava kings could also force their people to stop trading at a whim.[161] Kings executed men for killing cattle without their permission and seized young girls as

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[154] Dean, "Narrative," "MSS. Eur. B. 2. /K. 11," ff. 26-7.

[155] Benyowsky, *Voyages*, 2: 395.

[156] On Vezo memories as Sakalava tributaries, see Astuti, *People of the Sea*, 73-5.

[157] Birkeli, "Folklore Sakalava,"186. On Sakalava control of trade throughout the 19th century, see discussion in Campbell, "The Structure of Trade in Madagascar," 15, 23.

[158] Drury, *The adventures*, 391-3.

[159] M. Glement, Letter, 1767, "COL C/5a/2," French archives, Paris. See also the description of the absolute power of the king, from the Dutch ship Barneveld in 1719, in COACM, 5: 21-2.

[160] On later exactions of royal work, see the work of Gillian Feeley-Harnik, especially "The King's Men," 211-4.

[161] The ship journal of the Dragon, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598D."

presents for European captains.[162] The rulers also had complete control over the exercise of political power and named the different chiefs that ruled provinces under their imperial control.[163] Andriamanetriarivo's capriciousness was legendary, almost as much as his prowess as a military leader. He was remembered in traditions as a "cruel man," ordering his executions from beneath the tamarind tree.[164]

Subsequent leaders struggled to maintain control of this loose empire. As during the accession of Andriamanetriarivo, future kings battled with their relatives for control.[165] When the king of Young Owl [Morondava], "Romanetta," died in 1734, factions fighting for control prompted the people of Morondava to sell any food they had available in return for firearms. The choice of a new king made the region "very unsettled," despite the assumption that his grandson would accede to the throne. According to one trader, until a new king was declared, the "country [was] all in confusion with one and other ready to cut their own brother's throat [,] striving who shall be the most powerful according to custom."[166]

Dynastic instability may have contributed to the failure of the Sakalava to maintain Morondava as a stable trading port, unlike Tulear to the south or Boina to the north. Several Europeans visiting the western coast during the mid-eighteenth century found Morondava covered with empty huts, the inhabitants having moved elsewhere.[167] The mobility of the Sakalava allowed the Sakalava kings to extend rule throughout the

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[162] Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 393-4.

[163] See Chapter 4 for details.

[164] Birkeli, "Folklore Sakalava," 172.

[165] Contrast these accession struggles with the lack of problems at St. Augustine's Bay when Prince Will died. The ship journal of the Oxford, 1751, "IOR/L/MAR/B/588 B."

[166] The ship journal of the Hertfort, 1734, "IOR/L/MAR/B/656 E-G."

[167] The ship journal of the Harcourt, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/558 A-C"; the ship journal of the Fly, 1763, "IOR/L/MAR/B/597 B"; the ship journal of the Snow Mercury, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/554 C"; the ship journal of the Solebay, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/591 A-C"; Dean, "Narrative," "MSS. Eur. B. 2. /K. 11."

island, but it prevented them from establishing completely sedentary agricultural or trading villages on the west-central coastline. Disputes over succession contributed to the instability of trade in the Menabe region.

During this critical time, the early eighteenth century, the Sakalava struggled to control trade by establishing strong trading protocol that emphasized the hegemony of Sakalava rulers. The next chapter uses European descriptions of commercial visits to Sakalava ports to understand why English and other European ships began frequenting Sakalava ports during the eighteenth century in search of slaves, as well as how Sakalava rulers asserted their power in trading relationships with European merchants. The rulers of the Sakalava Empire, now controlling the entire west coast of Madagascar, needed to prove they could attract traders.

Chapter 3

Negotiating for Slaves

At the turn of the eighteenth century, an English trader wrote a trading manual entitled, "An account of the present commodities that are imported and exported at Madagascar and the manner of dealing with the natives." [1] The anonymous author gave instructions for English captains wishing to purchase slaves. He provided details about the commodities required for trade, as well as suggestions for negotiating with kings and preventing sailor and slave rebellions. Despite never mentioning the Sakalava, the writer referred to trading practices found in their slave-trading ports. He described St. Augustine's Bay and Fort Dauphin as the best sources for "provisions." For buying slaves, however, traders should visit the ports of the west coast, as "you need no doubt of meeting slaves enough at some of these places."[2] These ports, under Sakalava control, were as the most reliable points for purchasing slaves during the eighteenth century.[3]

Records left by other European captains and traders described their visits to these ports during this century. The smooth exchange of commodities for slaves required European captains to form alliances with Sakalava kings and trading representatives. Rigid hierarchies were visible in Sakalava trading negotiations that excluded others from participating. Europeans learned that only Sakalava kings could sell cattle, rice, or slaves for firearms. Europeans, seeking to trade with Sakalava sovereigns, agreed to these

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[1] An anonymous guide to trade, entitled "An Accot of the present comodityes that are imported & exported at Madagascar and the manner of dealing with the natives," late seventeenth century?, in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334," Memoirs of East India, Bodleian Library, Oxford University Library, ff. 61-2 (henceforth Rawlinson Ms). The document does not use the term Sakalava to describe the leaders of the ports on the west coast, as perhaps the writer visited the coast prior to Sakalava occupation. Spellings have been altered to confirm with contemporary usage.

[2] Ibid., f. 62v.

[3] This argument is echoed in Solofo Randrianja and Stephen Ellis, *Madagascar: A Short History*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 104, 107.

trading procedures and, in so doing, allowed these rulers to monopolize trade in western Madagascar. Sakalava trading procedures also reflected and engaged with ideas of trade and power already circulating within the Indian Ocean world. These trading practices were present even on the periphery of the Sakalava Empire, in regions such as Tulear that were under the control of members of the Sakalava confederation. Similar practices were observed by Europeans visiting Morondava and Massaleige, ports more traditionally considered part of the Sakalava Empire.[4]

Elite traders had dominated foreign exchanges from northern Madagascar during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and, in many respects, eighteenth-century Sakalava monarchs controlled trade using similar methods. When Portuguese arrived in northwestern Madagascar during the sixteenth century, they observed an already bustling exchange system in the ports of the island.[5] The *Antaloatra* traders of the northwestern

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[4] It must be noted that Europeans rarely referred to the traders in St. Augustine's Bay as Sakalava. Despite this fact, it appeared that the ruler of Tulear and his representative in the bay were related (by fatidra) to the Sakalava of Menabe. The introduction of the trading procedures described in this chapter occurred directly following the alliance between the Sakalava of Menabe and the local groups around Tulear. Marie-Pierre Ballarin, *Les reliques royales à Madagascar: source de légitimation et enjeu de pouvoir, Xviiie-Xxe siècles* (Paris: Karthala, 2000), 32-4. A nineteenth century European also stated that the Malagasy around St. Augustine's Bay were Sakalava. Pascoe Grenfell Hill, *Fifty Days on Board a Slave-Vessel in the Mozambique Channel, in April and May, 1843* (London: J. Murray, 1844), 11. The term Sakalava could be interpreted as groups affiliated with the Sakalava kingdoms elsewhere on the island. For more details, see Chapter 2.

In addition, these trading procedures differed greatly from those outside of the west coast of Madagascar. See, for instance, French trading experiences in East Madagascar described in Chapter 5.

[5] Portuguese sources from the sixteenth and especially seventeenth century describe dhows carrying about 1,000 to 5,000 slaves from the northwestern ports annually. The earliest descriptions of this slave trade come from the letter from Afonso de Albuquerque to the king," 6 February 1507, in *Documents on the Portuguese in Mozambique and Central Africa, 1497-1840* (Lisboa: National Archives of Rhodesia, 1962), 2: 121. See also the letter from Sebastiao de Sousa to the King, 17 September 1521, in Ibid., 6: 67; Portuguese observations around 1550, in COACM, 1:97-104. It seems probable that the Portuguese writers did not actually observe the loading of slaves onto dhows. Instead, these numbers may have been "more a reflection of capacity than actual exports." Pier M. Larson, "Enslaved Malagasy and Le Travail de la Parole at the Pre-revolutionary Mascarenes," *Journal of African History* 48 (2007): 459. Based on these observations, historians have postulated that 200,000 slaves total were exported from Madagascar on non-European vessels between 1500 and 1800. See discussions of this slave trade and its magnitude in J. C. Armstrong, "Madagascar and the slave trade in the seventeenth century," *Omaly sy anio*17-20 (1983-1984): 211-233; 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): 458-62; Thomas

ports had cultural, economic, and religious ties with rulers in the Comoro Islands and East Africa that enabled them to sell slaves to traders from these locations throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Some slaving ships probably came from the northern Indian Ocean, but the Malagasy possessed closer trading ties with East Africa and the Comoros.

These slaves probably came from the interior of Madagascar. The Antaloatra lacked the strength to seize slaves forcibly throughout the island and relied on traders in the interior of Madagascar for their supplies of slaves.[6] River canoes transported slaves captured in the highlands of the island, the most populous region, to the round bays of the northwestern coastline.[7] Throughout the seventeenth century, Antaloatra continued to export slaves, probably fewer than a thousand slaves annually. These slaves still came from eastern Madagascar and the highlands, although the instability within Madagascar likely interrupted slave-trading routes within Madagascar. The numbers of slaves exported from Madagascar to the Comoros, East Africa, and the northern Indian Ocean were probably quite small, at least in comparison to the numbers of slaves involved in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Around 1700, dhows visiting the northwestern ports of Madagascar annually probably numbered fewer than a dozen, at least judging by European observations. These ships likely carried fewer than a hundred slaves each.[8]

Vernet, "Le commerce des esclaves sur la côte swahili, 1500 - 1750," *Azania* 38, no. (2003): 75-88. For more details on the Antaloatra, see Chapter 1.

[6] The records of the Jesuit priests Freire and Mariano, 1613-4, COACM, 2: 9-13. See also the letter from Mariano, 1619, COACM, 2: 312; François Callet, *Histoire des rois, traduction du Tantaran'ny andriana*, 5 vols. (Tananarive: Éditions de la Librairie de Madagascar, 1953), 1: 591-3.

[7] "A Voyage in the ship Frances from Mossambique for St. Lawrence", 1640, reproduced in 1700?, in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334," ff. 54-7. See also Stephen Ellis, "Un texte du XVIIe siècle sur Madagascar," *Omaly sy anio* 9 (1979): 151-66. See also the records left by the French colonist, Martin, 1665-8, COACM, 9:555-7.

[8] Without hard evidence, it is hard to determine the magnitude of this trade, although we have good reason to doubt some of the Portuguese observations. First, the number of dhow ships leaving the

It would be difficult to make any definite conclusions about the size of this trade, however, as evidence only comes from occasional observations of Europeans, who had reasons to inflate their estimates of the trade. Without any additional data, it would be difficult to assess the conduct of this trade over a long period, as it also appears likely that the numbers of slaves exported from Madagascar yearly fluctuated widely between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.[9]

Regardless of these fluctuations, it appears that Antaloatra traders exported slaves from the northwestern entrepôts from the sixteenth century until the end of the nineteenth

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northwestern ports more likely would have been on the magnitude of a dozen ships a year, which would cap out the exports of slaves at about 2,000-2,500 annually. One Dutch source from 1664 states that two or three large dhow ships of 400 tons visited the northwest ports for slaves and amber gris a year. European slave traders rarely purchased more than a thousand or two thousand slaves a year from the entire island of Madagascar during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, augmenting this number with slaves from East Africa. It is hard to believe, judging by the existing evidence, that the northwestern ports exported 5,000 slaves annually on non-European dhows.

The estimates for the eighteenth century come from Robert Everard, "A Relation of Three Years Sufferings of Robert Everard, Upon the coast of Assada near Madagascar in a Voyage to India in the Year 1686 and of his Wonderful Preservation and Deliverance, and Arrival at London, Anno 1693," in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels*, ed. A. and J. Churchill, vol. VI (London: Printed by assignment from Messrs Churchill, 1732). In 1734, a dhow from northwest Madagascar carried a hundred slaves ("captifs") to Anjouan: the ship journal of the Le Chauvelin, 1733, "MAR 4 JJ/98."

At the peak of the nineteenth century slave trade, English observers estimated that sixty large ships sailed from Madagascar in a single year: Evidence taken before select committee (July 20, 1871) in Correspondence of Lt Col CP Rigby, political agent at Zanzibar July 27, 1858 - September 3, 1861, "AA 12/2", Zanzibar National Archives (henceforth ZNA), 150-1. In 1873, the British abolitionists estimated about 2,000 slaves a year came from Madagascar: Letter from Bartle Frere to Earl Granville, 12March 1873, State Papers Relating to East Africa, 1857-1874, in "BL 1/1," ZNA, 1: 42. During the nineteenth century, European captains observed a maximum of three hundred slaves per vessel, mostly children. However most ships carried smaller loads, maybe a hundred or hundred fifty slaves, when they sailed to East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

[9] Prior to the sixteenth century, there is no evidence of a widespread exportation of slaves from Madagascar to the northern Indian Ocean shores. The *Zanj* (black) slaves in the Middle East most likely referred to slaves from the Horn of Africa, a region that remained an exporter of slaves to the Arabian Peninsula and further east. Madagascar appears to have been an export region for slaves during periods in which other exports may have been disrupted. These disruptions encouraged entrepreneurial slave traders to send more dhows to Madagascar and East Africa than usual. The period after the arrival of Europeans in the Indian Ocean during the sixteenth century ushered in a time of expanded slave trading with Madagascar. Even during this period, the voyage from Madagascar was relatively long, compared with ships carrying slaves from the horn of Africa or even East Africa. The slave cargoes from Madagascar were added to voyages departing from East Africa and going to the Middle East.

century.[10] During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Sakalava or Sakalava-appointed leaders oversaw the slave trade from western Madagascar, but allowed the Antaloatra to maintain their trade networks within the Indian Ocean. The effect of this long-running export of slaves (and the inflation of the availability of Malagasy slaves by European observers) had an effect on Sakalava slave trading with Europeans and European perceptions of this practice. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, European merchants, evading monopoly controls in the Atlantic, sought to uncover new sources of slaves and a few focused their efforts on Madagascar. Reports of a bustling slave trade already in operation in Madagascar attracted many of these traders. By the mid-seventeenth century, Europeans were convinced that Malagasy merchants could supply American markets with cheap slaves, prompting a brief increase in the number of Malagasy slaves transported to the Americas. This trade came to a halt within a few decades, due in part to the distances involved.[11] During this period, European monopoly trading companies also purchased Malagasy slaves for their trading posts in the Indian Ocean.[12]

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[10] On the Antaloatra providing long-term stability to the slave trade, see Gwyn Campbell, "Madagascar and the Slave Trade, 1810-1895," *The Journal of African History* 22, no. 2 (1981): 205.

[11] On the slave trade to the Americas, see the The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, http://www.slavevoyages.org <accessed November 14, 2008>.

[12] During the sixteenth century, Portuguese traders tried to use Madagascar as a supplementary source of slaves for Mozambique as well as replenishing and filling the cargoes of their passing ships: See seventeenth century Dutch and French descriptions of the Portuguese trade, "COL C/5A/1." Portuguese traded for slaves for their Indian Ocean holdings in Goa as well. During the seventeenth-century, the Dutch bought slaves for the Cape, Mauritius, and Batavia: Rene Barendse, "Slaving on the Malagasy Coast, 1640-1700," in *Cultures of Madagascar: Ebb and Flow of Influences*, ed. Sandra Evers and Marc Spindler (Leiden: International Institute for Asian Studies, 1995), 137-55; J. Moree, *A Concise History of Dutch Mauritius, 1598-1710: A Fruitful and Healthy Land* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1998), 31; references to Madagascar are scattered throughout the Portuguese documents in George McCall Theal, *Records of South-Eastern Africa collected in various libraries and archive departments in Europe*, 9 vols. (Cape Town: C. Struik, 1964), vols. 1-6. For a good summary of the slave trade, see Markus Vink, "'The World's Oldest Trade': Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of World History* 14, no. 2 (2003):131-77. The French wanted slaves for the Mascarene islands and the English for their Indian Ocean holdings during the eighteenth century. For an overview, see J. M. Filliot, *La traite des esclaves vers les Mascareignes au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: ORSTOM, 1974); Richard B.

As in West Africa, European trading companies attempted to carve out specific regions for their purchases and constructed trading posts or forts for the defense of their traders in the Indian Ocean.[13] In Madagascar, however, Europeans faced hostility when they attempted to inhabit the shores of the island. This antagonism, combined with a lack of steady supplies on the island, meant that Europeans ships had to visit several ports. Captains were usually unable to purchase sufficient supplies of food and labor at a single port or even two. [14] European ships had to move from port to port, their captains buying a few slaves and some rice and cattle at each port. European captains had to be knowledgeable about multiple regions of Madagascar, as they might have to visit multiple ports to fill their cargoes.[15] This practice echoes the movements of slave-trading dhows in the ocean. Benefiting from centuries of maritime knowledge of winds and currents in the Indian Ocean, dhow captains directed their ships along the shoreline and visited at several ports during their voyages.[16] In addition, dhow captains rarely required

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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 (2008): 43-72. The English also bought slaves for St. Helena Island, as well as for their bases in India and Indonesia. For more details, see Chapter 5.

[13] On the European organization of the slave trade, see Herbert S. Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 74-102.

[14] Portuguese ships primarily visited the northwest ports, the English, the southwestern region around St. Augustine's Bay, the Dutch, Antongil Bay, and the French, Fort Dauphin. These preferences reflected a desire to protect European ships against other European threats, rather than a commentary on the supplies of slaves. The Portuguese kept control of slave exports from Mozambique prior to the mid-eighteenth century, so other groups such as the French had trouble securing large cargoes for reasonable prices in East Africa. See the encounter of the French there in 1737: "COL C/4/3." See also the ship journal of the Vierge de Grace, 1732, "MAR 4 JJ/74."

[15] On this knowledge of sailing into ports, see the directions given to ships, end of the seventeenth century, in "MAR 4 JJ/90." Trading companies preferred to send ships multiple times to Madagascar, see discussions of which captains to send to Madagascar, South Sea Company Correspondence, 1726 "Add. 25502," British Library, f. 203.

[16] This increases our difficulty in figuring out the origins of ships visiting the Arabian Peninsula. See C. G. Brouwer, "Non-western Shipping Movements in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden during the 2nd and 3rd Decades of the Seventeenth Century, according to the Records of the Dutch East India Company (Part 2)," *Die Welt des Islams* 32, no. 1 (1992): 29 (Part 1 of this article, published in 1991, also mentions this trade.); see also the mention of Portuguese seizure of a "Swahili vessel" in 1633/4 mentioned in the Hadrami chronicles: R. B. Serjeant, *The Portuguese off the South Arabian coast; Hadrami chronicles, with*

extremely large cargoes of food or water onboard for slaves, nor did dhows have room for such things, given their sizes.

As a result, Europeans struggled to purchase food and sufficient numbers of slaves, particularly during the decades prior to the rise of the Sakalava Empire. For example, one English ship in 1682 spent eighteen months off Massaliege. During this long stay, they only purchased 130 slaves. Most of the English crew, aside from seven men, died while the ship was at anchor in Massaliege. This death toll included three different captains. The crew sailed to Anjouan to purchase food before returning to Massaliege and resuming their attempt to fill the ship with slaves.[17] This story is suggestive of the trouble Europeans faced in obtaining slaves and why they were forced to visit multiple regions of Madagascar to purchase commodities.

Sakalava rulers assimilated other trading practices already in use within the Indian Ocean world. As Europeans turned to Sakalava ports for purchasing slaves, Sakalava rulers forced Europeans to operate within established modes of trade, many of which served to demonstrate the political and economic dominance of these elites. Sakalava rulers wore silk clothes and jewelry.[18] They even converted to Islam around 1800.[19] European slave traders were forced to operate within this model and they only traded with Sakalava-appointed elites who exhibited these traits.[20] Europeans also described how kings and queens used their military power to dominate trade. Having a monopoly on the use of violence allowed them to control local communities and establish

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Yemeni and European Accounts of Dutch pirates off Mocha in the Seventeenth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 68.

[17] The ship journal of the Royalle, 1682, "MAR 4 JJ/90."

[18] Robert Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury* (London: Printed and sold by W. Meadows 1743; Hull Reprinted for Stodart and Craggs, 1807), 369.

[19] For more details, see Chapters 6 and 7.

[20] To compare this practice with the Swahili, see Chapurukha Makokha Kusimba, *The Rise and Fall of Swahili States* (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 1999).

themselves as the sole mediators for cross-cultural contact. Europeans had to contend with Sakalava ideas of power and kingship to obtain access to supplies of food and slaves on the west coast of Madagascar.

In return, Sakalava-affiliated leaders organized the visits of Europeans to their ports. Royal representatives gave foreign traders assistance with navigating, translating, and negotiating with rulers in western Madagascar. European merchants began to depend upon this assistance. They also relied upon the Sakalava to obtain sufficient commodities in a relatively short period on the west coast of Madagascar. This reliance allowed the Sakalava to dominate exchanges and control the movement of certain items, specifically firearms, rice, cattle, and slaves, within the west coast of Madagascar.

Sakalava Trading Representatives

In St. Augustine's Bay, the news of the Onslow's arrival came to communities around the bay by May, at the end of fall in the southern hemisphere. Men and women brought food items such as oranges, lemons, and honey on canoes from the interior. By the time the English ship anchored in the bay in 1741, the Malagasy were ready.[21] They approached the Onslow in their canoes and climbed onboard the ship with their food. Famished sailors peddled their personal belongings for fruit, chickens, and milk. Following good harvests, households sold their excess food items for alcohol, Indian cloth, and metals. The rapid appearance of these Malagasy amazed less experienced sailors, as no houses or buildings were visible on the "grand and beautiful" shoreline.[22]

[21] The ship journal of the Onslow, 1740, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C."
[22]The ship journal of the Houghton, 1746, "IOR/L/MAR/B/438 F."

The crews welcomed food from "very civil" Malagasy with "joy."[23] Malagasy living along the bay were aware of European demands and needs. They took advantage of the poor state of the crew to gain access to valuable items. Englishman Silas James visited Madagascar as a sailor towards the end of the eighteenth century. James observed,

> Hardly was the anchor gone before we were visited by near twenty canoes, full of the inhabitants and their wives; with them they brought on board a great variety of the produce of the land, in order to trade with us, or barter for such articles as we possessed. The commodities they dealt in, though of a different specie from ours, were, like them, calculated for that prime object, the belly. Their goods consisted of an abundant variety of eatables, particularly tropical fruits, viz. yams, tamarinds, plantains, bananas, cocoa nuts, sweet potatoes, sugar-canes, oranges and honey, besides a great plenty of animals which principally consisted of monkeys and mococks.[24]

By the eighteenth century, people living along the bay no longer fled from Europeans and instead provided them with ample food.[25]

The Malagasy observed European ships entering their bay, the large ships always in danger of scraping their bottoms on reefs that dotted the bay. Europeans lowered smaller boats, known as *chaloupes*, longboats, or "pinnaces," overboard.[26] These boats sounded the depth of the bay ahead of the larger ship. At times, Europeans employed local fishermen to assist with navigating into the bay, but it was more usual for the Sakalava to send a navigator to the ship as it entered the bay.[27] These skilled Malagasy assisted Europeans in finding secure anchoring in the bay. Just as Vasco da Gama had engaged a local sailor from the East African coast for assistance in sailing to India,

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[23] The ship journal of L'Amphitrite, 1734, "MAR 4JJ/126"; the ship journal of the Philibert, 1733, "MAR 4 JJ/114, 1733."

[24] Silas James, *Narrative of a Voyage to Arabia, India, &c.* (London: W. Glindon, 1797?), British Library, ff. 140-1.

[25] Compare this reaction to the reception Europeans had received in the bay a century earlier. See Chapter 1.

[26] For example, see the use of the longboat in the ship journal of the Caesar, 1747, "IOR/L/MAR/B/235 H."

[27] Ibid.

European captains relied upon local navigators to anchor safely in Indian Ocean harbors.[28] Navigators could read European maps and use their instruments. They were also knowledgeable about monsoonal wind schedules.[29] If they failed to lead the ship in successfully, however, frustrated European captains punished them.[30] With the help of these sailors, European monopoly companies tended to neglect the improvement of their geographical knowledge of the coastline until the nineteenth century.[31] As a result, European sea charts remained rudimentary and captains relied heavily upon local knowledge to come to anchor in the port.[32]

The navigator who assisted the Europeans with entering the bay was the first royal representative to come onboard. These representatives ensured that Europeans would only purchase slaves, cattle, and rice from the Sakalava rulers. When the Onslow entered the bay in 1741, a royal greeting party came aboard. The party was sent by Prince Will, the local ruler, and was comprised of "three men ... from St. Augustine's Bay."[33] The party usually included a skilled navigator, a translator, and a messenger from the

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[28] Dalrymple states that only Arabian navigators know how to pilot the coast between Northwest Madagascar, the Comoro Islands, and East Africa: Dalrymple, "Geographical collections," "Add. 33,765," f. 18.

[29] One observer advised, "When you come upon the coast of Madagascar and begin to draw near any bay or river where ships commonly touch at for slaves or provisions, you must spread your ensign, and if you are afraid of rocks or shoals and can't discover the proper anchoring place, .. [ask] if there be any white men upon the place, and canoes to come off." From "The present commodities," in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334," f. 61.

[30] Alexander Dalrymple gives an account of a French captain who threatened to cut off the head of a navigator who led him astray, "whether by mistake or design was not known." Alexander Dalrymple, "Geographical collections of Alexander Dalrymple on "Mauritius, Island of Bourbon, Madagascar, and Diego Rayes," 1808, "Add. 33,765," British Library.

[31] During the nineteenth century, the French made precise measurements about the locations of ports around Madagascar. See, for instance, observations of Île Sainte Marie from 1847, in "MAR 5JJ/436."

[32] On the dangers of sailing into St. Augustine's Bay: the ship journal of the Marquis, 1769, "MAR 4 JJ/ 83." Prince Will was also known as "Prince Augustin." The ship journal of l'Astree, 1735, "MAR 4 JJ/86."

[33] The ship journal of the Onslow, 1740, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C." On the relationship between Prince Will and King Baba, and these rulers and the Sakalava Empire, see Chapter 2.

Sakalava monarch, King Baba.[34] On another occasion, Prince Will raised a Union Jack flag to welcome the approaching Swallow, before sending his representatives to the ship.[35] By the middle of the century, European captains expressed their surprise if such a group did not approach the ship as it came into the bay, as they had come to depend on this greeting party. After the Sussex arrived in the bay in 1738, the English crew "hoisted their colours and fired several guns, for to bring the Malagasy down." When Malagasy lit fires along the shoreline at night, the English decided it was a signal of their goodwill and approached the shoreline the next day.[36] That day Prince Will dispatched his canoes carrying an interpreter and a navigator, referred to as a "pilot," to the Sussex. The crew welcomed the English-speaking translator and his gift of honey on board, and began to anticipate trading negotiations.[37]

The second member of the welcoming party, the translator, developed the most long-lasting relationship with the visiting crew. This interpreter remained on board during their entire stay of the ship in the bay, to ensure ease of communication between Europeans and Malagasy.[38] Interpreters sent to ships in St. Augustine's Bay and Morondava possessed titles such as "Captain William Bush," "Tom Bush" or "Captain Martin."[39] Prince Will himself spoke English, but these interpreters were nearly fluent in

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[34] Prince Will and King Baba appeared to have been described by the Dutch traders who visited Tulear in 1715 as "king Demonaji" and "viceroy Bevaha." Hendrik Frappé and Willem van der Lint, *Slawehandel met Madagaskar: die joernale van de Kaapse slaweskip Leijdsman, 1715*, ed. Pieter E. Westra and James C. Armstrong (Kaapstad: Africana Uitgewers, 2006), 67.

[35] The ship journal of the Swallow, 1749/50, IOR/L/MAR/B/385 A." See also "William Purser, the interpreter" described by Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 332-3.

[36] John Dean, "Narrative of one of the crew belonging to the Ship Sussex," 1738, "MSS. Eur. B. 2. /K. 11," ff. 8-9.

[37] Ibid.

[38] It should be noted that the French never encountered any Malagasy translators elsewhere on the island. In fact, the French traders usually brought a translator with them from the Mascarenes. See: the ship journal of the Reine, 1734, "MAR 4 JJ/91."

[39] On at least one instance, Captain Bush also presented himself as an influential chief at Morondava as well. The ship journal of the Hertford, 1734, IOR/L/MAR/B/656 E-G."

English. They spoke English, even with French and Dutch merchants.[40] We know little about these interpreters, their role in the coastal communities, and whether Europeans had given them these names.[41] It was only clear that they worked for Prince Will and they demonstrated loyalty to their leaders.

A third member of the welcoming party met with the European captain to receive messages for the king in Tulear, King Baba. This messenger frequently spoke English as well, as with "James Martin" who met the crew of the Onslow in 1740. James Martin quickly advised the captain that the real ruler of southwestern Madagascar resided in Tulear.[42] This messenger, also described as the king's "ambassador," was assisted the captain in settling trade by taking messages to King Baba about the trading demands of the Europeans. Sometimes the ship's captain was particularly desperate for supplies and sailed from the bay into Tulear where King Baba sold these goods. Most of the time, however, the messenger accompanied an officer of the crew on a visit to King Baba in Tulear.[43] The officer had to bring a present to the king in order to start trade.[44] The dispatch of this present to Tulear, "according to custom," was the first step in trading negotiations between Europeans and King Baba.

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[40] Ibid.; the ship journal of La Conde, 1733, "MAR 4 JJ/97." There were also French interpreters at Fort Dauphin, such as "Paul Negre," in 1737: the ship journal of the Duc d'Anjou, "MAR 4 JJ/76."

[41] Drury suggested that William Purser, for instance, learned English from pirates. Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 332-3.

[42] The ship journal of the Onslow, 1740, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C." See also description of Prince "Ouil" and his messenger: the ship journal of l'Astree, 1735, "MAR 4 JJ/86."

[43] The ship journal of the Swallow, 1749, "IOR/L/MAR/B/385 A." At Young Owl, a parallel procedure took place - upon the arrival of a European ship, the king's messenger came to assist with the movement of his present up the Morondava River to the king's palace 12 to 15 leagues in the town of Mahabo. The ship journal of the Delaware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B"; observations of a French captain, 1743, "MAR 4 JJ/74."

[44] The ship journal of the Salisbury, 1742, "IOR/L/MAR/B/478 A."

The messenger informed Europeans that when King Baba arrived in the bay, formal trade negotiations could start.[45] Only King Baba was able trade guns for rice and slaves, and he could provide captains with a large number of cattle as well.[46] Without the King's permission, Europeans could only purchase small food items such as lemons from the people who visited their ship in canoes.[47] For example, in 1751, the royal messenger, "Tom Bush," informed the captain of the Delaware that the interpreter "Captain Martin" and Prince Will had gone to see the King Baba in Tulear, and would not return for several days. No trading of rice, cattle, or slaves could commence until all three men returned.[48]

Royal representatives also transmitted considerable information about trading prospects in the bay prior to the arrival of the king.[49] They could tell the ship's captain where to accomplish certain tasks, including getting water, constructing their trading factory, and fetching wood for the ship.[50] Captain George Bagwell of the Hertford heard some good news when he arrived in the bay. Messengers described the bloody wars that had occurred recently and that the present King Baba had murdered three of his brothers to take over power eighteen months earlier. As a result, King Baba had many slaves for sale. Six months earlier, the king had sold eight hundred slaves to the French, according to messengers. As a result, Captain Bagwell decided to stay in St. Augustine's Bay for several weeks, but only purchased twenty-nine slaves. During this stay, he had to purchase enough food to support his crew, to the profit of local Malagasy and the

[45] King Baba, like Prince Will, was an honorific. The French also described the king of Boina as "Adrian Baba": the ship journal of the Hirondelle, 1731, "MAR 4 JJ/86."
[46] The ship journal of the Hertford, 1734,"IOR/L/MAR/B/656 E-G."
[47] In St. Augustine's Bay in 1733: the ship journal of the Philibert, "MAR 4 JJ/114."
[48]The ship journal of the Delaware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B."
[49] The ship journal of the Delaware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B."
[50] The ship journal of the Ilchester, 1750, "IOR/L/MAR/B/601B."

Sakalava rulers.[51] Sakalava messengers may have been attempting to prolong the visit of the visiting Englishman, in order to sell more items to his crew.

Messengers were a crucial source of information for visiting European traders on commerce in the Indian Ocean. They knew intimate details about commerce, politics, and the needs of European traders. European captains would go months without any updates about events in the ocean. Passing ships carried news of European peace treaties, shifting alliances, and crucial information about the control of ports such as Madras. During times of war, such information was invaluable for the crew of ships like the Haeslingfield. In 1739, the captain of the Haeslingfield spoke with a Portuguese commodore in St. Augustine's Bay. The Portuguese reported, "the English were at war with Spain" and the Spanish had taken an English galleon.[52]

These representatives also gave captains news of passing ships. Captains routinely asked messengers if any English, French or other European ships had stopped in the bay recently. More likely than not, this news reassured worried captains, as knowledge of the East Indies in Europe tended to lag as much as a year behind events in the ocean. The captain of the Caesar discovered that three English ships had anchored in the bay recently, before sailing north.[53] Knowing that trade still continued without disruption encouraged visiting captains to remain in the bay and open trading channels with Prince Will and King Baba. Likewise, the absence of these assurances prompted some captains to travel elsewhere for supplies.[54]

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[51] Archival research, so far, does not back up these claims. Might he have been intentionally misled? The ship journal of the Hertford, 1734, "IOR/L/MAR/B/656 E-G."

[52] The ship journal of the Haeslingfield, 1739, "IOR/L/MAR/B/642 C"; the ship journal of the Duke of York, 1723, "IOR/L/MAR/B/94 C."

[53] The ship journal of the Caesar, 1747, "IOR/L/MAR/B/235 H."

[54] The ship journal of the Warren, 1750, "IOR/L/MAR/B/571 A."

When the Sussex went missing in 1738, the captain of the Prince William heard a rumor that the Malagasy had seized and enslaved the entire crew at Massaliege.[55] In 1740, the EIC officers commanded the captain of the Onslow to touch at Madagascar "in her outward bound passage in order to enquire further after the ship Sussex," as well as purchase supplies for their voyage to India.[56] When the ship arrived, "James Martin," one of the messengers, informed the captain that the Malagasy had not seized the crew of the Sussex and instead they had been castaways on the coast of Madagascar. Another English ship had been in the bay the previous year and received one of the surviving sailors of the Sussex, John Dean, as well as a letter left by another survivor with King Baba.[57]

Messengers also knew enough of European politics to manipulate rivalries to their advantage. In 1714, a messenger reassured a French captain that, after some English ships stole three hundred cattle without paying, the Malagasy would no longer trade with the English.[58] Despite this statement, English merchants continued to trade peacefully in the bay. Further north, at Massaliege, a boat with French colors approached an English ship, the Diligent. After a confrontation with the English captain, the people quickly explained that some chiefs owned this flag. The boat carried rice for local trade and "it was customary to hoist French colours when they had trade."[59] Royal representatives in Sakalava ports usually expressed a great friendship with the English when they spoke

[55] The ship journal of the Prince William, 1738, "IOR/L/MAR/B/324 E."

[56] Orders and Instructions, to Cap John Balchen Commander and Ralph Congreve Chief Mate of the Onslow, 1740, "IOR/E/3/108," f.164.

[57] The ship journal of the Onslow, 1740, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C." For the full story, see Dean, "Narrative," "Sussex, MSS. Eur. B. 2. /K. 11." On rescuing some of the crew, see the ship journal of the Winchester, 1736, "IOR/L/MAR/B/643A." On "Prince Martin": the ship journal of the Astree, 1735, "MAR 4 JJ/86."

[58] Memoire, 1714, in Correspondance d'ile Bourbon, "COL C/3/3-4."

[59] The ship journal of the Diligent, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/320 E."

with English traders and the opposite when they met with Frenchmen.[60] By playing off perennial English/French competition, the Sakalava representatives ensured they received favorable trading deals with passing traders.

Pirates

Sakalava representatives also knew how to use European itinerants to their advantage in trading negotiations. The period that began European slave trading in Madagascar coincided with the spread of piracy from the Atlantic into the Indian Ocean. A number of these pirates made Madagascar a base for their operations in the ocean and Sakalava monarchs took advantage of their presence on the island. By the eighteenth century, many of these European pirates became Malagasy subjects under the patronage of the Sakalava Empire. In return for harboring these fugitives, Sakalava monarchs acquired military and linguistic knowledge from European and American pirates. Forging close links with the pirates, allowed the Sakalava to monopolize trade.[61]

Pirates lived on the coast of the island from around 1690 until at least 1720.[62] The paths that brought them to Madagascar varied. Most pirates came from a seafaring background and were either out-of-work sailors from Europe or disgruntled privateers.

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[60] See the ship journal of the Dragon, 1753, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598D."

[61] The different reaction of Malagasy leaders on the east coast of Madagascar is testament to the very different attitudes towards power and kingship on the different coasts. On the east coast, the descendents of pirates became powerful leaders, eventually leading to the creation of the Betsimisaraka Confederation. See Chapter 4.

[62] Despite the British announcing the dispersal of pirates from Madagascar, the sultana of Anjouan complained of pirates in 1704: Stanes, "A Journal of a voyage to Muscat and Surrat," 1703, "Add. Ms. 24931," British Library (see also Sloane Ms. 3145). One French document also states that 1704 was the peak of pirate activity off Madagascar: M L'Abbe Davelu, n.d., "Notes historiques sur l'isle de Bourbon, 1506-1753", *Fonds des Colonies, Divers, Collection Moreau de St Méry*, "COL F/3/1," French National Archives, Paris. Another French source states that pirates, "forbans," and "filibusters" inhabited Madagascar mostly around 1706: letter, 28 July 1706, "MAR B/2/190," f. 623. In 1731, a dispatch from the Mascarenes stated that the pirates in Madagascar had been eliminated: letter, 1731, "COL C/3/5." For an overall summary of pirates in Madagascar, see Hubert Deschamps, *Les pirates à Madagascar aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Éditions Berger-Levrault, 1972), especially 100-105, 121-177.

The need to find a home in the ocean drew the pirates to Madagascar and the Comoro Islands. For some of these illicit traders, residence in Madagascar offered a respite from sea life and the possibility of living the life of a rich merchant. The pirate lifestyle among the Sakalava was so appealing to European sailors that many "fractious fellows" tried to flee inland at St. Augustine's Bay and other ports to join pirates.[63] With enough firearms and allies, pirates could live safely and peacefully on the shores of Madagascar. By gathering dependents, intermarrying with locals, coordinating (illegal) trade, and forming armies, pirates became part of the fabric of Madagascar.

Pirates engaged in trade with rulers on Madagascar and relied upon supplies purchased from rulers for their survival. Europeans complained that these "renegades of all nations" disturbed communities in Madagascar, by kidnapping people and cattle from communities on the island.[64] In fact, pirates were relatively successful at living on the island and disrupted Malagasy communities less than European colonists had. Many of these migrants were adept at surviving in the harsh environment of Madagascar, although mortality rates were comparable among pirating groups as among English or French colonists on the island. The smaller size of pirate groups, however, meant their long-term residence was not as threatening to the Malagasy. Pirates relied on intermarriage with Malagasy women and supplies of guns for survival, strategies that still occasionally failed them.[65]

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[63] "IOR/L/MAR/B/402 A-D, King George, 1718," British Library.

[64] Dalrymple, "Geographical collections," "Add. 33,765," 2.

[65] Our primary sources on these migrant communities come from European efforts to eradicate their presence on Madagascar when they threatened the licit trade of European monopoly companies. Europeans also noted the degree of interaction between the pirates and the Malagasy. The suppression of piracy gained support in part due to religious sectarianism, as the French complained that mostly English protestant pirates spread Protestantism among the Malagasy. See colonial correspondence, 1706, "COL C/2/12." The French government tried to stop illegal trading with pirates at île de Bourbon (Reunion) in 1711: orders of the king of France, 11 January 1711, "COL C/3/31."

Many pirates sought shelter and protection through alliances with Sakalava monarchs. In St. Augustine's Bay, around the end of the seventeenth century, there were "nine or ten white men who were under the king of Boarare [Baba?]."[66] When shipwrecked sailor Robert Drury visited western ports during the first decades of the eighteenth century, white men were a fixture in Sakalava courts.[67] By the 1720s, when the French attempted to stop pirates from controlling trade from the east coast of Madagascar, many pirates fled to the west coast. They sought protection under the "king of Massaly," the Sakalava monarch at Boina.[68] French sources described the king as the "strongest" monarch on the island. The king reportedly "has the most territory of Madagascar, and often sends out 50,000 men on foot, [so the king] can easily rule the entire island." His close relationship with pirates bolstered his power. The king supposedly loved and protected whites and traded with them.[69] In Massaliege, the pirates lived in "a very decent manner," in houses with pewter dishes and were very rich, owning "many cattle and several slaves."[70]

In return for their place in the Sakalava court, pirates assisted local monarchs with translation and negotiations with passing European ships. They facilitated long-distance trade from western Madagascar to European and American ships, much as the Antaloatra assisted the Sakalava in maintaining trade networks within the Indian Ocean.[71] They may

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[66] "The deposition of Goe. Recreley taken December the 18th, 1698," Records of the High Court of Admiralty and colonial Vice-Admiralty courts, "HCA 1/98," National Archives, Kew, UK. See Frappé and Lint, *Slawehandel met Madagaskar,* 99.

[67] Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 381-2.

[68] A few decades earlier Drury described four white men living in Massaliege, coming from Île Sainte Marie. Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 428.

[69] "COL C/3/3-4," French National Archives, Paris.

[70] Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 430.

[71] Interestingly, Anjouan never housed any such migrants, other than those seeking to sell and plunder ships there or in Mozambique. The Sultan of Anjouan also complained the pirates pillaged his island as well, in 1714. The ship journal of the Greenwich, 1720, "IOR/L/MAR/B/488 A"; the ship journal

have also provided the Sakalava with a linguistic education and taught the Malagasy how to use firearms. Reportedly, the people of St. Augustine's Bay knew how to curse in English, making frequent statements such as "G-d D—n ye, John, me love you."[72] Within a few decades, the Sakalava had incorporated knowledge gained from pirates into their own trading patterns, visible in their use of English translators, for instance.

The age of piracy also attracted European vessels to Sakalava ports and away from the east coast of Madagascar.[73] In European eyes, Sakalava kings had re-established "regulated commerce" on the island by preventing pirates from entering their ports. Europeans also stated that pirates did not dare to attack Sakalava tributary states, so Sakalava-controlled ports were safe for commerce.[74] The threat of piracy from Madagascar had largely passed from Madagascar by around 1720, but European sea captains continued to fear pirate attacks for most of the eighteenth century.[75] European traders continued to trust the Sakalava to protect them in their ports and, in return, Sakalava rulers welcomed traders and drew upon knowledge obtained from the pirates.

The King's Arrival: Food, Drink, and Presents

This knowledge was important in the next stage of trading negotiations: the meeting between the king and the ship's captain. After the ship came to anchor, a European captain would order his crew to fire canon salutes to greet Prince Will and King Baba. After royal representatives delivered presents to the king in Tulear, usually a

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of the Prince Frederick, 1722, "IOR/L/MAR/B/663 C"; the ship journal of the Curieux, 1708, "MAR 4 JJ/88"; the ship journal of the Sirenne, 1720, "MAR 4 JJ/90."

[72] Downing, *A Compendious History of the Indian Wars*, 81.

[73] See, for instance, the ship journal of the King George, 1718, "IOR/L/MAR/B/402 B."

[74] Letter of Boucher, 1724, on the pirates in Madagascar, "COL C/3/3-4."

[75] Justin Corfield and Ian Morson, eds, *British Sea-Captain Alexander Hamilton's A New Account of the East Indies (seventeenth - eighteenth Century)* (Lewiston, New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), 28.

gun and "good spirits," Europeans received in return "a fat ox or some other valuable thing." [76] King Baba usually arrived a few days later.[77] A meeting with King Baba was a significant ceremony because, as all passing captains knew, he was the one who controlled their successful acquisition of goods in St. Augustine's Bay.[78]

The king and prince frequently ordered that the longboat come to the shore and carry them to the boat.[79] Boat also carried their large retinues, described as the king's "black princes."[80] In 1743, the King brought along his grandson and daughter on his visit to the ship, in addition to the various "nobles."[81] These "nobles" had English names, such as Prince George, John, Dick, Frederick, and "Robin Hood." [82] A few decades later, an English visitor observed that when King Baba arrived, he was "attended by full fifty of his nobles and a vast retinue of commoners." Observers explained that many received their English names from the frequent visits of English in the bay. These nobles

> had received the royal titles of Prince George, Duke of York, Duke of Cumberland, Prince Ferdinand, &c. and one of them had actually called himself Sir Isaac Newton, nor the two legged animal answer to any other name. Among the class of commoners we noticed Robin Hood, Will Scarlet, and Little John.[83]

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[76] "The present commodities," in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334," f. 61.

[77] These ceremonies were similar in Fort Dauphin, although Europeans frequently dealt with more than one king. The ship journal of the Astree in 1734, "MAR 4 JJ/86." The trading ceremony was different at île Sainte Marie, reportedly due to the influence of the pirates. The "serment" ceremony involved sharing a concoction of salt water and gunpowder, as described in the ship journal of the Heron, 1732, "MAR 4 JJ/91."

[78] The ship journal of the Grantham, 1750, "IOR/L/MAR/B/617 K"; the ship journal of the Dragon, 1753, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598 D."

[79] The ship journal of the Hardwicke, 1751, "IOR/L/MAR/B/568 D."

[80] The ship journal of the Pitt, 1759, "IOR/L/MAR/B/525 A."

[81] The ship journal of the Grantham, 1743, "IOR/L/MAR/B/617 I"; the ship journal of the Grantham, 1750, "IOR/L/MAR/B/617 K."

[82] The ship journal of the Dragon, 1758, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598 E"; on other names, see the ship journal of the London, 1767, "IOR/L/MAR/B/1 E."

[83] James, *Narrative of a Voyage*, 146. These names were repeated by Dr Edward Ives, "A voyage to India in the year 1754," in COACM, 5: 255. At Young Owl, as well, various headmen and "captains" boarded with the Sakalava king. The ship journal of the Heaslingfield, 1739, "IOR/L/MAR/B/642 C."

Some of these local chiefs even claimed to be powerful enough to coordinate trade on their own, but Europeans preferred to deal with the established rulers: Prince Will and King Baba.[84] All of the Malagasy guests were dressed in "oriental panoply" and armed with all sorts of weapons, from guns to spears.[85] Women and children were not excluded from the party and the chance to examine the European ship closely.

Once onboard, the ceremony between the Europeans and Sakalava consisted of two parts: the consumption of a meal and the exchange of more presents.[86] The king and his favorites sat down for a meal with the Europeans, although the majority of his retinue did not partake.[87] In addition to the meal, King Baba drank copiously during the feast. The alcohol made the feast a real celebration and diplomatic occasion.[88] Alcohol consumption acted as a cross-cultural social activity that both groups enjoyed. The captain of the Diligent found he received only a "cool reception" from the king Baba until he saw the brandy as a present. The minute the King and his attendants came aboard, they usually drank "a good deal of brandy."[89] A common gift to the king was several bottles of brandy.[90]

Both Malagasy and Europeans drank to excess, even though Europeans boasted their high tolerance to the local Malagasy alcohol, *toaka*, while Malagasy officials would

[84] Dean, "Narrative," "MSS. Eur. B. 2. /K. 11."
[85] James, *Narrative of a Voyage*, 146.
[86] In Fort Dauphin, "we have had many kings aboard the ship, always wanting to drink eau de vie. The ship journal of the Astree, 1734: "MAR 4 JJ/86."
[87] Ibid.
[88] The ship journal of the Oxford, 1751, "IOR/L/MAR/B/588 B."
[89] The ship journal of the Diligent, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/320 E."
[90] The ship journal of the Duke of Albany, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/553 A." For another account of presents to the Sakalava king in 1743, see the ship journal of the St. Charles, "MAR 4 JJ/74."

be falling down after drinking the same amount.[91] On one occasion onboard the ship, the Malagasy "behaved very ridiculous, being much in liquor professed a great deal of friendship and made large promises" to the crew.[92] Similarly, when the king's sisters and eldest daughter came on board, they were "not easy [until] they got more" brandy to drink.[93] At least one English sailor died of alcohol asphyxiation on the shores of St. Augustine's Bay.[94]

After the meal, the king and the captain formally exchanged gifts that were both practical and luxurious. Malagasy rulers frequently brought the commodities most desired by Europeans: food items. The presentation of a bull, however, was hardly a "gift" according to one captain. He explained that "the present is more properly selling them," as the King expected a present in return for the bull. Despite being obligatory, both sides of these exchanges referred to them as "presents." When in 1742, King Baba brought a captain five bulls, one from himself and one from each of his four wives, the king was "affronted" when the cattle were not killed immediately. The captain, not wanting to seem ungrateful, felt obliged to kill two and have them salted.[95] Slaves were also frequent presents and young female slaves were given for the use of the ship's captain.[96] In fact, even if the visiting Europeans were not slave traders, Sakalava rulers still offered slaves as gifts.[97]

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[91] For example Everard, "A Relation," 263. The captains of ships relied on plying their sailors with alcohol to decrease discontent during long trips: the ship journal of the Warren, 1749,"IOR/L/MAR/B/571 A."

[92] The ship journal of the Prince Henry, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/325 G."

[93]The ship journal of the Dragon, 1753, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598D."

[94] The ship journal of the Haeslingfield, 1739, "IOR/L/MAR/B/642 C."

[95] The ship journal of the Swift, 1741-2, "IOR/L/MAR/B/616 A."

[96] The ship journal of the Onslow, 1741, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C."

[97] The ship journal of the St. Charles, 1742, "MAR 4 JJ/74."

European gifts to King Baba always included guns and their accoutrements and at times, the king refused to accept any other gifts.[98] In addition, King Baba received presents of clothing. Rulers of western Madagascar valued presents of foreign clothing, as well as beads and jewelry.[99] A captain in 1749 gave the king of Massaliege a "buccaneer" gun, a "half buccaneer" gun, a small keg of powder, as well as a case of cordials, a looking glass, and some pewter and clothing.[100] One European captain gave the king a "second-hand imperial blue silk coat" from India, along with some other worn European clothing. The pleased king danced a "jig" with his attendants before leaving, without "showing the least token of gratitude."[101] The demand for cloth and clothing explained why some of the most frequently stolen goods (other than firearms) from Europeans were the ship's canvas and dirty laundry.[102]

On many occasions, the queens, wives of the king, and their daughters came on board and received gifts as well. Sakalava monarchs had several wives, as many as twelve in the case of the king of Young Owl (Morondava). All of these wives required presents from European traders.[103] When messenger took presents from an English ship to King Baba in Tulear, gifts to his wives were usually included as well.[104] Noble women also accompanied their husbands onboard.[105] The wives of Prince Will received gifts

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[98] The ship journal of the Astree, 1737, "MAR 4 JJ/86."

[99] The ship journal of the Dragon, 1753, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598D."

[100] The ship journal of the Swallow, 1749-50, "IOR/L/MAR/B/385 A."

[101] Said to be of such poor quality that it was said to have been the property of the cabin boy, not the captain. James, *Narrative of a Voyage*,146

[102] The ship journal of the Oxford, 1751, "IOR/L/MAR/B/588 B." In 1749, an English captain gave the king of Massaliege presents that included a "scarlet gold laced cloak" and a "gold laced ... hat." The ship journal of the Swallow, 1749-50, "IOR/L/MAR/B/385 A."

[103] The ship journal of the Stormont, 1759, "IOR/L/MAR/B/458 B"; the ship journal of the Hertford, 1734, "IOR/L/MAR/B/656 E-G"; the ship journal of the Chesterfield, 1748, "IOR/L/MAR/B/507 A."

[104] The ship journal of the Prince Henry, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/325 G."

[105] The ship journal of the Onslow, 1741, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C."

from the captains, a practice that became "customary" during the eighteenth century.[106] Men received guns, while women received mirrors, scissors, and cloth from Europeans.[107] Despite Sakalava women possessing political power in northern Madagascar, European captains rarely gave women guns as presents.[108]

A final component of the king's visit, a gun salute, had to occur upon his departure for the shore. European ships commonly saluted one another, as they would have in European-controlled ports.[109] Sakalava trading representatives learned to request this gesture from visiting ships. In Morondava, "Capt. John the linguist" informed the captain that he had to fire the guns twice to show they were there for trade (in addition to sending a gift of brandy to the king).[110] Sometimes "natives of distinction" were also saluted by gunshots, including John Nick and Prince Gregory by the ship Beckenham.[111] If the captain failed to salute the king upon coming on board, King Baba ordered the captain to do so immediately, even if he seemed a bit startled by the result.[112]

Negotiating Prices

After the king visited the ship, relations between Europeans and Malagasy took place on beaches where they would agree on prices for rice and cattle. The king's purser remained on the coast to settle any trading disagreements that could arise after the king returned to Tulear. Of course, as one captain observed, prices were never hard and fast:

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[106] The ship journal of the Hougton, 1748, "IOR/L/MAR/B/438 F."
[107] In 1734, St. Augustine's Bay, the ship journal of the Philibert, 1733, "MAR 4 JJ/97."
[108] Ibid.; the ship journal of the Onslow, 1741, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C"; in the case of Massaliege, ruled by a queen: the ship journal of the Delaware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B." For an example, see Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 102.
[109] The ship journal of the Grantham, 1743, "IOR/L/MAR/B/617 I."
[110] The ship journal of the Dragon, 1753, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598D."
[111] The ship journal of the Beckenham, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/561 A."
[112] In 1734, St. Augustine's Bay, the ship journal of the Philibert, "MAR 4 JJ/97."

"The agreeing on the price of cattle is merely a matter of form for they deceive you in the size and age of the cattle as much and whenever they can."[113] Prices were heavily debated, anywhere along the coast, at any point in time, by English and French captains alike.[114] Between disputes over the size of cattle, the age of the slaves, and the size of a measure of gunpowder, the captain and his representatives were busy during their stay.[115] Officials in Europe, however, insisted on their captains purchase commodities for the same prices from voyage to voyage. These commands produced difficulties for captains trying to purchase the necessary commodities in Madagascar.[116]

As early as 1692, slave traders on the shores of Madagascar demanded guns from Europeans in return for slaves. The anonymous English guide advised slave-trading captains to bring large quantities of firearms to Madagascar.[117] The trading goods that the "natives esteem most are good powder and arms," the writer explained. These commodities were supplemented with flints, beads, scissors, knives, and various other small items. In negotiating for slaves from the Sakalava, Europeans had to discover the exact number of guns or amount of gunpowder that would be required for slaves.[118] Prices varied from one slave to another, with younger (Europeans preferred slaves between fourteen and twenty-five years old) male slaves costing Europeans at least a gun,

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[113] The ship journal of the Oxford, 1751, "IOR/L/MAR/B/588 B."

[114] See for instance the French visit to Massaly: the ship journal of the 1736, the Griffon, "MAR 4 JJ 144 C."

[115] The ship journal of the Diligent, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/320E." Without fixed weights (prior to the Merina Empire and the creation of a rice-based weight measurement), the debates over the size of a "gamelle" of rice or a "bamboo" of gunpowder became quite heated: the ship journal of the Astree, 1737, "MAR 4 JJ/86."

[116] For example, "Orders and Instructions to Cap George Bagwell and Mr Richard Taylor and Mr William Oaker, in reference to the ship Hertford," 1733, "IOR/E/3/106, Letterbooks, 1733," f. 10.

[117] The author explained that, whereas traders only demanded guns on the east coast, on the west, they asked for guns as well as "some powder and flints, or some other thing that they want." From "The present commodities," in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334," f. 61; other examples of prices of slaves include: in Fort Dauphin where the French bought slaves for a combination of gunpowder and guns: the ship journal of the Astree, 1734, "MAR 4 JJ/86."

[118] Frappé, and Lint, *Slawehandel met Madagaskar,* 65-7.

some gunpowder and flints. Prices sometimes included other commodities, such as barrels of alcohol, but always included at least one gun.[119]

Europeans purchased cattle with gunpowder and other food for a variety of flints, bullets, and other desired goods like knives.[120] To obtain food such as "yams, potatoes, fowls, goats, plantains, bananas, milk, honey, tamarinds, or wax," they traded with beads or knives. Guns were required for the purchase of slaves and gunpowder for cattle. Slave traders purchased large amounts of food for the survival of the crew and slaves.[121] The most common purchase to feed slaves was manioc. Rice was reserved for European crewmembers. The anonymous English writer wrote that, "If you meet with yams [perhaps manioc], buy as many as you can, for your slaves continue more hearty when they feed upon them, than when you give them rice."[122] Transporting Malagasy slaves to the Americas (as opposed to locales throughout the Indian Ocean) was particularly resource intensive. Captains tried to fill large cargoes of slaves (200+) and purchase enough food, primarily beef, rice, and manioc, to last for several months at sea.

By controlling this trade in cattle, rice and slaves, Sakalava rulers monopolized the importation of guns into their territory. Sakalava rulers prevented other groups in western Madagascar from owning guns.[123] In fact, it was only during periods of unrest that Sakalava subjects managed to purchase guns. In 1734, following the death of the Sakalava king in Mahabo, there was massive unrest in Morondava. Canoes of men, women, and children approached the ship and tried to sell small quantities of rice,

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[119] The preferred age for slaves was under twenty-five: Letter from London, 2 April 1740 in "IOR/E/3/108, Letterbooks," f. 99. For examples of prices, see the ship journal of the Swallow, 1749/50, "IOR/L/MAR/B/385 A"; the ship journal of the Dragon, 1753, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598D."

[120] See, for instance, the letter in 1733, "COL C/3/7."

[121] On the prices for cattle, sheep, and other goods on negotiation with locals: the ship journal of the Philibert in St. Augustine's Bay, 1734, "MAR 4 JJ/97."

[122] "The present commodities," in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334," f. 62.

[123] Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 396-7.

callavances, and some cattle in return for guns.[124] They might have been selling their food to Europeans because they required guns to defend themselves in uncertain times.

Usually, as trading began, the captain negotiated with Prince Will to provide him with men to "build a storehouse" on the shore. The "factory" or storehouse constructed along the bay was little more than a hut (or huts), impermanent and to be taken down by the Malagasy after the ship left.[125] Europeans paid Malagasy workers "some powder, beads, looking glasses, etc" for their assistance in construction. These workers built the factory with local materials, the building sometimes lacking a roof if the ship visited during the dry season.[126] After the storehouse was built, the captain divided it "into two parts, one end for trading in and the other for salting and packing your meat."[127] A factory contained trading goods, under strict guard by the crewmembers. Keeping guns and gunpowder dry was their primary concern, although this was next to impossible during the rainy season. Wise captains did not send a large number of supplies to the shore at a time, in order to reduce theft and damage.

Captains ordered tents erected for the quartering of soldiers and sailors onshore, so that they could guard firearms in the factory and assist in the transportation of slaves. Europeans also used tents for the rehabilitation of sick sailors. Once again, Sakalava rulers determined the location of these tents.[128] Ideally, the factory and tents were located as close to the shore and river as possible, to facilitate trade with the interior of the island. The constructions had to be easily approachable by canoe. Captains still complained of

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[124] The ship journal of the Hertford, 1734, "IOR/L/MAR/B/656 E-G."

[125] In 1734, three tents were erected at St. Augustine's Bay: the ship journal of the Philibert, "MAR 4 JJ/97."

[126] The ship journal of the Onslow, 1741, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C."

[127] "The present commodities," in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334," f. 61.

[128] The ship journal of the Hertford, 1734, "IOR/L/MAR/B/656 E-G."

the difficulties involved in loading cattle and slaves onto longboats and bringing them to the ship, particularly in bad weather.[129]

Europeans required factories on the shores of Madagascar because it sometimes took several months for slaves to arrive on the shoreline.[130] After European sailors, with the help of paid Malagasy labor, erected the factory and tents on shore, soldiers and sailors disembarked with their trade goods of mostly guns and gunpowder, and waited for the arrival of the slaves. These soldiers and slaves living in the tents had increased contact with the diseases of Madagascar and the inhabitants of the island. Sick men sent ashore to recover frequently got sicker and sicker, particularly if a ship arrived in the hot season. During this time of year, European sailors were more vulnerable to catching illnesses ashore.[131] Already weak with scurvy, the sailors' sickly conditions could be exacerbated by the heat and unclean drinking water, especially if they stayed on shore for longer than a few months. The crew of the Beckenham was unlucky and spent all of November and December, months of intense heat, ashore in St. Augustine's Bay. The captain complained that the "number of our sick [was] still increasing" throughout their entire stay.[132] Another stated, "Natives here seem to wonder much at the White men's' dying."[133]

European traders hired Malagasy to assist in the necessary "drudgery" to ease the work of sailors.[134] Europeans hired them to help with filling water barrels and transporting food to their ships, in addition to hiring them to build the factories and tents

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[129] The ship journal of the Discovery, 1700, "IOR/L/MAR/A/CL."
[130] The ship journal of the Edgebaston, 1740, "IOR/L/MAR/B/622 A."
[131] The ship journal of the Delaware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B."
[132] The ship journal of the Beckenham, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/561 A."
[133] The ship journal of the Delaware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B."
[134] "The present commodities," in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334," f. 62.

that housed the sailors on the shore. Despite this cooperation, on more than one occasion, Malagasy attacked the sailors. The people of Madagascar knew of the disgruntled mood of the sailors and could take advantage of it. Sailors living on shore had more time for establishing relationships with local Malagasy, relationships of either conflict or cooperation. In 1761, the ship's chief mate went ashore with a number of armed men. A great number of Malagasy, "armed with muskets and lances," approached the beach and tried to get into the English canoes. The chief mate called upon "Captain Frazier," a local headman, to ask why the Malagasy had attacked his crew. Captain Frazier replied that, contrary to English promises, his subjects had been treated "very ill" by the English sailors and some of them were killed by the Malagasy. After a complaint to King Baba, a Sakalava royal guard was left at the European's tent to prevent future disagreements.[135]

On another occasion, the Malagasy took advantage of a disgruntled sailor. Silas James, an English sailor, was stationed on shore to guard the tents. He complained of hunger. When he observed some local fishermen bringing fish to the beach, James offered his assistance with bringing in the nets, in return for a few fish. The men, observing James' poor state, invited him to their fire and gave him some sweet potatoes and fish, which made "a most exquisite supper." James fell asleep and woke to discover that the fishermen had "cut away almost the whole tent," taken the iron hoops off the water casks, and rolled the casks into the sea. The captain promptly beat this sailor for neglecting his duty.[136]

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[135] The ship journal of the Prince Henry, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/325 G." A similar encounter occurred during a French stopover in Zanzibar during the 1750s: the ship journal of the Gloire, 1757, "MAR 4 JJ/87, 1756."

[136] James, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 150-153

On another occasion, an English captain blamed two of his sailors for mistreating Malagasy on the shore. The captain decided that, due to the actions of these two, the Malagasy had become inclined to "do us some injury" and took some of King Baba's representatives hostage until the peaceful conclusion of trade.[137] Impoverished sailors clearly had many incentives to ally with the Malagasy. By trading commodities from the ship illegally, sailors could purchase supplementary food. Unsurprisingly, stories of such trades appear frequently in the archives.[138] One particularly humorous encounter involved three sailors stealing gunpowder to sell to the locals. The sailors stole gunpowder from the large canons mounted on the ship in order to escape detection, which they sold in return for honey. The following day, King Baba came aboard and the officers order an eight-gun salute. "To the astonishment of everyone on board... only one cannon made a report, the other seven had no more powder in them than what was contained in the tube, and these went off with a fizz!"[139] Fearing the wrath of the captain, the three sailors fled into the interior of Madagascar.

Runaways and Rebels

The work demanded of famished sailors tempted many of them to rebel or flee, as the three described above did.[140] Some of the crew of the Dragon called the captain an "old dog" and the captain placed them into irons.[141] Stories of piracy abounded and

[137] The ship journal of the Delware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B."
[138] The ship journal of the Duke of Albany, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/553 A-D."
[139] James, *Narrative of a Voyage*, 145.
[140] For examples of runaways in Madagascar, see the ship journal of the Northington, 1777, "IOR/L/MAR/B/483 D"; the ship jornal of the Godfrey, 1778, "IOR/L/MAR/B/464 D"; the ship journal of the Egmont, 1770, "IOR/L/MAR/B/535 F."
[141] The ship journal of the Dragon, 1758, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598 E."

captains worried about sailors threatening them with "piratical expressions."[142] By the mid-eighteenth century, European pirates had mostly vacated Madagascar, but captains still worried about maintaining ship discipline.[143] On the Delaware, a sailor named James Morrice refused to bring a shipment of rice on the pinnace. Morrice "damned the officer of the factor[y] and said he would not bring the rice forever, a son of the bitch you all." Morrice and the officer began to strike each other. When the captain arrived to stop the fight, Morrice informed him that he thought there were "too many officers on board and denied what he had said on shore." As punishment, Morrice was to receive two or three lashes. He retorted that he would swim ashore to escape, but the captain placed him in irons as an example to other crewmembers.[144]

In defense of the captain who punished Morrice, one sailor could influence others and convince them to run away with him.[145] Sailors tended to escape in groups and steal items from the ship, including the longboat and "the ship's canvas," items invaluable for the ship's functioning.[146] Many of the escaping sailors were repeat offenders.[147] The most frequent runaways were *lascars*, seamen acquired in the Indies and the Arabian Peninsula for working on ships.[148] On the Houghton, in addition to five other sailors attempting to run, three "black lascars" were successful: Hattular, Shaw Mahomett, Shecoseen.[149] Two sailors from the Talbot escaped with "Cock eye," a lascar from Bengal, and headed for

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[142] Ibid.

[143] Examples of pirate sightings during the eighteenth century: the ship journal of the Curieux, 1708, "MAR 4 JJ/88." See also the ship journal of the King George, 1718, "IOR/L/MAR/B/402 B."

[144] The ship journal of the Delaware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B."

[145] The ship journal of the Onslow, 1741, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C."

[146] The ship journal of the Durrington, 1748, "IOR/L/MAR/A/613D"; the runaways of the Tilbury also stole a long boat: the ship journal of the Tilbury, 1757, "IOR/L/MAR/B/551 A."

[147] The ship journal of the Durrington, 1748, "IOR/L/MAR/A/613 D."

[148] On lascars, see 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): 69-91.

[149] The ship journal of the Houghton, 1748, "IOR/L/MAR/B/438 F"; see also the ship journal of the Ajax, 1759, "IOR/L/MAR/B/620 A."

Tulear.[150] Captains remained cautious in trading with the Malagasy, yet their sailors ran away, preferring to associate with the Malagasy rather than remaining on board the ship.[151] One Englishman even offered a cautionary tale. He told of three runaways who became "wretched objects of [King Baba's] capricious cruelty." To ingratiate himself with the king, one of the sailors constructed the king a palace "in the English taste." Even this carpenter became a victim of the king's ill will and boarded a Portuguese ship going to China to escape the island.[152] This warning did nothing to decrease the incidence of desertion on the shores of Madagascar.

When sailors ran away, European captains enlisted the help of either King Baba or Prince Will to find them. The captain of the Delaware found the stolen longboat without their assistance, but then relied upon King Baba to help him recover his sailors.[153] When a seaman of the Oxford ran away, the captain offered a reward of "six quarts of gun powder to any of the natives who shall apprehend him." The captain thought this reward would be sufficient as "These people are cunning enough to entice" them to help the English. Despite the captain's confidence, the runaway sailor was not found before the ship departed for England.[154] For the recovery of runaways, European captains relied upon the goodwill and support of Prince Will and King Baba. Captains found themselves helpless without it.

Captains frequently described the men they picked up in Malagasy ports as sailors "left" by earlier vessels. More likely, these sailors had been runaways from previous voyages or even retired pirates. They worked as intermediaries for captains. When the

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[150] The ship journal of the Talbot, 1769, "IOR/L/MAR/B/474 B."
[151] For example, the ship journal of the Haeslingfield, 1739, "IOR/L/MAR/B/642 B."
[152] James, *Narrative of a Voyage*, 170-3
[153] The ship journal of the Delaware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B."
[154] The ship journal of the Oxford, 1751, "IOR/L/MAR/B/588 B."

captain of the Chesterfield took on a Frenchman at St Augustine's Bay, he sent the man to Young Owl to lead negotiations with the king because he spoke Malagasy.[155] Captains expected these rescued sailors to work for their passage. Another English ship, the Devonshire, recovered two lascars who, supposedly, had been taken in a "Moor's ship" belonging to Bombay and carried to the Red Sea two years earlier, before gaining passage on a French ship to Fort Dauphin, via Mauritius, and traveling across the island to St. Augustine's Bay.[156] The vast majority of runaways, however, remained on shore and became part of Malagasy society.[157]

Europeans worried over other dangers that threatened their voyages. The longer it took to acquire slaves, the more likely slave rebellions were to occur onboard.[158] To prevent slave revolts, captains tried to guard slaves, give them enough food, and ensure they were well treated, letting "nobody bloody them." To prevent rebellions, Europeans frequently agreed to pay higher prices for slaves than originally agreed to, in order to hurry the arrival of slaves to the ship.[159]

Rebellions were still frequent. The first slave acquired by the crew of the Dragon, named "Adam," hid a hammer and after more slaves had been loaded, he started to remove the slaves' irons.[160] Many slaves encouraged each other in rebellion. A female slave was freed to assist with the ship's cooking, but she attempted to steal weapons and

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[155] The ship journal of the Chesterfield, 1748, "IOR/L/MAR/B/507 A."

[156] The ship journal of the Devonshire, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/272 E."

[157] On one occasion, the English captain learned of three English sailors on board a Dutch ship anchored in Tulear, where the Dutch were engaged in buying slaves. The Dutch captain refused to return the English sailors, as the sailors said they were not interested in boarding the English ship. A fourth man changed his mind about leaving Madagascar on either ship and ran away into the country. The ship journal of the Sandwich, 1753, "IOR/L/MAR/B/606 C."

[158] For more slave rebellions, other than what is mentioned below, see the letter about the French ship the Subtile in 1730, "COL C/4/3." See also smaller events, such as the theft of canoes by slaves: see the 1750 account in the ship journal of the Princesses Emilie, "MAR 4 JJ/86." Villagers might have harbored runaway slaves: Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 446-7.

[159] "The present commodities" in "Rawlinson Ms. A 334," f. 62.

[160] The ship journal of the Dragon, 1758, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598 E."

free other slaves.[161] Once free, slaves would try to escape to the shore, if within swimming distance, and occasionally revenge themselves on the ship's crew.

On another voyage, the slaves escaped from their irons twice and the second time they were able to seize a member of the crew. They failed to concede defeat even after the English fired a musket into their midst and they continued firing until they killed one of the slaves. The seventeen Malagasy who had fled in a canoe were brought back on board, although three made another escape and were fired upon until they cried out for mercy. One slave was so severely injured that he threw himself overboard. The captain forced the rebelling slaves to admit their crimes and chained them more carefully in the future. In the inquiry into which slaves were responsible for the uprising, an interpreter assisted the English. In this action, he placed his loyalties into question: was he more loyal to the rebelling slaves or the Europeans?[162] On board another ship, the Delaware, the interpreter was one of the first hostages the slaves seized during their uprising. Using pieces of wood and a lance, the slaves stabbed him through his body when the English sent him in to "parley" with the ringleader. Two more "linguists" had to be found to inquire after this bloody rebellion. The slaves finally admitted they had originally intended to poison the entire crew, echoing the use of poison trials on the west coast of Madagascar in determining the guilt of suspected individuals.[163]

The scariest encounter may have been at Morondava, where rebelling slaves on board the St. Michael stated that the Sakalava king had encouraged them to rebel and that he had promised them guns if they did so. Just a few months prior to the arrival of the St.

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[161] Ibid.

[162] The ship journal of the Swallow, 1749/50, "IOR/L/MAR/B/385 A."

[163] The ship journal of the Delaware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B." For more about the poison trials, called *tanguin*, see Chapter 7.

Michael, some French slave traders had also experienced a slave revolt at Morondava just prior to their departure from the island.[164] Time and time again, while off the coast of Madagascar, the slaves on the St. Michael managed to escape their rusty irons. The slaves broke loose and this prompted the sailors to fire upon them. The English killed several slaves in suppressing multiple rebellions on the St. Michael. In addition, several slaves jumped ship and swam to shore while the ship was at anchor in Fort Dauphin and in Morondava. The ship's doctor reflected, after the rebellions: "I believe there is scarce an instance where such a small number of Negroes persisted so long in such an obstinate attempt, for there was not in all above 150 men of them."[165]

In concluding trading agreements, particularly those concerning slaves, the threat of violence was always present. Rebellions by sailors, slaves, and Sakalava subjects threatened to unravel the carefully ritualized exchanges of the Sakalava and Europeans. Both Sakalava kings and European captains recognized their dependence on each other for commodities and they both relied upon the use of force for stability in these exchanges. They also depended on each other for assistance in the control of their inferiors, whether sailors, fishermen, or slaves. The next chapter explores how the Sakalava used this threat of violence to successfully integrate commercial zones and create an expanding confederacy within the island.

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[164] "Journal and Logbook of an anonymous Scotch sailor, 1726-1729," Hispanic Society of America, New York, "HC 363/1299"; also referred to in the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, Voyage ID 76203.

The voyages of the "Saint-Michel" are also mentioned by François Rajaoson, "Pour une interpellation permanente sur l'esclavage," in *La route des esclaves: système servile et traite dans l'est malgache*, ed. Ignace Rakoto and Eugène Régis Mangalaza (Paris: Montréal, 2000), 21.

[165] "Journal and Logbook of an anonymous Scotch sailor."

Chapter 4

Sakalava Expansion, c. 1730-1800

Sakalava leaders monopolized exports of food and slaves from western Madagascar throughout the eighteenth century. Obtaining these supplies required the expansion of Sakalava commercial influence within Madagascar. European demands for food and labor increased during the eighteenth century, due in part to the increasing presence of the English and French in the Indian Ocean. European ships stopped more frequently in Sakalava ports and their captains purchased large amounts of food to feed their sailors and soldiers. To supply European merchants, Sakalava leaders tried to secure new sources for commodities and expand their reach into the more fertile regions of the island. They used the threat of force to forge alliances with groups to the north and east of Sakalava territories. These alliances contributed to the commercial integration of communities in Madagascar.[1]

After the Sakalava seized control of the northwestern ports and created the Volamena dynasty by the early eighteenth century, they began to look eastward to expand their influence over trading networks in the interior of Madagascar. The ports in the northwest, including Massaliege, Boina, and Majunga, had been entrepôts for trade with Arab and Swahili merchants prior to the eighteenth century, but there were also similar ports located along the north and northeast coast of Madagascar, the most important being Vohémar and Irodo.[2] Archeologists have shown that merchants in these ports

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[1] Pier Larson and Gwyn Campbell hint at this economic coordination in their publications. As they study the trade of the Merina kingdom primary, however, they do not focus on the role of the Sakalava in the economic integration of communities in Madagascar.

[2] Tibbetts lists the ports in Madagascar that were mentioned by ibn Majid during the fifteenth century. Several of them were located on the north and northeast coast of the island: Ahmad ibn Majid al-Najdi, *Arab Navigation in the Indian Ocean before the Coming of the Portuguese*, ed. G. R. Tibbetts (London: Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1972), 432-5.

exchanged commodities from eastern Madagascar with traders from East Africa and the northern Indian Ocean.[3] As a result, commercial networks probably linked the ports on both sides of the island prior to the eighteenth century. These networks may have prompted Sakalava leaders to target these ports when they decided to extend their commercial influence in Madagascar.[4] Regions in the east coast, including areas around Antongil Bay and Tamatave, supplied the northeastern ports with slaves, rice, and luxury items such as amber gris. It seems that, after gaining control of the northern and northeastern ports, the Sakalava then focused their efforts on gaining direct access to these sources of slaves and rice on the east coast.

Sakalava rulers focused on expanding their commercial influence in regions already connected by trade networks. The Sakalava forced states in the north and east to become tributaries and, in so doing, gained direct access to supplies from these regions. After attacking these states, the Sakalava formed alliances with the defeated rulers. These leaders formalized their inclusion into the Sakalava Empire through the *fati-dra* ceremony.[5] Following the completion of this ceremony, rulers throughout the north and east were related to the Sakalava rulers on the west coast. This alliance allowed for the cessation of warfare and the resumption of peaceful trading between the Sakalava and their newly conquered subjects.

Few European sources described the spread of Sakalava influence throughout the north and northeast of the island. Europeans rarely visited these ports, so we have few

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[3] Pierre Vérin, *The History of Civilisation in North Madagascar*, trans. David Smith (Rotterdam: A. A. Balkema, 1986), 142-156, 209-280.

[4] One of the trademarks of Sakalava rule was the assertion of blood relations between rulers across the island. It is possible that the articulation of kinship ties represented already present linkages between the coasts and laid the groundwork for Sakalava expansion.

[5] For details of this ceremony, see Chapter 2.

records of how the Sakalava established alliances with groups across the island. Europeans that visited the east and west coasts, however, cited an increase in Sakalava military activity during the eighteenth century. It is helpful to compare the expansion of warfare in eighteenth century Madagascar with similar developments elsewhere in Africa. Some historians studying the trans-Atlantic slave trade have found that the growing demand for slaves during this century resulted in a dramatic increase in prices of slaves.[6] Many scholars argue that, thanks to this price increase, Africans attempted to sell more slaves to Europeans and they obtained these slaves through warfare. The expansion of warfare destabilized many African communities. This instability sparked famines and more conflict in these communities.[7]

The demand for slaves from Madagascar, however, probably did not increase over the course of the eighteenth century. Slaves were exported from Sakalava ports, at times in relatively large numbers, during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.[8] The Sakalava acquired these slaves through short-term military campaigns and through purchases of slaves from other regions of the island.[9] After about 1720, the demand for Malagasy slaves declined dramatically, as did the supplies of the slaves on the west coast of the island. When English East India Company ships tried to buy slaves from the Sakalava after 1760, they usually failed to purchase more than a hundred slaves on each

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[6] For one example, see Joseph Miller, "Slave Prices in the Portuguese southern Atlantic, 1600-1830," in *Africans in Bondage: Studies in Slavery and the Slave Trade: Essays in Honor of Philip D. Curtin on the Occasion of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of African Studies at the University of Wisconsin*, eds. Philip D. Curtin and Paul E. Lovejoy (Madison: University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1986).

[7] See for instance Boubacar Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic slave trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 107-9.

[8] On the slave trade from Madagascar to the Americas, see The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces (accessed November 14, 2008).

[9] As in West Africa, the wars that produced captives were "caused by local political, economic, or religious conflict among competing people." Herbert S. Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 57.

voyage.[10] Even on the east coast of the island, frequented by traders from the Mascarenes, only small numbers of slaves were bought, usually with larger cargoes of food.[11] By the late eighteenth century, instead of purchasing slaves in Madagascar, the French bought them on the East African coast where supplies were more plentiful.[12]

Europeans bought slaves with guns, yet the increased availability of firearms does not explain the increase in violence in Madagascar. Historian John Thornton has argued that the expansion of warfare and slave trading in Africa was not caused by an increase in firearm imports.[13] He concluded that warfare in Africa occurred for a wide variety of reasons, but to obtain slaves for the purchase of guns was not one of these reasons.[14] The expansion of several powerful and violent states in Madagascar during the eighteenth century, despite the absence of widespread slave trading, supports Thornton's argument. Furthermore, the Sakalava rarely used guns in battle. Instead, they used guns in royal ceremonies, for announcing the king's arrival or his death.[15] The possession of guns was largely symbolic.[16]

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[10] For instance, see the ship journal of the Diligent, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/320 E"; the ship journal of the Prince Henry, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/325 G"; the ship journal of the Beckenham, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/561 A." The Dutch also did not seem to purchase large numbers of slaves from western Madagascar during this period. See also the following ship journals: dagregister gehou aan boord die Schujlenburgh, 1755, "C 2248" and "C 2249"; dagregister gehou aan boord die Neptunus, 1760, "C 2251"; skeepsjoernaal van die Zon, 1774, "C 2254"; dagregister van koopman PJ Truter (the Zon?), 1775-6, "C 2255." These sources are all found in the Western Cape Archives, Cape Town, South Africa.

[11] For details, see Chapter 5.

[12] 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): 56.

[13] John Thornton, *Warfare in Atlantic Africa, 1500-1800* (London: Routledge, 1999), 4-5. On Thornton's take on trade and warfare, see 13.

[14] Thornton is arguing strongly against Robin Law. His argument is in many of his works, including: 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). Another example of this viewpoint: Ray A. Kea, *Settlements, Trade, and Polities in the seventeenth-century Gold Coast* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).

[15] For an explanation of this in the Merina highlands, see Gerald M. Berg, "The Sacred Musket. Tactics, Technology, and Power in Eighteenth-Century Madagascar," *Comparative Studies in Society and*

Perhaps the incidence of warfare in Madagascar was actually lower than reported by Europeans. Sakalava may have rarely resorted to direct violence to obtain supplies. Warfare may have been a characteristic of increased commercial contact between the Sakalava and other groups in Madagascar and the trade in food, no slaves, fueled this commerce. Rather than directly controlling other groups on the island, the Sakalava sought to dominate exchanges between the Malagasy and European traders. Possessing a powerful military was only one component in Sakalava commercial dominance in Madagascar.[17] The Sakalava sought to ensure the movement of commodities across long distances in the island. Sakalava leaders lacked a permanent standing army but were able to recruit a large number of subjects that they could use to assert their control over trading networks. Sakalava soldiers may have been protecting long-distance traders against hostile groups throughout the island. Commercial exchanges may have only occasionally erupted into violence, perhaps in times of food insecurity.

The Sakalava, despite their military strength, could not sustain continual military campaigns without diminishing the commodities they could acquire from other communities in Madagascar. For these reasons, Europeans sources probably overemphasized the incidence of violence within Madagascar, as trade appears to have continued to increase throughout the eighteenth century.[18] By concluding alliances with

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History 27, no. 2 (1985): 272-4. Sakalava rulers demanded European ships greet them with a firing of canons, sometimes on multiple occasions. See chapter 3 for details.

[16] Berg has made this point with respect to the Merina: Ibid. Drury observed the link between firearms and royalty in Madagascar, in the southeast near Fort Dauphin and in the west, among the Sakalava. Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 33-4. The Malagasy used a combination of spears and guns in warfare, including against Europeans: see the ship journal of the Prince Henry, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/325 G."

[17]The British enforcing the abolition of the slave trade, for instance, was another instance of a state using military force to (attempt to) create a commercially prosperous and stable zone for exchanges.

[18] Drury, for instance, referred to warfare as "The epidemical evil of this island" which resulted in so many slaves being sold to European. Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury,* 119.

their enemies, the Sakalava could ensure the smooth functioning of trade routes across the island and, as a result, the Sakalava likely reduced their reliance on direct military force to acquire commodities.

Food was crucial in the expansion of Sakalava commercial influence, especially as it became more valuable to Europeans. This ever-increasing need for food and labor meant that the Sakalava Empire was always growing and searching for new allies and trading partners. The Sakalava Empire benefited from an emerging market economy on the island, in part due to the development of other centralized states on Madagascar in the highlands and on the east coast.[19] As these states grew more powerful, however, they began to restrict exports to the Sakalava. Many of these leaders retained slaves as laborers within their states or for sale to Europeans visiting the eastern ports of Madagascar. Despite the early alliances between these states, the competition for resources increased. The expansion of the Merina Empire in Madagascar and European empires in the Indian Ocean eventually threatened Sakalava domination over western Madagascar.[20]

Sakalava Warriors

The French described the disorder caused by Sakalava violence in eastern Madagascar, a region the French visited frequently. French traders routinely purchased

[19] Stephen Ellis, "Tom and Toakafo: The Betsimisaraka Kingdom and State Formation in Madagascar, 1715-1750," *Journal of African History* 48, no. (2007); Conrad P. Kottak, "The Process of State Formation in Madagascar," *American Ethnologist* 4, no. 1 (1977). As a result, by the close of the eighteenth century, Sakalava rulers were importing slaves from East Africa for use within their territory and for sale to the foreign slave traders visiting their ports.

[20] In writing of warfare and enslavement, the work of Larson, focusing on later developments in Madagascar, is useful for understanding the impact of enslavement on Malagasy individuals. See Pier Martin Larson, *History and Memory in the Age of Enslavement: Becoming Merina in Highland Madagascar, 1770-1822* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000), 13-16.

food from there for the Mascarene Islands.[21] A long history of trade allowed them to develop lasting relationships with the leaders of the villages that dotted the coast. Leaders around Antongil Bay, for instance, sold rice and slaves to the French annually. The only resource the people in this region lacked was cattle, which the French bought in Fort Dauphin. The French colonists on the nearby Mascarene Islands required frequent imports of food, as the islands failed to produce enough to support their populations. The French also bought slaves from the east coast and these slaves provided the labor required to develop farms and plantations on the Mascarenes.[22]

Several French ships arrived in Antongil Bay in November 1734.[23] When the captains sent their boats to shore, the local chiefs informed the French traders that there was no rice for sale along the coast. The French visited more coastal villages but received the same answer. The kings apologized for the lack of supplies and explained that many people on the east coast were starving. The Malagasy seemed more eager to buy guns than usual, but had no rice with which to purchase firearms. They begged the French to buy their slaves, especially old female slaves. The slaves were perhaps dependents that the kings could no longer feed. The captains, however, did not purchase the slaves, being unable to feed them. Finding this lack of rice but surplus of slaves "very ridiculous," the ship's captain decided to sail to the west coast of Madagascar in search of food.[24]

The French voyage to eastern Madagascar had been a failure. French colonial officers had ordered the traders to purchase 2,400 measures of rice on this voyage but

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[21] The following comes primarily from the ship journal of the Astree, 1734, "MAR 4 JJ/86."

[22] On the contribution of Malagasy slaves in the early history of the Mascarenes, see Pier Larson, *Ocean of Letters; Language and Creolization in an Indian Ocean Diaspora* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[23] The ship journal of the Astree, 1734, "MAR 4 JJ/86."

[24] Ibid.

they returned with only 200 measures.[25] French rarely had difficulties in purchasing rice from communities around Antongil Bay. In previous years, villages in this region had plentiful supplies of rice carried from rice fields located not far from the shores of the bay. Rulers in Antongil Bay frequently exported large quantities of rice when they had supplies in excess of what their communities could consume.[26]

After questioning various chiefs, the French discovered the cause of this shortage. The "king of Massaly," the Sakalava ruler living on the northwest coast of Madagascar, had recently pillaged their stores.[27] He had sent hundreds of soldiers to the east coast to attack the coastal villages around the bay earlier that year. News of the Sakalava army reached the communities before the soldiers. In advance of their arrival, the kings and their followers fled their towns, leaving behind only the rice, slaves, and cattle they could not take with them.[28] The Sakalava army seized the food items and took the people who remained captive. Following this attack, the people of Antongil Bay returned to their land and found it burnt and stripped of food. When French trading ships arrived, the Malagasy were attempting to survive until the next harvest came.

At first glance, this story is difficult to believe. Why did the Sakalava king, based in northwestern Madagascar, lead hundreds of soldiers more than a hundred miles across

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[25] The "measures" are hard to keep track of, as they usually referred to a "gamelle," "panier," or sack of rice, or to the amount Europeans could purchase for an amount of gunpowder. The amount included in a measure had to be agreed during each trading venture. See various voyages on measuring trading goods: Bérubé Dudemene, letter on trade in Madagascar, 1774, "COL C/5A/5"; "Notes on trade with Madagascar," n.d, "COL C/5A/9"; f. 115; "Orders and instructions given by the Court of Directors of the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies," orders given to Capt George Bagwell, Commander and Henry Wilson, chief mate of the Resolution," 1737, in "IOR/E/3/107, Letterbook," f. 115.

[26] On the long history of this trade, see François Martin, "Memoires sur l'ile de Madagascar," 1665-1668, COACM, 9:466.

[27] The ship journal of the Astree, 1734. Massaly may have been the same as Massaliege.

[28] Drury describes similar circumstances in which warriors left most of their belongings behind in fear of attack, sending the women and children a distance away from the villages. After the battle, they returned to find all the "plantations" and storehouses "reduced to ashes." Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury,* 132-3, 142.

the island, across mountainous terrain, to seize rice and slaves? Merchants frequently travelled between the coasts by following rivers and mountains in the interior, but leading hundreds of soldiers would be far more difficult.[29] If long-distance trade in Madagascar had been peaceful, why would the Sakalava king alter this arrangement and assert his power hundreds of miles from his territory?

There are some strong reasons, however, to believe that these attacks occurred, perhaps repeatedly. Evidence from other French traders supports these reports of Sakalava attacks. About year earlier, in August 1733, French merchants visited Madagascar in search of rice and slaves.[30] In a break with usual practice, the captain instructed his ship to sail to the west coast of Madagascar. He visited Massaly and Morondava, the trading centers of the northwestern and west-central Sakalava kingdoms.[31] After the French ship sailed into the Morondava River, the captain wanted to purchase a large quantity of rice to feed the 368 slaves he had purchased in Mozambique. The Sakalava king agreed to these demands.

A few days after the French ship arrived, the king arrived with his trading goods. Accompanied by five or six hundred armed men, he marched up the river and approached the French ship. The soldiers and their slaves brought with them rice, a large herd of cattle, and other food. The traders purchased only forty slaves from the king but acquired 12,000 measures of rice (the traders on the east coast only bought a few hundred measures). The traders never inquired of the source of this rice and soon set sail with their slaves and food for Île de France.

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[29] On this passage, see the voyage of Mayeur to the north of Madagascar, 1774, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," ed. B. de Froberville, "Add. Ms. 18128-18129," British Library, 1: 10-54.

[30] The ship journal of the Hirondelle, 1732-3, "MAR 4 JJ/86."

[31] Ibid.

The descriptions provided by these French traders visiting the east and west coasts of Madagascar may simply be a coincidence, although they suggest that Sakalava power extended across broad stretches of the island by the 1730s.There is no proof that the Sakalava had seized this rice on the east coast of Madagascar, before selling it to the French merchants.[32] The timing of this trade, however, is suggestive. The surplus of rice on the west coast occurred within twelve months of reports of starvation on the east coast.[33] Additionally, the Sakalava king had an army numbering in the hundreds. Even if the French exaggerated the size of this force, the Sakalava king clearly commanded a large number of armed men and was capable of sending these soldiers across the island.

Sakalava Expansion

Judging by European trading accounts such as these, it appears that the Sakalava had access to large supplies of food throughout the eighteenth century and at least some of these supplies were acquired through warfare.[34] Sakalava wars of expansion began during the seventeenth century when the Sakalava seized control of Tulear and Boina. Following these military victories, however, Sakalava rulers relied upon a strategy of incorporation for expanding the boundaries of their rule and transforming enemies into allies. The threat of force, however, preceded this transformation.

Despite the diffusion of power throughout the empire, as various rulers alternately fought and cooperated, the recognition of the political supremacy of the royal line

[32] Additionally, since the raiders were reportedly from Massaly, not Morondava, the rice was either exported from Massaly to the southern port of Morondava or, more likely, the king of Morondava had unleashed his own raids on the interior of the Madagascar.

[33] These reports of low rice supplies were from the northeastern region around Antongil Bay, as well as further south, closer to Fort Dauphin. See the ship journal of the Astree, 1734.

[34] See, for instance, the ship journal of the Dragon, 1753, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598D."

allowed for the peaceful movement of traders throughout the entire region ruled by the Sakalava.[35] The two kings, based in Morondava and Boina, commanded imperial armies, collected tribute, and made crucial decisions about war and peace. Allied with these kings were provincial leaders who became relatives of the Sakalava monarchs following the conclusion of a fati-dra. They oversaw trade at port cities, protected the populations of these cities, and ensured the flow of goods from the interior into their ports. The princes gathered strong armies for their protection but also for military raids inland, as the necessity arose.

Based on scattered European observations, it appears that leaders in Madagascar prior to the rise of the Sakalava did not command large armies. This is not to say that violent clashes between groups on the island were uncommon. Wars provided an outlet for addressing social wrongs and rebalancing the wealth within a region. Chiefs began wars when they were seeking revenge or food supplies for their dependents.[36] Clashes were primarily between close neighbors. When men were not attacking enemy communities or protecting their own, they were cattle-herders, farmers, or traders. Most (non-slave) men possessed a spear, or possibly a gun, but chiefs lacked the resources to create a large army.[37] People fought over access to limited resources throughout the seventeenth century, but these struggles were rarely a result of European trading demands.[38]

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[35] See Chapter 2.

[36] Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 120-1.

[37] Although Drury describes a thousand-man army in the south: Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 131.

[38] Walter Hamond, *Madagascar, the Richest and Most Fruitful Island in the World* (London: Nicholas Bourne, 1643), 7. For an early description, see Richard Boothby, *A Briefe Discovery or Description of the most Famous Island of Madagascar or St. Laurence in Asia neare unto East-India* (London: E.G. for John Hardesty, 1646), 11. For more details, see chapter 1.

Seventeenth-century European descriptions of warfare on opposite sides of Madagascar demonstrate how the Sakalava expanded upon military strategies of groups elsewhere on the island. The governor of the seventeenth-century French colony, Étienne de Flacourt, described the brutality of attacks between communities living near the southeastern port of Fort Dauphin.[39] In this region, leadership was divided among several strong big men, or "grands," as the French referred to them.[40] People lived in villages and relied upon their chiefs for protection, although all free men used their spears to guard their families and cattle herds.

Many leaders preferred to avoid conflict because wars halted agricultural activities and prevented the movements of commodities across long-distance trade routes.[41] In times of crisis, such as famines or droughts, chiefs were pushed to fight their neighbors for resources. Chiefs led raids on neighboring villages. Some of these raiding forces consisted of hundreds or thousands of men, but more often, chiefs sent much smaller armies to pillage neighboring villages. In these raids, the invaders would seize and enslave women and children.[42] During these attacks, women remained behind with

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[39] Etienne de Flacourt, *Histoire de la grande isle Madagascar,* ed. Claude Allibert (Paris: INALCO: Karthala, 1995), 185-6. See similar descriptions of warfare in southern Madagascar from Modave's eighteenth century colony in Fort Dauphin, journal, 1768-70, "COL C/5A/2." Drury emphasized the frequency of violence in the south and described battle tactics: Drury, *The adventures of Robert Drury*, 119.

[40] Traders at Fort Dauphin describe arranging for trade with multiple kings: the ship journal of the Harrington, 1736, "IOR/L/MAR/B/654B."

[41] On the deliberations that preceded wars, see Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*,146.

[42] The spoils were divided among the victorious soldiers, with the headmen getting more than ordinary warriors. Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 154. In the east coast as well, people rarely sold slaves to Europeans. In one engagement around 1759, the Malagasy on the east coast reportedly captured 2,000 prisoners, but only sold 250 of these as slaves. The rest were ransomed or used locally. See "Notes et éclaircissements," 1774, in *"Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar,"* 1: 62.

The French slave traders on the east coast referred to the slaves they bought as "captifs" because the slaves were captured in small-scale raids or warfare. Examples of the use of the term "captifs": Letter of D'Hermitte, 1733, "COL C/3/7"; the ship journal of the Amphititre,1739, "MAR 4 JJ/76"; instructions for the ship La Paix, 1750, "COL C/4/6."

their children and food stores.[43] The ability to attack villages successfully represented the power of the headman and his people. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth century, no single leader appeared to dominate the region.[44] Several powerful men sold cattle and some slaves to European slave traders, but relatively few in comparison with the numbers sold from Sakalava ports.[45] For this reason, it appears that the exchange of slaves for guns with Europeans did not fundamentally change power struggles in southern Madagascar.

On the opposite side of the island, an English observer made similar comments about warfare there. The sailor, Robert Everard, claimed to have spent "three years suffering... upon the coast of Assada near Madagascar," between 1690 and 1694, before being rescued.[46] The captain of Everard's ship wanted to purchase slaves in the northwestern port of Assada, near present-day Nosy Be. After unloading guns and other trading goods on the shore, the Malagasy suddenly, without provocation, killed most of the Europeans on the ship and on shore. Following the massacre of his crewmates,

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[43] As did sometimes the slaves: see Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 82.

[44] On the continuation of these wars, see Modave's journal, 1768-70, "COL C/5A/2."

[45] See a similar description given by an English observer: "The island is divided, it is said by the inhabitants, into seven distinct kingdoms, each governed by its own king, who enjoys his authority and title by inheritance. These princes commit hostilities in proper form; but it consists in plundering and carrying off the horned cattle, and the prisoners are sold to the French and Dutch traders as slaves." William MacIntosh, *Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa*, 2 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1781), 395. Drury describes his agricultural and herding work as a slave in southern Madagascar. Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 68-9, 110-1.

[46] Robert Everard, "A Relation of Three Years Sufferings of Robert Everard, Upon the coast of Assada near Madagascar in a Voyage to India in the Year 1686 and of his Wonderful Preservation and Deliverance, and Arrival at London, Anno 1693," in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels*, eds, A. and J. Churchill, vol. VI (London: Printed by assignment from Messrs Churchill, 1732), 259-82. As the Sakalava were encroaching on this territory by this time, the dates of his narrative may be questionable. There is enough detail that it appears that this narrative was, at least in part, based on other travelers' stories of northwest Madagascar, if it was not truly a first-hand account. There is certainly no evidence that the king described in Everard's narrative was Sakalava. More likely, his observations date pre-1690. The account is also dissimilar enough from Drury's that it seems unlikely the same author wrote them both. To see the arguments about the authenticity of Everard's account: COACM, 3: 395, where the editors describe the narrative as "completely fantastic"; Anne Molet-Sauvaget, "La 'Relation de Robert Everard', ébauche probable du 'Journal de Robert Drury' de Daniel Defoe," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, no. 241 (1986): 1-28.

Everard was enslaved by the king of Assada.[47] While on the island, he accompanied the king on several military expeditions. The king paraded Everard through his villages as proof of his superiority over Europeans.

During these trips, Everard gained first-hand knowledge of the functioning of this pre-Sakalava state. According to Everard, the king and his army marched to a new town within his territory every day and recruited men from each town. In the towns, "as soon as the women saw the king and his army coming, they got their sticks and came dancing for joy of his arrival."[48] The women smeared a white paste on the king's face and planned a feast for the king's army.[49] The king described his military plans to listening villagers and repeated the news of their past victories. Following a celebration in honor of the king, men in the town joined the king's march towards the enemy's territory.

After six or seven weeks of marching, the army arrived at the enemy's village.[50] The king's soldiers fired their muskets and struck with their lances. The enemies tried to flee, but the soldiers took as many people hostage as possible, including the wives of the great men. The soldiers pillaged bark cloth and food from the houses. The next day, the army moved further into enemy territory and continued fighting. The battles continued for "about a month in this manner." The enemy's soldiers were largely unsuccessful at defeating the invaders and they only killed about twenty men. The king's army, on the other hand, took a hundred prisoners, abandoning and killing the children not worth enslaving.

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[47] Everard, "A Relation," 265.
[48] Ibid., 265.
[49] Women in northwest Madagascar still put a white paste on their faces to protect them from sun.
[50] Ibid., 265.

The army returned to the coastal city of Assada, escorting the slaves and carrying the food. The trip back to the king's village took longer, as the slaves were "troublesome, especially the women with their young children at their backs, and the men were laden with rice and other provisions for the army."[51] After they finally reached their own territory, the army celebrated with a great feast of rice and fish at every town. During the feasts, the soldiers reenacted the battle to a rapt audience. Upon reaching the coastal capital, the king sold the captured slaves to "Arabian" traders at anchor off Assada.[52]

Everard's description highlighted the impromptu quality of battles in northwest Madagascar before the arrival of the Sakalava. Although communities in Madagascar occasionally engaged in offensive and defensive military engagements during the seventeenth century, these clashes tended to be local. Leaders focused their attacks on nearby villages. The purpose of these raids appears to have been to assert power and seize food and slaves. Communities frequently fled in the face of such attacks. These raids were not intended for the permanent seizure of land or the extension of a leader's political power.

From the beginning, the Sakalava strategy of asserting permanent commercial dominance over large areas of land differed from the practices of other groups in Madagascar. The establishment of tributary relationships throughout the west coast encouraged the transformation of the Sakalava Empire into the expansive confederation it became during the eighteenth century. Despite possessing trading ports, the empire still did not enclose many agricultural or well-populated regions. To gain access to sources of

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[51] Ibid., 265-6.

[52] Ibid., 268. These "Arab" traders may have been Swahili. Everard eventually gained passage on a dhow carrying slaves. The dhow stopped at one of the Comoro Islands and then travelled to Pate on the East African coast. He then sailed to Muscat and Surat, before gaining passage back to English on a trading ship there. Ibid., 269-72.

food and labor, Sakalava representatives travelled across the island. This necessitated the development of large mobile armies.[53] During trips, the Sakalava king ordered villages to provide warriors with provisions with the help of local people.[54] Outside of Sakalava territory, the soldiers probably seized their own food items.

The Sakalava leaders did not order these soldiers to destroy communities, but instead instructed them to steal valuable commodities. Later, Sakalava leaders tried to establish trading relations with their former enemies, probably because warfare did not assure steady supplies of food or slaves.[55] As the European traders discovered, supplies varied along the coast, Sakalava expeditions frequently returned empty-handed.[56] For instance, in 1737, King Baba told the French captain to be patient in waiting for rice. He explained that in order to obtain rice, he needed to pillage villages far into the interior and transport the rice to the coast.[57] Sometimes trade representatives told the Europeans that they had captured a large number of slaves in wars, but even these supplies were slow in coming.[58]

Linking the Military and Commercial

The supply problem became more pressing as the eighteenth century progressed and more ships traded along the west coast. By the middle of the century, English ships

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[53] The Merina further refined such strategies, most notably in the development of obligatory work for the state, the *fanompoana*. See Chapter 7.

[54] Ibid., f. 23.

[55] In 1758, an English captain was told that the "king had lately come from the wars and had taken a great number of prisoners and that he would supply us with many slaves."Despite the promises, they only were able to purchase 15 slaves: the ship journal of the Dragon, 1758, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598 E." The king of Tulear had to go inland to get rice for trading to the French in 1735: the ship journal of the Jupiter, 1735, "MAR 4 JJ/76." See also the report of the De Brack, COACM, 6: 170.

[56]The ship journal of the Swift, 1742, "IOR/L/MAR/B/616 A."

[57] The ship journal of the Astree, 1737, "MAR 4JJ/86."

[58] The ship journal of the Dragon, 1758, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598 E." On these trading representatives, see Chapter 3.

regularly punctuated their journey to India with stops at St. Augustine's Bay and Anjouan. Europeans obtained comparatively large supplies of slaves, rice, and cattle from Sakalava ports, even while the people elsewhere on the island lacked food.[59] During this time, non-European traders continued to visit the northwestern ports of Madagascar that were under Sakalava control. Merchants, sailing on dhows to locations throughout the Indian Ocean such as Surat, bought between fifty and a hundred slaves on the coast along with cloth, silver or firearms.[60] Without direct evidence, it is hard to discern the extent of this trade but the fact that it continued uninterrupted during the eighteenth century implies the Sakalava had steady supplies of food and other commodities for export to both European and non-European traders.

With the conquest of much of the west and north completed, however, there were few adversaries for Sakalava soldiers to enslave. Additionally, the Sakalava practice of intimidating neighbors to gain allies within the empire failed when the Sakalava encountered other strong expansionist military states. For these reasons, the Sakalava developed (usually) peaceful trading relations with the leaders of these states, namely the Betsimisaraka of the east coast and the Merina of the highlands.[61] From the available sources, we can surmise that the first encounters between the Sakalava and these states may have been violent. These leaders, however, were quick to respond and formed alliances with the Sakalava.

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[59] For instance, for food shortages around Fort Dauphin, see the ship journal of the Griffon, 1735, "MAR 4 JJ/144 C."

[60] On European observations of this slave trade, see the ship journal of the Diligent, "IOR/L/MAR/B/320 E"; the ship journal of the Fly, 1763, "IOR/L/MAR/B/597 C"; the ship journal of the Conde, 1733, "MAR 4 JJ/97."

[61] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 113.

The French, frequent visitors to the east coast, were the first to make note of political transformations occurring in this region. Their descriptions also link the development of centralized states to the expansion of Sakalava commercial and political influence. When French leaders in the Mascarene Islands attempted to establish a trading settlement on the east coast of Madagascar in 1732, they focused their attention on Antongil Bay.[62] The governors decided to place the settlement on a small island called Île Marotte. They described it as a rocky piece of land near the mouth of the bay.[63] The French dreamed of renaming this island Île d'Anjou and developing a permanent presence on the east coast of Madagascar. The presence of this colony would allow ships to visit and quickly load rice before returning to the Mascarenes.

The following year, the French governors put soldiers on two ships that carried trading supplies and sent the ships to Antongil Bay. They instructed the soldiers to construct a fort on the island and begin stockpiling goods for export to the Mascarenes. Curiously, the governors simultaneously dispatched several ships to the port of Massaly on the northwest coast of Madagascar. They ordered the captains of these ships to conclude a treaty with the Sakalava king. French purchased the island of Marotte, located in Antongil Bay from the king. The Sakalava king readily granted the French permission to found a colony in the bay.[64] In return, the French gave the king some knives, several guns, and pieces of decorated cloth.[65] He also agreed to let the French purchase 400-500 slaves from the shores of Antongil Bay and gave the French permission to trade in the

[62] The first mention was in a letter from Île Bourbon, 1732, "COL C/3/6."
[63] A reference to this island: the ship journal of the Amphititre, 1740, "MAR 4 JJ/76."
[64] A description of this voyage can be found in the ship journal of the Hirondelle, 1732, "MAR 4 JJ/86"; see also letter, 5 January 1733, "COL C/3/7"; letter to the king of Massaly from the captain D'Hermitte, 23 October 1732, "COL C/4/1."
[65] "Memoire de ce qui est necessaire pour le roi de Madagascar," 1733, "COL C/3/7."

Sakalava-controlled ports of the west coast.[66] He promised to maintain peaceful trading relationships with the new colonists. The French negotiations with the king of Massaly for Île Marotte provide the first hint of Sakalava influence on the east coast of the island, but there is little explanation of why the French believed the Sakalava king had control over the bay or the island, both located over a hundred miles from his capital on the opposite coast.

Despite these promises, the French colony quickly failed. Upon assuming control of the island at the end of 1732, supply problems hampered the French expedition.[67] The man intended to lead the colony died en route to Île Marotte. The soldiers and traders failed to secure sufficient numbers of cattle or slaves to export on French ships. The officers and their thirty soldiers spent a few months on the island and discovered that this "paradis terrestre" was actually uninhabitable. The soldiers traded guns and cloth for slaves, but they spent most of their trading goods purchasing food needed for their own survival. Their supplies of firearms were quickly "dissipated," with only a single gun remaining for trading.[68] A few months after the French had founded the colony, a French ship sailed from Île Marotte with all the surviving soldiers on board.[69]

Even after this failure, the French continued to establish trading posts on the east coast of Madagascar. As French merchants and colonists visited the east coast more frequently during the eighteenth century, French officials and merchants recorded more

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[66] Ibid.

[67] Letter, 20 Dec 1732, reporting the taking possession of the island, "COL C/4/1."

[68] See description from various letters from January 1733, in "COL C/3/7."

[69] Describing the impact of this failure, see "Projet d'establissement a Madagascar," 1749, in "COL C/5A/1."

incidents of Sakalava aggression on the coast.[70] French frequently complained of "guerre entre les negres," war between the blacks, in eastern Madagascar. As described above, the soldiers of the king of Massaly pillaged the region around 1732. Following these attacks, several leaders within Antongil Bay developed protective alliances against future incursions. Kings who traced their ancestry to pirates (the *zana-malata,* or children of mulattos) joined in a federation against the Sakalava and other groups on the east coast.[71] The king Ratsimilaho (Tamsimalo, Tom Similahoe) of Foulpointe led the confederation. He and his allies assisted each other against Sakalava attacks.[72] The allies created the *Betsimisaraka* (the many who will not be separated) Confederation and reasserted their strength within the region. When the Sakalava attacked again in 1736, soldiers on the east coast forced the Sakalava to retreat.[73] Ratsimilaho sent thirty armed canoes to Antongil Bay to help his allies Baldriche and de la Re (residing at Pointe de la Re).[74] Even though the Sakalava possessed an unusually large army with experienced soldiers, the members of the Betsimisaraka confederation ensured the raids stopped.

In 1739, French traders met with a chief named "Chimelef" in Antongil Bay who offered three hundred cattle for sale to the traders and stated he had many "captif"

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[70] It should be noted that the presence of European pirates on the east coast, particularly at Île Sainte Marie, through the 1720s caused considerable unrest within this region as well as focusing French attention on trading with the coast. For details, see Chapter 3.

[71] On the *zana-malata,* see Yvette Sylla, "Les Malata: cohésion et disparité d'un 'groupe,'" *Omaly sy anio* 21/22, (1985): 19-32.

[72] For more details on the role of Ratsimilaho and his life, see Ellis, "Tom and Toakafo: The Betsimisaraka Kingdom and State Formation in Madagascar, 1715-1750." Most histories of Ratsimilahoe rely upon the French translator and slave trader Mayeur's "Histoire de Ratismilahoe, roi de Foulpointe et de Bet-tsimiscaracs," found in BL, "Add. Ms. 18128-1812," "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," vol. 2, pp. 183-300. See also Dalrymple, "Add. 33,765," f. 18.

[73] The ship journal of the Duc d'Anjou, 1736, "MAR 4 JJ/76."

[74] Baldriche took his name from a European pirate who lived in eastern Madagascar during the late seventeenth century. For more details on Baldridge, the pirate, see Records of the High Court of Admiralty and colonial Vice-Admiralty courts, National Archives, Kew, UK (henceforth HCA), "HCA 1/98."

(slaves) for sale.[75] The French also found plentiful rice within Antongil Bay communities during this trading excursion and they had no trouble purchasing commodities, unlike earlier in the decade. The local traders told the French of the Sakalava defeat in Antongil Bay by the Betsimisaraka leaders, Ratsimilaho and Baldriche, both referred to as the "mulâtres." In the aftermath of the attack, these leaders asserted themselves within the region by pillaging other communities. The confederation of kings seized enough rice and slaves to ensure the viability of their communities, although at the expense of other groups in the region.[76]

After dispelling the invaders, the Betsimisaraka kings negotiated with the Sakalava and became their allies. They concluded a treaty with the Sakalava in which the Sakalava of Boina agreed to provide the east coast rulers with a steady source of cattle in return for the Betsimisaraka sending other trading items to the west. Perhaps obtaining just such a trading relationship had always been the goal of Sakalava warriors.[77] Ratsimilaho became part of the Sakalava dynasty following the fati-dra ceremony. He also reportedly married the daughter of the Sakalava king.[78]

The Betsimisaraka Confederation was never as powerful as the Sakalava Empire and its leaders failed to create stable trading networks on the east coast of Madagascar.[79] In 1743, French traders complained of poor trading in Antongil Bay after rival factions

[75] The ship journal of the Amphitrite, 1739, Ibid.
[76] In 1738, Ibid.
[77] Sources imply ties between Ratsimalaho and the Sakalava empire as early as 1715: Stephen Ellis, "Tom and Toakafo: The Betsimisaraka Kingdom and State Formation in Madagascar, 1715-1750," *Journal of African History* 48, no. (2007): 451-2.
[78] "Histoire de Ratismilahoe, f. 297.
[79] Included in the unrest: an attack in 1740 on French ships in Antongil. Letter, 18 December 1739, "COL C/4/3"; 28 April 1740, "COL C/4/4."

fought for the control of coastal towns.[80] Again, in 1754, the French described frequent warfare on the coast. None of these accounts described the warriors as Sakalava.[81] Ratsimilaho's descendent was murdered by a relative (who was, according to one report, his son). The murderer, Jean Hare (Hard), assumed control of Foulpointe but he constantly battled to maintain control of the port throughout the 1760s.[82]

These frequent struggles appeared to be for the control of coastal trading posts and the ability to sell commodities to the French. According to French observers, neighboring leaders wanted access to the firearms Jean Hare had gained through exports of slaves, rice, cattle, and fowl.[83] Again, in 1772, war broke out between the people of Foulpointe, the center of Hare's dominions, and neighboring groups.[84] In the following decade, the leader of Foulpointe, "Yavi" fought against a group described as the "Fariavas" for the control of trade from eastern Madagascar.[85]

Even in the midst of these constant struggles over trade and trade routes, leaders on the east coast maintained a commercial relationship with the Sakalava, although the inability of the Betsimisaraka confederation to dominate trade meant that this relationship was unstable. Throughout the eighteenth century, frequent trading convoys crossed the interior of the island, between the east and west coasts, as the east coast rulers sent regular supplies of slaves to the Sakalava. By 1780, the leader at Foulpointe, Yavi, sent a

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[80] "Remarques et observations de M Joannis sur l'isle de Madagascar et le Canal de Mozambique," 1743, "MAR 4 JJ/74."

[81] Letter, 10 January 1754, "COL C/4/8." These invaders may have been from the highlands. See Chapter 6.

[82] Dumas to Poivre, Letter, 11 May 1768, "COL C/5A/2."

[83] The ship journal of the Illustre, 1762 , "MAR 4 JJ/105."

[84] Maillart, letter, 4 November 1772, "COL C/5A/2."

[85] Maurice-Auguste Benyowsky, *Voyages et Memoirs de Maurice-Auguste, Comte de Benyowsky*, 2 vols. (Paris: F. Buisson, 1791), 2:247.

"levy" of slaves to Boina each year, in return for two hundred cattle from the west coast.[86]

The French had plans to control the trade routes crossing from the east to west coasts of Madagascar. In 1776, the French military commander, Maurice-Auguste Benyowsky, decided that the passage across the island could be controlled easily with "mediocre" forces.[87] Benyowsky was determined to establish trading relations with the Sakalava of the west coast and redirect shipments of cattle and slaves to the east.[88] The French intended to set up five small trading posts on the trade route towards the west.[89] Unfortunately, the Sakalava were extremely displeased with the French presence in the east and the disruption of their trading there. Despite alliances formed between the French and several east coast leaders, including Yavi ("Hiavi"), the Sakalava were determined to avoid an alliance with the French colonists. The Sakalava leaders sent deputies to meet with the French, but refused to allow them to establish trading fortresses on Sakalava territory.[90]

The Sakalava reportedly tried to incite the people of Antongil Bay against the French. In 1774, after the French angered the Sakalava, the king of Boina dispatched 250 cattle to buy the assistance of a Sakalava-appointed chief near the bay.[91] The Sakalava Empire also supposedly dispatched 40,000 warriors to the east coast. The French hired Malagasy men to defend the French colony and, after a few battles, managed to come to

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[86] Mayeur, 1774, "Voyage au pays des Seclaves, côte ouest de Madagascar," in "notes et éclaircissements,""Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1: 98.

[87] Benyowsky, memoire on the establishment, September 1776," in *Series ancienne, Mélanges*, "M 1031," French National Archives, Paris.

[88] See memoire on Ste Marie, n.d, in "XVII/memoires/88,"*Fonds ministériels, Dépôt fortifications colonial, Sainte Marie de Madagascar*, Centre des Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, France.

[89] Benyowsky, memoire on the establishment, September 1776, "M 1031."

[90] Benyowsky, *Voyages et Memoirs*¸ 2:266.

[91] Ibid., 2: 280.

an uncertain peace with the Sakalava. Following the conclusion of the peace, Benyowsky dispatched traders to the Sakalava territory. They visited the Sakalava capital at "Maronvai" [Marovoay?], home to a market for the exchange of all sorts of goods, particularly with the visiting Comorian traders.[92] The French visitors proposed to purchase Nosy Be, an island on the northwest coast, but the Sakalava representative refused.

The Tributary North

Attempts of the French to extend their influence into northern Madagascar uncovered the extent of Sakalava control in this region. We have few details about how this expansion occurred, as Europeans largely avoided the rocky northern coast of Madagascar prior to the mid-eighteenth century. In 1665, for instance, a Dutch map plots, with some accuracy, the ports on the coast of Madagascar, except in the north. The mapmaker labeled this region "*pays incogneu*" or "unknown."[93] Europeans probably avoided the north because other locations were closer to their sailing routes that directed them around Madagascar and towards the more lucrative ports of India and Indonesia.

Archeologists have shown that the northern part of the island was home to bustling ports prior to the eighteenth century. Islamized traders frequented these ports, which were located at the southern end of the monsoonal winds. They were home to the Antaloatra who provided merchants with food and slaves. Oral traditions describe the Sakalava as only controlling the northwestern ports of the island by the start of this

[92] Ibid., 2: 387.

[93] Joan Blaeu, map of "Isula S. Laurentii, vulgo Madagascar," 1665, Amsterdam, found online at Northwestern University Library, map collection:
< http://hdl.library.northwestern.edu/2166.DL/inu-afrmap-4264860-recto-ah > <accessed 3 March 2010>.

century, but in subsequent years, they appeared to control the entire northern region.[94] By the end of the century, the leaders of the major ports dotting the coastline, chiefly Nosy Be, Diego Suarez (Antsiranana) and Vohémar, all claimed to be blood relatives of the Sakalava ruler of Boina.[95]

In 1774, Benyowsky dispatched traders to meet with the chiefs of the north after he became aware of how influential they were in Malagasy commerce.[96] He appears to have been ignorant of the ties between them and his enemy, the Sakalava of Boina. During his visit, his representative, Nicolas Mayeur, discovered that one Sakalava representative ruled over the northern province, stretching from the west coast to Vohémar in the east.[97] The king lived to the west of the northern-most point of the island, near the location that French traders had visited about fifty years previously.[98] The king, named Lamboine (L'Amboine, Lamboeny), ruled over some twenty local chiefs controlling smaller provinces.[99] Chiefs sent Lamboine annual tributary payments in rice, cattle, and slaves. They ruled over smaller villages located along rivers, which they used for transporting trade items, and they grew crops on the riverbanks.[100] During times of war and privation, Lamboine exempted the chiefs from the tributary payments until the

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[94] Oral traditions barely mention the development of Sakalava control over the north and east, for instance see Charles Guillain, *Documents sur l'histoire, la geographie et le commerce de la partie occidentale de Madagascar* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1845).

[95] See, for instance, the letter on the succession to the Sakalava throne on Ratsimilaho, who desired Sakalava blood in his lineage: Mayeur, "Voyage au pays des Seclaves, côte ouest de Madagascar," April 1774, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1:127. See also Chapter 7.

[96] Mayeur, 1774, trip to the north of the island, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1:10.

[97] On Mayeur: Solofo Randrianja and Stephen Ellis, *Madagascar: A Short History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 114-5; Pier Martin Larson, History *and Memory in the Age of Enslavement: Becoming Merina in Highland Madagascar, 1770-1822* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000), 1-5.

[98] The ruler here was a relative of the Sakalava king of Boina and sold slaves to Arabs. The ship journals of the Charles and Elisabeth, 1742-3, "MAR 4 JJ/144/D."

[99] Dumaine, voyage to the west coast of Madagascar, 1793, in "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar,"1:296.

[100] Ibid., 1;294.

next harvest.[101] By 1780, the Sakalava also had a representative named "Raminti" ruling over the port of Vohémar, formerly an "Arab" Antaloatra trading port.[102]

Lamboine seems to have been subordinate to the Sakalava king based at the northwest port of Boina. The Sakalava ruler at Boina used these two rulers in the north and east to coordinate attacks, especially against the French. They also organized trade in the northern and northeastern regions of Madagascar. In 1774, Lamboine sent five hundred armed men to attack various villages in the north. His army raided and stole cattle from villages not already under his control.[103] These military actions convinced these northern people to form commercial alliances with the Sakalava. By concluding a *serment*, or fati-dra, with the Sakalava, local rulers entered into inviolable alliances with the strong empire.[104]

With Sakalava rule over the northern province assured, the Sakalava queen of Boina began to keep her herds in the region.[105] The queen reportedly owned over 10,000 cattle and she developed the northern Sakalava region into a major cattle-exporting center.[106] When Benyowsky and Mayeur tried to negotiate for cheaper prices cattle from the people of the north and bypass the Sakalava traders at Boina, they discovered the extent of Sakalava control over northern Madagascar. The Sakalava forbade the people in the north to sell the cattle intended for export from Boina. The provincial Sakalava

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[101] Benyowsky, memoir on the establishment, 1776, "M 1031."

[102] Mayeur, 1774, trip to the north of the island, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1:29.

[103] Mayeur, 1774, trip to the north of the island, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1: 28-36.

[104] Benyowsky, *Voyages et Memoirs*¸ 2: 269. The French frequently referred to the fati-dra as a serment.

[105] Mayeur, "Voyage au pays Seclaves," 1774, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1: 115.

[106] As it was during the nineteenth century: W. F. W. Owen, *Narrative of Voyages to Explore the Shores of Africa, Arabia, and Madagascar* (London: Richard Bentley, 1833), 35-7.

leaders appeared to have had little independence from the Sakalava ruler, particularly in the realm of foreign affairs.[107] When the Sakalava went to war against the French in 1776, the Sakalava king forced Lamboine to end commerce with the Europeans.[108]

Sakalava rulers had established a stable empire and consolidated control over the northern interior of the island. During the next century, leaders in the north in ports such as Vohémar and Diego Suarez identified themselves as "Sakalava." The adoption of this identity would have important repercussions during the battles between the Sakalava and Merina in the coming years.[109] By the end of the nineteenth century, a French observer complained, "Arabs and the Sakalava form the majority of the population of Vohémar," the same "race" as those around Nosy Be. Rulers in these regions continually sought to "prevent the foreigners [such as the Merina] from gaining influence."[110]

The Highlands

Throughout the eighteenth century, changes were brewing in the interior of Madagascar. Quietly, but steadily, leaders of this state had gathered strength, conquered other communities, and gained riches.[111] During the seventeenth century, many highland kingdoms reportedly paid tribute to the Sakalava.[112] Leaders began to unite these kingdoms during the following century, but civil wars periodically divided them until the

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[107] Dumaine, voyage to the west coast of Madagascar, 1793, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1: 294-6; Desroches, "Notes sur Madagascar," March 15 1816, in "Pieces Diverses Relatives à Madagascar," ed. M. de Froberville, "Add. 18135," British Library, f. 36.

[108] Benyowsky, memoir on the establishment, 1776, "M 1031."

[109] Descriptions of the Sakalava in the north, 1843, in*Fonds ministériels, série géographique, Madagascar*, Centre des Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, France"MAD14/28-29"; M Goudon, "Naturalisés sur Madagascar", 183, in "MAD15/30," *Fonds ministériels, série géographique, Madagascar*, Centre des Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, France.

[110] Buisson, 22 November 1880, notes on Vohémar, in *Fonds de la Marine, Séries modernes, Service Hydrographique*, "MAR 3 JJ/351," French National Archives, Paris.

[111] Conrad P. Kottak, "The Process of State Formation in Madagascar," *American Ethnologist* 4, no. 1 (1977): 146-151.

[112] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 113.

end of the eighteenth century.[113] The news of a strong state controlling this region leaked out to the coasts and the curious French sent representatives to meet with the king of the Hova (later known as the Merina) in 1777.[114]

Hova influence over the coastal trade of Madagascar began with their attempt at controlling exports to the east coast of the island during the mid-eighteenth century.[115] The people of the east coast traded regularly with visiting French traders but required imports of slaves to sell to them. Groups in the highlands had exported slaves to the ports of the island for at least two centuries. In fact, these highland exports may have fueled much of the slave exports from Madagascar.[116] Trading groups on the island relied upon supplies from the interior of the island and the Hova kingdom capitalized on this reliance. In return, the Sakalava provided them with cattle and probably firearms.[117]

Europeans traders visiting the coasts of Madagascar were largely unaware of the tumult occurring in the interior.[118] On the east coast, however, the French noted a curious trend around 1754. Instead of firearms or gunpowder, the people of the east now demanded *piastres*, or Spanish silver dollars, in return for slaves in particular, but also for the purchase of cattle and rice. This demand echoed developments throughout the Indian

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[113] On the development of a centralized state in the highland, see Ibid., 114-5.

[114] Mayeur, "Voyage au Pays d'Ancove," 1777, in "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1:149. During the eighteenth century, "The mass of the people in the central highlands seems to have been known by the word *hova* from an early period, while being divided in numerous polities." Mayeur refers to the state as "Ancove," or kingdom of the Hovas, and this kingdom became Merina under the rule of Andrianampoinimerina who ruled the kingdom after 1795. Ellis and Randrianja, *Madagascar*, 108.

[115] Ibid., 117.

[116] Benyowsky, memoir on the establishment, 1776, "M 1031"; Ellis, 113.

[117] Memoir, n. d, "Pieces Diverses,' f. 127.

[118] Merina traditions record the development of the kingdom. See François Callet, *Histoire des rois, traduction du Tantaran'ny andriana*, 5 vols. (Tananarive: Éditions de la Librairie de Madagascar, 1953).

Ocean by this time.[119] The leaders from Antongil Bay, Foulpointe, and Île Sainte Marie accepted no other commodities for their supplies of slaves.[120] Judging by frequency of French complaints about the usage of piastres, such demands were common and east coast rulers were inflexible with French negotiators.[121] Even communities to the far southeast of the island, near Fort Dauphin, began asking for coins by 1768.[122]

The use of this currency linked the people of Madagascar to broader trade patterns, most visibly with the Comoro islands, but also with people living in East Africa.[123] As early as 1700, European traders, primarily English and French, paid for goods on Anjouan using *piastres* or silver coins.[124] Throughout the eighteenth century, Europeans could not purchase any commodities on the island without silver. Some French merchants recorded that, in Anjouan in 1767, a bull cost them 5 piastres, a goat, 1 piastre, and the small fowl were 30 to a single piastre.[125] When east coast traders in Madagascar began demanding piastres in exchange for slaves, the French immediately assumed coins were being funneled to the northwestern Sakalava coast, where they were used to buy cloth or other goods from Arabian ships that stopped in the ports of the

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[119] On early coin usage in the Indian Ocean, see Genevieve Bouchon and Denys Lombard, "The Indian Ocean in the Fifteenth Century," in *India and the Indian Ocean, 1500-1800,* ed. Ashin Das Gupta and Michael Naylor Pearson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).

[120] The ship journal of the Duc de Chartres, visiting Foulpoint in 1754,"MAR 4 JJ/144/B." For complaints about Foulpointe, see letter, 8 November 1768, "COL C/4/21"; see also Modave's description of the use of piastres in Fort Dauphin, 1768, "COL C/5A/2."

[121] Letter, 25 October 1768, "COL C/4/22"; memoir on the use of currency in Madagascar, 1773, "COL C/4/34." Then, in 1774, Benyowsky's letter to Île de France, "COL C/4/37."

[122] Modave, journal, 1768-70, "COL C/5A/2."

[123] This practice is described in Jean Martin, *Comores: quatre Île s entre pirates et planteurs*, 2 vols. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1983), 1: 32-5.

[124] The ship journal of the Deux Couronner, 1715, "MAR 4 JJ/111"; the ship journal of the Duc de Chartres, 1734, "MAR 4 JJ/89"; the ship journal of the London, 1750, "IOR/L/MAR/B/313 J"; the ship journal of the Warren, 1749, "IOR/L/MAR/B/571 A."

[125] The ship journal of the Paix? (unlabeled), 1767, "MAR 4 JJ/107."

Comoros.[126] The French governors of the Mascarenes complained constantly of the drain on their resources to export silver to Madagascar.[127]

This shift of using coins to trade in Madagascar ushered in an era of more expensive commodities, according to Europeans, and more extensive trade networks throughout the island. While Sakalava leaders still desired guns from Europeans, piastres propelled their participation in internal long-distance trade routes, particularly between the highlands and the west.[128] On the Sakalava coast, guns and gunpowder were still the preferred trading good from Europeans, but piastres were used to trade with passing Arabs.[129] The continued reliance of the Sakalava on guns says more about Sakalava military organization than economic imperatives.[130] Sakalava rulers presumably obtained enough piastres from other regions in the island and relied upon Europeans for firearm imports.

Without taking into account the intervention of the highland states in trade networks during the mid-eighteenth century, this shift to the demand for piastres appears inexplicable. Traders in the central Antananarivo market traded with pieces of silver coins by 1777.[131] Payments in the market were made in "vakim-bola" or broken money, produced by the broken pieces of French silver pieces.[132] For east coast rulers to gain access to slaves from the interior, they needed pieces of silver. Rather than reflecting a

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[126] From observations of Benyowsky, 1775, "COL C/5A/5."

[127] Benyowsky, memoir on the establishment, 1776, "M 1031."

[128] Callet, *Histoire des rois*, 2: 404.

[129] Coins took on a role in ceremonies: Michael Lambek, "The Value of Coins in a Sakalava Polity: Money, Death, and Historicity in Mahajanga, Madagascar," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 43, no. 4 (2001).

[130] The ship journal of the Hector, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/486 A"; MacIntosh, *Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa*, 394.

[131] Mayeur, "Voyage au Pays d'Ancove," 1777, in"Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1: 177.

[132] Richard Temple, *The administrative value of anthropology* (Bombay: British India Press, 1913), 1-5.

desire for these rulers to trade with "Arabs" by using silver coins, the trading shift reflected the growing economic integration of east coast communities with the Hova state.[133]

In 1777, when Mayeur visited the interior of Madagascar ("Pays d'Ancove", home of the Hovas), he discovered an expansive, centralized state.[134] The king commanded an army of 2,000-2,500 armed men who were prepared to pillage villages near the east coast of the island for slaves. When the Frenchman reached the capital, Antananarivo, he described how the people built large houses, wove silk, and stored large quantities of rice.[135] Mayeur was impressed by the large weekly markets held in various villages and every Sunday in the capital. In the market, people from the provinces arrived to sell and buy a variety of commodities. The important trade was in slaves, although this trade may simply have been the most noteworthy to Mayeur, who was a French slave trader. The slaves were exported to both the east and west coasts. The Sakalava also traded for cattle with the highlanders. Mayeur states trading involved the use of pieces of silver weighed on scales. The Hova developed standardized weights for measuring goods and coins, weights being determined in amounts of rice grains or seeds.[136]

The Hova king in 1777 was named Andrianamboatsimarofy.[137] Tributes of labor, coins, and food made this king wealthy and powerful, prompting the leader to expand his control into land on the east coast. On a second voyage by Mayeur, in 1783, he noted the

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[133] On the Merina role in this slave trade, see Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 117.

[134] Mayeur, "Voyage au Pays d'Ancove," 1777, in "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1: 149-87.

[135] The expansion of riziculture was especially important in the formation of the Merina Empire. Gerald M. Berg, "Riziculture and the Founding of Monarchy in Imerina," *The Journal of African History* 22, no. 3 (1981).

[136] Temple, *The Administrative Value of Anthropology*, 4. For the myth on the development of this usage, see Callet, *Histoire des rois*, 2: 48-9.

[137] Campbell, *An Economic History*, 44.

expansion of Hova warfare beyond highlands and towards the east.[138] The army adopted similar tactics as the Sakalava. The king used military force to create tributaries on his borders. He also drew immense revenues from commerce and received half a piastre a head from his people annually as a form of taxation.[139] The king did not limit his activities to commerce. He also enforced a labor corvée, using this labor to the benefit of the growth of the state, through an expansion of roads, irrigation ditches, and, most importantly, the military.[140]

Despite the constant wars fought by the Hovas in their attempts to expand eastwards towards Tamatave, the primary commodity traded in the capital was silver coins, not guns.[141] While guns were still desired, piastres propelled internal long-distance trade routes, particularly between the highlands and the west coast.[142] This period of increasing trade and consolidation of power within Madagascar was also a period of commercial integration. The Hova state coexisted fairly peacefully with the Sakalava empire for at least half a century, until their interests came into direct conflict.[143] The dhow trade from Sakalava ports increased in importance during the latter half of the eighteenth century. The extension of large markets in the rich, fertile, and populous highlands of Madagascar fueled this expansion. The Hova state oversaw the creation of markets in which merchants from all corners of the island met and negotiated. These markets supported the growth of Sakalava and Hova commerce throughout the island.

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[138] Mayeur, second "Voyage au Pays d'Ancove," 1783, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1: 208.

[139] Mayeur, "Voyauge au Pays d'Ancove," 1777, Ibid., 1: 177.

[140] find source

[141] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar,* 116-7.

[142] Callet, *Histoire des rois,* 1: 594.

[143] Example: Ibid., 2: 72. Even an alliance between them: Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar,* 115.

War and Trade

Economic changes within the island occurred concurrently with the expansion of European power in the Indian Ocean. By the end of the eighteenth century, Europeans proved more eager to invest large amounts of money into securing slaves and food from Madagascar, as the French and English increasingly relied upon the island for provisions. Understanding the internal politics and trading networks of Madagascar gave experienced European traders a significant advantage in within the Indian Ocean battles.

An eighteenth-century French trader described his experience of purchasing slaves from Madagascar. His description illustrated the problems Europeans faced in attempting to understand the trade of Madagascar. In August 1774, the French sent a convoy, headed by Mayeur, to the Sakalava king in Bombetoc.[144] French leaders were desperate to obtain slaves, which were in short supply on the east coast during this decade. Mayeur concluded a trading agreement with the Sakalava king, although the king's demands for guns as presents and payments far exceeded the supply of commodities Mayeur had on hand. Benyowsky sent a ship, commanded by Bérubé Dudemene, to the west coast with trading goods to finish acquiring the slaves.[145] When Dudemene arrived, he referred to the agreement the king had made with Mayeur.[146] The king continued to stress that he would only trade for guns, gunpowder, flints, or bullets.

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[144] Mayeur, "Voyage au pays Seclave," 1774, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar," 1:109.

[145] This name is very hard to read and may be incorrect. Bérubé Dudemene, letter, October 1775, "COL C/5a/5."

[146] Ibid.

Before Dudemene, could even discuss trade, however, the king desired his "salam," or present.[147] After the king received two barrels of gunpowder, two cases of *eau de vie* alcohol, 2,000 flints, and 2,000 bullets, the king finally agreed to discuss prices. His prices were exorbitant to the Frenchman. The king demanded four bamboos (described as eight pounds each) of gunpowder, two guns, two hundred flints, and two hundred bullets for each "captive" or slave. Even more astonishingly, he demanded the same price for all slaves, even though women and children were usually cheaper than young men. The Sakalava king also demanded large amounts of gunpowder in return for rice and other foods.

After some negotiation, Dudemene convinced the king to accept guns, flints, and bullets in return for rice and cattle, as he did not have the required amounts of gunpowder. The "Arab" navigator he hired also demanded gunpowder for payment, but he arranged for him to be paid in piastres instead. Local chiefs visited the ship and demanded large "salams." The people on shore even requested gunpowder as payment for their labor in building the palisade, or factory, for the trading goods. The hired workers (*marmittes*) on shore wanted guns for their labor, as well as a bowl of rice a day.[148]

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[147] Ibid. "Salama" is a greeting in Madagascar, which means "healthy" in Malagasy. In Arabic, *Salām* means peace, but is also used in the greeting *As-Salāmu `Alaykum*. This document appears to describe the Malagasy referring "salam" as a present, a usage of the term not found in other sources.

[148] Ibid. Mayeur defines marmittes: "On appelle Marmittes ceux des naturels de Madagascar qui habitant sur les bords de la mer, s'offrent aux europeenes a leur arrive, pour commissaires, pour guides, pour pilotes, pour la traite, la conduite, et le soin des boeufs, tant a terre qu'a bord des vaisseaux et pour toutes les affaires en un mot dans lesquelles leurs ministere peut-etre utile a un etranger." In effect, the French on the east coast came to refer to hired labor as marmittes (usually through a chief or big man hiring out his slaves/workers). "Notes et éclaircissements," 1774, "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar ," 1:60. The marmittes may have been derived from the term *maromiton*, French for servant. Drury referred to them as the "maurominters." Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 103.

Just when the captain had thought he was ready to purchase slaves, a large Dutch ship entered the bay. Having sailed from the Cape of Good Hope, the Dutch ship was prepared for a two-month stay in the bay and had plenty of trading commodities. In response, the Sakalava traders increased the price, from four to six bamboos of powder, for each slave. Dudemene reminded them he had little gunpowder and he offered them piastres. After a long meeting ("gabare" or *kabary*), they let him pay twenty coins for each slave, but told him that, for other commodities, he had to pay as the Dutch did. The Dutch had come prepared, with 190 barrels of fine gunpowder and many boxes of guns, iron, cloth and other goods. They could pay 11 or 12 bamboos of powder for the slaves, all ages and genders, as well as powder for cattle, rice, fish, fowls, eggs, and milk. Dudemene offered more piastres for the slaves, but to little avail. Eventually he gave up and set sail again, having exhausted his stores of coins and gunpowder for only a few slaves.[149]

Military power enabled Sakalava growth, and vice versa. The Sakalava could demand imports of gunpowder from the French and refuse French prices when the Dutch presented more favorable terms. Despite the emphasis on gunpowder in the above account, the control of imports of guns and gunpowder was just one aspect of Sakalava control. Communities on the periphery of the Sakalava Empire found it in their interests to give the Sakalava favorable trading concessions, rather than fight against the Sakalava armies. More groups on the island acquiesced to Sakalava control by the end of the period and adopted the Sakalava identity.

The growth of European power in the Indian Ocean, however, prevented the consolidation of the Sakalava Empire. European forces in the Indian Ocean faced similar

[149] Dudemene, letter, 1775, "COL C/5a/5."

demands for supplies of food and labor. European monopoly companies needed to send warships and soldiers in large numbers to the Indian Ocean to secure trading privileges. English and French naval commanders increasingly relied upon supplies from the ports of Madagascar for food and labor during the three Carnatic Wars of the eighteenth century. The expansion of European power in the Indian Ocean and the demands this expansion made on the trading supplies of Madagascar conflicted with Sakalava imperial growth. The creation of multiple expansive military empires led to a collision on the shores of Madagascar.

Chapter 5

European Fleets in the Indian Ocean

In 1760, the governor of Île de France (present-day Mauritius) wrote a letter complaining of food shortages on the island.[1] "It is cruel," he wrote, "to struggle each instant against famine."[2] He explained that he had sent ship after ship to Madagascar to purchase rice to feed the island's colonists, soldiers, and slaves. French captains reported that wars along the east coast between the ruler of Foulpointe and his neighbors prevented them from buying the rice needed by the colony. Conflicts greatly diminished supplies of grain and created shortages along the coast. A devastating cyclone and the spread of epidemic disease among the coastal populations further reduced the rice stores of communities in eastern Madagascar.[3] For the rest of the year, settlers in the Mascarene Islands were precariously close to starvation. Many of the slaves on the island died and the governor sent ships to eastern Madagascar in search of food and more slaves.[4]

Agricultural production on the two French islands of Île de France and Île Bourbon (Réunion) was not sufficient to support their populations.[5] Throughout the eighteenth century, French ships purchased cattle, rice, and slaves in Madagascar to supply the islands with food and labor. When the famine of 1760 struck, however, it was during the middle of the Seven Years' War, also referred to as the Third Carnatic War in

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[1] Portions of this chapter were presented in a conference paper, Jane Hooper, "*Flux du sang et sauterelles:* How the People and Environment of Madagascar Thwarted French Commercial Expansion" (paper presented at the annual meeting for The Western Society for French History, October 2009).

[2] Desforges Boucher, 6 March 1760, "COL C/4/12."

[3] Magon, journal, 6 October 1757, "COL C/4/10."

[4] Desforges Boucher, 6 March 1760, "COL C/4/12."; find source on this slaves; see also COL C/4/13.

[5] The term Mascarene Islands in this chapter also refers to the French possession of Île de Rodrigues, a small island inhabited by tortoises, introduced dogs and chickens, and a small population of French soldiers and slaves. On the early history of Rodrigues, see "Une note pour l'île Rodrique," 1692, "COL C/3/11."

the Indian Ocean. British, French, and Indian (Maratha) forces fought three wars for the control of southern India's coastline, referred to as the "Carnatic." The majority of clashes occurred on the land and sea surrounding India but the soldiers on land required naval support.

Over a period of almost twenty years (1744-1748, 1748-1754, and 1756-1763), the French and British governments sent squadrons of five or more ships into the Indian Ocean annually to support land battles in India. [6] The crews and soldiers of these ships required food and labor, so their captains turned to islands in the southwestern Indian Ocean, primarily Madagascar and Anjouan, to sustain their military campaigns. The British directed their ships to St. Augustine's Bay, while the French attempted to replenish their ships in the Mascarenes. The British were successful at obtaining sufficient quantities of food, wood, and water from the Sakalava. Due to persistent shortages in the Mascarenes, French naval commanders frequently could not replenish their stores of food in the ports of the islands.[7] Instead, they sailed to Madagascar and spent months off the island's east coast attempting to purchase supplies. The French wasted valuable time in negotiating with the Malagasy and frequently could not purchase enough food to support their soldiers. The British had fortuitously established a trading relationship with the more stable Sakalava Empire.

These struggles over food provide a new perspective on the history of European monopoly companies in the Indian Ocean. Europeans relied upon supplies in

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[6] On the French navy, see Jonathan R. Dull, *The French Navy and the Seven Years' War* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2005). For the records of the British navy during these wars, see the letters of the admiralty (henceforth ADM) kept in the British National Archives, Kew, especially "ADM 1/160," "ADM 1/161," "ADM 1/162," "ADM 1/163."

[7] In good years, the islands could produce enough food for the colonists and export to warships, but cyclones, locusts, and other environmental problems such as droughts and floods frequently harmed agriculture on the islands.

Madagascar, a reliance that placed limits upon their expansion into the ocean. The Sakalava Empire could supply the goods needed by British military leaders. This access to commodities in Madagascar helps to explain British successes and French failures in India. This trade also increased the extent to which the British and French depended on supplies from Madagascar and increased their interest in political developments within the island.

Much of the scholarship on the French East India companies fixates on the failures of the French traders and administrators in comparison to their Portuguese, Dutch, and English counterparts.[8] The French did not send enough ships, make cogent plans, or invest adequate financial resources in these endeavors. Many historians focus on the economic imperatives that determined the formation of early French trading companies and contrast these with the English and Dutch monopoly companies. Historians tend to describe the limitations that mercantilist policies placed on the French East India Company.[9] As a result, historians usually blame constant funding struggles for hampering French access to prime markets in the Indian Ocean.[10] There is a tendency to

[8] Several French monopoly companies were formed between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, including the *compagnie d'orient*, dissolved in 1654, the *compagnie royale des indes orientales*, between 1664 and 1668, and the *companie des indes*. Donald C. Wellington, *French East India Companies: A Historical Account and Record of Trade* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2006), 9-28. On this narrative of French failures, see Ames, who highlights the disastrous attempt to colonize Madagascar. Glenn Joseph Ames, *Colbert, Mercantilism, and the French Quest for Asian Trade* (DeKalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996). The two-volume history of the French East India Company written by Haudrère focuses on the role of mercantilism in the failures of the company. Philippe Haudrère, *La compagnie française des Indes au XVIIIe siècle*, 2 ed., vol. 1 (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2005), 13-40.

[9] See, for instance, Haudrère, *La compagnie française*, 13-40.

[10] This is because the eighteenth-century sea wars have been described as "struggles of endurance" when banking and credit became crucial to success. See the works done by military historians on the Carnatic wars that put an emphasis on sea power and the importance of supplies: Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), 76; Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*, 25 ed.(New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 244-7; Dull, *The French Navy*, 10-35.

isolate the decisions of the companies' directors in France from events within the Indian Ocean.

Scholars typically fail to consider how events and circumstances in the Indian Ocean affected these plans. During the seventeenth century, French plans centered on the island of Madagascar and French officials became obsessed with painting a "rosy picture" of Madagascar, according to one scholar.[11] Most scholars do not note that the seventeenth-century French colony at Fort Dauphin failed primarily due to Malagasy antagonism, not the failures of French colonial administrators to fund the endeavor adequately. [12] When scholars work on presenting a general history of the French *compagnie des indes*, they tend to ignore that the plans for a colony in southern Madagascar, from a strategic point of view, were sound, but the colonists faced unforeseen difficulties. Yet few scholars have examined the role of Madagascar in shaping French commerce in the Indian Ocean.[13]

Likewise, the possession of Île de France was seen as a crucial link in developing French commerce, as it provided the French with large and viable ports near the center of the ocean.[14] The functionality of the island's ports, however, proved less than expected, in light of frequent cyclones and frequent food shortages. Such colonial failures should be attributed to the negative influence of diseases, such as dysentery, malaria, or various *flux*

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[11] Wellington, *French East India Companies*, 10.

[12] 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).

[13] For example, a collection focusing on French Indian Ocean commerce examines interactions between French and Indian trade networks: Indrani Ray and Lakshmi Subramanian, *The French East India Company and the Trade of the Indian Ocean: A Collection of Essays* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1999). The same is of course true for studies of the English East India Company that focus on the influence of India on EIC policies: H. V. Bowen, *The Business of Empire: The East India Company and Imperial Britain, 1756-1833* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[14] For instance, Haudrère, *La compagnie française*, 1: 203; Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power*, 227.

described by Europeans, and natural disasters, such as *sauterelle* (locust) infestations, rather than blamed upon poor management or funding.[15]

The battle for the control of the Carnatic coast exacerbated these challenges to the French Mascarene colonies. Megan Vaughan has argued that scholars have not paid enough attention to the role of warfare in the history of the Mascarene Islands.[16] These islands were home to sugar plantations but the French originally intended the islands to be provisioning stations for French ships sailing to India. French officials, however, decided to convert the land to sugar plantations.[17] These plantations required constant influxes of labor and, due to the influx of warships to the ocean, the colonial governors had difficulty investing in the development of a labor force on the island. The Mascarene plantations did not start to import large numbers of laborers until the 1770s, after the wars had ceased.[18] Despite these importations of slaves, when the British seized control of Mauritius several decades later, they found its land still underdeveloped.[19]

The constant need for slaves to develop the islands induced the French to rely on Madagascar for food and slaves, imports that became more important during the Carnatic Wars. In many ways, British and French reliance on Madagascar paralleled Sakalava commercial expansion. These groups all required food and labor to expand their economic and military influence during the eighteenth century though a combination of violence and alliances. Sakalava leaders and Europeans also began to purchase large

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[15] Davelu, "Notes historiques sur l'isle de Bourbon," n.d., "COL F/3/1."

[16] Megan Vaughan, *Creating the Creole Island: Slavery in Eighteenth-Century Mauritius* (Chapel Hill, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 34.

[17] Ibid., 35. On importance of supplies from Madagascar, see Ibid., 46.

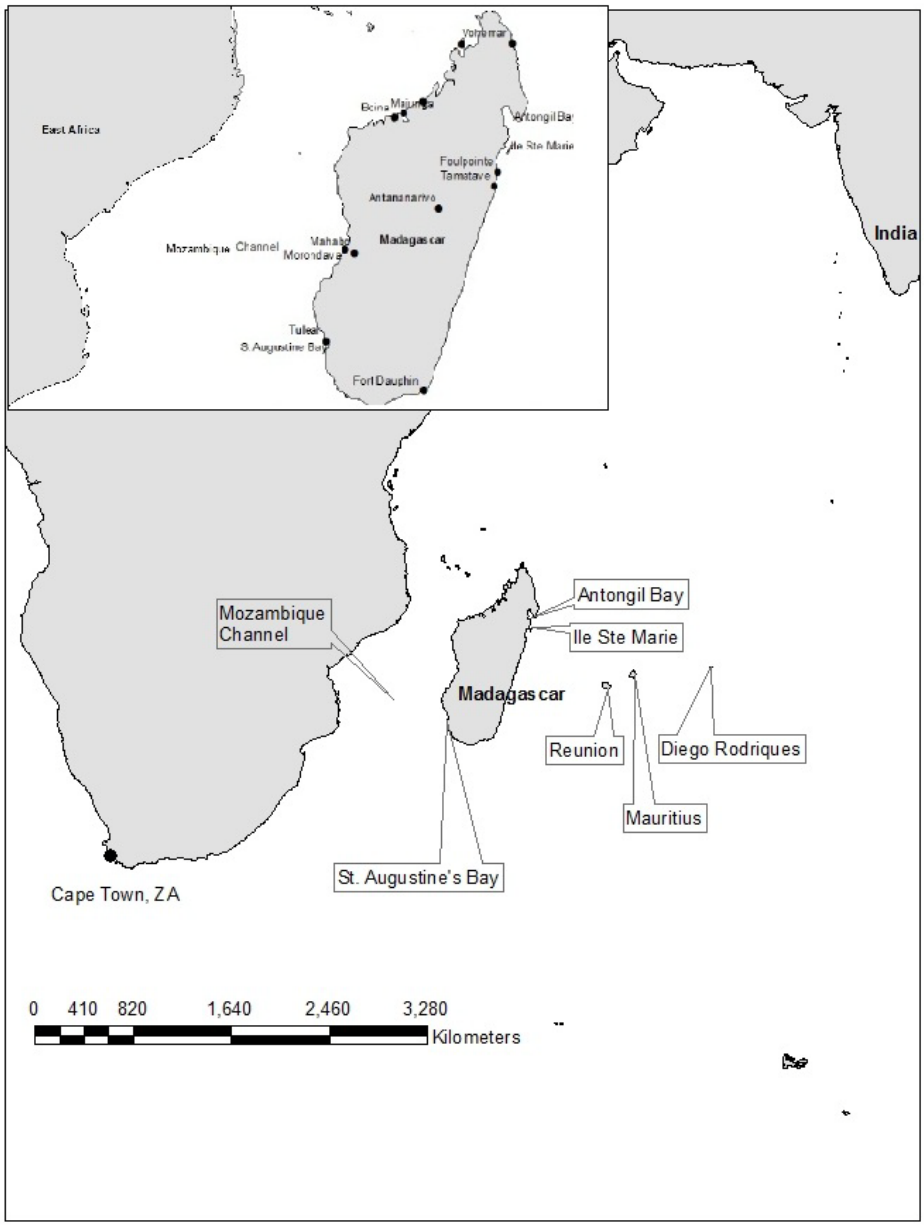
[18] Richard Allen, "The Constant Demand of the French: The Mascarene Slave Trade and the Worlds of the Indian Ocean and Atlantic During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of African History* 49, no. (2008): 52.

[19] Richard Allen, "The Slender, Sweet Thread: Sugar, Capital and Dependendency in Mauritius, 1860 ," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (1988):153.

quantities of slaves by the end of the century, most of them from East Africa. [20] This period marked a deepening dependence between Europeans and Malagasy leaders. This dependence accelerated the rate of political change and transformation in and around Madagascar, as Europeans grew interested in directly harnessing the resources of Madagascar for themselves.[21]

[20] On this topic: Allen, "The Constant Demand"; 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); Nancy Jane Hafkin, "Trade, society, and politics in Northern Mozambique, c. 1753-1913" (PhD diss., Boston University, 1973).

[21] I agree with the description given by Wright about the creation of dependence of Africans on Western imports and support during this period, but I wish to call attention to how Europeans also grew to depend on Madagascar. Donald R. Wright, *The world and a very small place in Africa* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 89-90.



Map 5: Madagascar and the southwest Indian Ocean

European Competition

The French complained that the Malagasy were frequently at war. They explicitly connected military power with economic stability and complained about the disruption that local conflicts caused to trading networks.[22] During wartime, people fled their lands and failed to cultivate crops.[23] Entire communities disappeared, their people enslaved. Quarrels prevented food supplies such as cattle from moving throughout the island.[24] The French identified the Sakalava in particular as aggressors and the "most ignorant and most aggressive of all the people of the island."[25] Battles, such as those described in Chapter 4, convinced Europeans that the Malagasy were savages, with no interest in long-term economic gain.

By examining political developments in early modern Europe, however, the Malagasy could have made similar observations about Europeans. The French and British focused on the relationship between war and commerce within Madagascar, but failed to consider their own actions in the Indian Ocean. European wars interrupted commerce in the ocean and affected the number of Europeans who traded in Madagascar. European states relied upon foreign trade for prosperity and for maintaining the strength of their commercial establishments abroad. Blockades were the most prevalent naval strategy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and British warships frequently patrolled French

[22] See especially the French complaint in St. Augustine's Bay: Desforges Boucher, letter, 1760, "COL C/4/12." Food shortages were a product of wars, according to Europeans visitors, who always described the island as exceedingly fertile. Proposal for a French establishment in Madagascar, 1749, "COL C/5A/1."

[23] Bellecombe, journal and notes, 10 September to 31 October 1776, "COL C/5A/7."

[24] For instance: complaints about the wars in the Comoro islands: the ship journal of the Walpole, 1786, "IOR/L/MAR/B/293 O"; the ship journal of the Warren, 1749, "IOR/L/MAR/B/571 A"; the ship journal of the Pentheiere, May 1743, "MAR 4 JJ/116."

[25] D'Unienville?, November 1815, essay on Madagascar, "MAD7/15."

ports in an attempt to cut off maritime traders.[26] The officers of European monopoly companies, the Dutch, Portuguese, French, and English, constantly worried about attacks on their merchants by warships.

The impact of European disagreements on trade in the Indian Ocean pre-dated the Carnatic wars. Malagasy observed hostilities between various European groups, as they struggled to evade other European traders in and around the ports of Madagascar. These evasions helped to determine European trading patterns. Battles for control of commerce in the ocean encouraged traders to visit previously unused coastal regions, such as St. Augustine's Bay, and influenced the development of trade in these ports. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the English and French had become the most influential and frequent European traders in Madagascar. The Dutch replenished their Indian Ocean-bound ships at the Cape of Good Hope and sent only small trading ships to western Madagascar to fetch rice and slaves.[27] The Portuguese consolidated their forces in Mozambique and Angola. They imported food from northwestern Madagascar with some regularity, but their voyages were probably not as frequent as those of the English and French.[28] After 1744, however, the English and the French relied heavily on Madagascar and nearby islands, especially Anjouan, to supply their ships passing through the southwestern Indian Ocean.

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[26] Archer Jones, *The Art of War in the Western World* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1987), 265.

[27] Dutch East India Company (VOC) records held in *Nationaal Archief* (the Hague) discuss this trade. See, for instance, "Copie missiven... in de baij van St. Augustijn aen de westzijde van Madagascar," 1632, Surat, "1.04.02 1109", ff. 127 – 134; "Copie dagregister ... reijse als omtrent den slavenhandel op Madagascar," 1694, Ceylon, "1.04.02 1544," ff. 1026 – 1058; "Factuur ... slavenhandel op 't eijland Madagascar," 1740, Kapp, "1.04.02 2547," ff. 110 – 113.

[28] There has not been much work done in the Portuguese archives on the frequency of this cross-channel traffic before the nineteenth century. See Thomas Vernet, "Le Commerce Des Esclaves Sur La Côte Swahili, 1500 - 1750," *Azania* 38, no. (2003).

During the first decade of the seventeenth century, the English sent large numbers of ships on spice and cloth trading missions throughout the northern Indian Ocean. English East India Company (EIC) merchants focused on establishing trading posts in locations such as Batavia, in present-day Indonesia, and Fort St. George, on the coast of India. Madagascar fed the passing traders and their crews and provided slaves to work these EIC establishments.[29] By the mid-eighteenth century, the English became fixated on addressing the shortage of maritime laborers in the Indian Ocean and they developed two strategies to solve this problem. English captains focused on improving the health of their sailors through diet and rest on the shores of provisioning points such as St. Augustine's Bay. They also began to hire short-term contract laborers in the Indian Ocean called lascars. These were sailors typically from the northern Indian Ocean coastal regions, particularly the Indian subcontinent and near the Persian Gulf.[30]

These strategies were expensive but, as a result, the English were relatively more successful in sending ships across the oceans. In 1746, for instance, the captain of the EIC ship Houghton was forced to sail into St. Augustine's Bay when he had "26 men down with the scurvy, etc, uncapable [sic.] of duty and others falling down daily."[31] After

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[29] On this slave trade to EIC colonies (to St. Helena, Fort St. David, and Bencoolen): Letter book, 1718, "IOR/E/3/99," f. 250; Letter book, 1716, "IOR/E/3/98" f. 429; Letter book, 1733, "IOR/E/3/106," f. 10-13; the ship journal of the Harrington, 1736, "IOR/L/MAR/B/654 B"; the ship journal of the Hertford, 1734, "IOR/L/MAR/B/656 E-G"; the ship journal of the Prince William, 1738, "IOR/L/MAR/B/324 E"; the ship journal of the Edgebaston, 1740, "IOR/L/MAR/B/622 A"; the ship journal of the Onslow, 1741, "IOR/L/MAR/B/164 C"; the ship journal of the Swift, 1741/2, "IOR/L/M AR/B/616 A"; the ship journal of the Chesterfield, 1748, "IOR/L/MAR/B/507 A"; Letter book, 1749, "IOR/E/3/110," f. 172; the ship journal of the Delaware, 1752, "IOR/L/MAR/B/322 B"; the ship journal of the Swallow, 1749/50, "IOR/L/MAR/B/385 A"; the ship journal of the Dragon, 1753, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598D"; the ship journal of the Prince Henry, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/325 G"; the ship journal of the Dragon, 1758, "IOR/L/MAR/B/598 E"; the ship journal of the Fly, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/597 B"; the ship journal of the Diligent, 1761, "IOR/L/MAR/B/320 E"; the ship journal of the Snow Mercury, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/554 C"; the ship journal of the Beckenham, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/561 A"; the ship journal of the Solebay, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/591 A."

[30] On lascars, see Chapter 3.

[31] The ship journal of the Houghton, 1748, "IOR/L/MAR/B/438 F."

sending the sick to the shore to recover, the captain filled his ship with fresh water, wood, beef, and rice. The Houghton set sail three and a half months later for the English holdings in "Bencoolen" (Benkulen, in Sumatra), Madras, and Bengal. Most of the crew had recovered during their stay in Madagascar, probably due to a combination of the short visit and the arrival of the ship during a period of cooler weather (August).[32] To speed the recovery of his crew, the captain likely purchased oranges, lemons, fish, and milk, in addition to the usual purchases of rice and beef in St. Augustine's Bay.[33] English captains such as that of the Houghton gathered knowledge on how to trade in the Sakalava western ports, in order to gain provisions such as these. After years of visits, the English knew of the "customs" necessary for trading in the bay.[34] By the end of the eighteenth century, European captains could replenish supplies within a week or two.[35]

On the east coast of the island, however, EIC traders had trouble in purchasing provisions. [36] Years of visiting the west coast eased trading relations and meant that the English did not know how to trade on the east coast. In fact, the Malagasy of Fort Dauphin expressed surprise when the English visited their port, as they had heard the English were afraid of the French and so did not frequent that part of the island.[37]

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[32] Compare this success to the failures of the Beckenham visiting during the summer months. The ship journal of the Beckenham, 1764, "IOR/L/MAR/B/561 A." French colonists complained continually of the high mortality rates of Europeans who remained on the island more than a few months. In November of 1768, the French colonial leader in Fort Dauphin reported that out of a hundred Frenchmen, 29 were sick with fevers, after three months on the island. See Modave, journal, 1768, "COL C/5A/2."

[33] On purchasing these goods in the bay, see the ship journal of the Winchelsea, 1743, "IOR/L/MAR/B/4C."

[34] The rival "King John" is mentioned when the lascars fled to his "domains" and hence out of reach for the Sakalava soldiers trying to recover the runaways. Ibid.

[35] See for instance the various voyages of the Greenwich: the ship journal of the Greenwich, 1767 and 1769, both in "IOR/L/MAR/488 F, G."

[36] Lt Colpoy, report, 1772, "ADM 1/160." British ships bought cattle and rice on the east coast in 1751 but had trouble getting water and had to return to the Cape of Good Hope. The ship journal of the Ruby, 1751, "ADM 52/696."

[37] The ship journal of the Harrington, 1736, "IOR/L/MAR/B/654 B."

Furthermore, the English complained supplies were far more limited on the east coast than on the west.[38]

It only took about two weeks to sail between the east coast of Madagascar and the Mascarene Islands.[39] The Mascarenes attracted the attention of both the Dutch and the French, but they both depended on Madagascar for supplies of food and labor. After taking possession of the uninhabited island of Mauritius in 1638, Dutch commanders sent several small ships to Madagascar to purchase slaves for the colony.[40] Despite periodic investments, the Dutch decided to abandon Mauritius in 1710 following difficulties caused by runaway colonists, frequent storms, locusts, and rats.[41] In 1665, the French had taken control of another uninhabited island in the region, Île Bourbon [present-day Réunion]. Frenchmen, along with their Malagasy slaves (and wives) from Fort Dauphin, were the first settlers on Île Bourbon. After the French lost their colony in Fort Dauphin in 1674, they decided to invest in developing trading posts in India, the Middle East, and the Mascarenes.[42] The French assumed control of Mauritius in 1717, renaming it Île de France, and attempted to develop it into a provisioning center for the French in the Indian Ocean.[43]

The islands' governors, however, were not satisfied with growing wheat and herding cattle for passing ships. They transformed the farms on the islands into plantations that grew coffee, sugar cane, indigo, and cotton. They envisioned the islands

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[38] Edward Bosawen, letter, 17 October 1748, "ADM 1/160."

[39] See, for instance, the voyages of the Duc D'anjou, 1737, to and from Île de France and Fort Dauphin and Antongil Bay, "MAR 4JJ/74."

[40] P. J. Moree, *A Concise History of Dutch Mauritius, 1598-1710: A Fruitful and Healthy Land* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1998), 3.

[41] On the following, Moree, *A Concise History of Dutch Mauritius,* 1-3.

[42] On the failure of the colony, see the "Memoir on the current state of isle Dauphine," 1668, "COL C/5a/1."

[43] Orders to take control of "isle Maurice," 1 March 1716, "MAR B/1/14," f. 31.

becoming even more profitable than Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti), France's Caribbean colony. These plans relied upon steady supplies of food and labor from Madagascar to succeed, especially since sugar plantations required large influxes of slaves to work them.

Unfortunately, the islands never lived up to French expectations, in part due to a continual lack of supplies from eastern Madagascar, a difficulty the French governors could not have foreseen. By 1698, the French colonists required frequent imports of slaves from Madagascar to help with clearing land and establishing agriculture on the islands.[44] Slave ships also frequented Mozambique and the Indian subcontinent during the eighteenth century. French officials compared slaves from Madagascar unfavorably with those from "Malabar" or Mozambique.[45] Despite negative opinions about Malagasy slaves, ships would return from Madagascar with a small number of *captifs* along with the rest of their cargo, primarily rice and cattle.[46] Traders from the Mascarenes undertook multiple voyages a year to the island and rarely visited the Sakalava-held ports on the north and west coasts of the island.[47] The danger of bringing large numbers of Malagasy slaves to a relatively uninhabited island became clear. The governors constantly debated

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[44] Proposal for a colony in Madagascar in order to purchase slaves, 1697, "MAR B/3/98," f. 320. So desperate was the need for slaves that the French openly traded with the pirates of east Madagascar during the early part of the eighteenth century. Desforges Boucher, 30 November 1725, "COL C/3/3-4."

[45] On the development of slave-trading states in East Africa, see Hafkin, "Trade, society, and politics," 23-26.

The French imported thousands of slaves from the Indian subcontinent, although the preferred use of these slaves was in the ports or ships. These "lascar" sailors from the northern Indian Ocean worked the ships in the ports of the islands, ferrying provisions to and from visiting ships.

[46] For this reason, Allen concludes that slave cargoes from Madagascar were "usually substantially smaller than those arriving from eastern Africa": Allen, "The Constant Demand," 54. In addition, French traders complained that the eastern ports of Foulpointe, in Antongil Bay, and at Fort Dauphin never supplied many slaves.

[47] It became common practice for the colonial authorities to send their *particulier* ships (short-haul ships owned by the colonial governments) to eastern Madagascar. The French sent ships occasionally to western Madagascar. See: the instructions to the captain of the Jupiter, 1725, "COL C/2/27"; orders from the council of Île de France, 1744 and 1745, "COL C/2/31"; Diore, letter, 30 March 1728, "COL C/3/5." They also desired slaves from Senegal. David, letter, 25 October 1749, "COL C/4/6."

what to do about the *marons*, or runaway slaves, usually of Malagasy descent.[48] Marons robbed French colonial farms and encouraged rebellion among slaves. Some reportedly stole canoes in an effort to return to Madagascar.[49]

Colonists used slave labor to develop ports, farms, and plantations. Company governors dictated trading quotas to the settlers and began encouraging coffee cultivation by 1735.[50] In response to these quotas, the demand for slaves on the island remained high throughout the eighteenth century.[51] Slave traders sold slaves to the colonists on the island for pre-arranged prices. As a result, sources frequently refer to the slaves as a "noir pièce d'inde" or "negresse pièce d'inde," meaning a "black" valued at "a piece of India cloth."[52]

Even with slave labor, the plans of the company's directors quickly unraveled. The crops on the islands failed repeatedly following a series of natural disasters (primarily droughts and cyclones) in 1725, 1728, 1730, and 1737.[53] The colonists and their slaves struggled to grow wheat, maize, and rice, and to raise cattle on the islands. Coffee growing proved even more difficult. Locusts and rats consumed crops, especially the prized wheat.[54] Droughts dried up rice fields and diseases struck cattle and slaves.

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[48] Many of the colonists believed that the "Madagascar slaves are always much more inclined to desert their master" and flee into the mountains. Alexander Dalrymple, "Geographical collections of Alexander Dalrymple on "Mauritius, Island of Bourbon, Madagascar, and Diego Rayes", 1756, "Add. 33,765, 1808," f. 10.

Marons or maroons also posed a constant problem in the Americas: Richard Price, "Introduction: Maroons and their Communities," in *Maroon Societies: rebel slave communities in the Americas*, ed. Richard Price, 3 ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 1-30.

[49] Dalrymple, "Geographical collections of Alexander Dalrymple," f. 10.

[50] Davelu, "Notes historiques sur l'isle de Bourbon," n.d., "COL F/3/1."

[51] Letter, 9 August 1741, "COL C/3/8."

[52] For the use of this term, see Bouver, letter, 6 September 1751, "COL C/3/10."

[53] These are just examples, there were more in subsequent years. See: Davelu, "Notes historiques sur l'isle de Bourbon," n.d., "COL F/3/1."

[54] Ibid.

Cyclones wiped out crops and destroyed the recently constructed ports. In one year, slave mortality among the company's slaves was above ten percent.[55]

To solve the problems that faced the colonies, the French leaders made several pragmatic decisions. One of the most important was the introduction of manioc. As manioc grew well throughout Madagascar, colonial leaders assumed it would provide the slaves with a steady food supply. By 1733, manioc became a staple crop for non-Europeans in the Mascarenes.[56] Despite this innovation, the French preferred to eat rice, usually imported from Madagascar.[57] They purchased rice at the ports of Foulpointe, Île Sainte Marie, and Antongil Bay. Ships from eastern Madagascar returned with large quantities of rice and a few slaves. For instance, in 1725, the small ship belonging to the islands, the Ruby, returned from the east coast of Madagascar with several thousand tons of rice, 32 male and 4 female slaves. This supply of rice appeared to the grateful colonists as "manna fallen from the sky" against the next famine. The food was retained for distribution among the troops on the island and the company's various workers, until the next harvest.[58] From Fort Dauphin, the ships could purchase hundreds of live cattle at a time, required to "populate" the islands.[59] Although, with cattle mortality rates as high as fifty percent during the transit, this project was costly.[60]

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[55] Ibid.

[56] See the letter written by Jean Marchand on the ship Vierge de Grace discussing getting slaves from Madagascar to grow manioc, 1733, "COL C/5A/1."

[57] For example, see French orders in 1736, for ships to visit Madagascar for cattle, other livestock, and slaves, "COL C/2/27."

[58] Desforges Boucher, letter noting the arrival of the Ruby, 1723, "COL C/3/3-4."

[59] Lenoir, letter, 1726, "COL C/4/1." In 1734, the company decided they needed 600 cows and bulls to be purchased for Île de France: orders given to Bourdonnais, 11 December 1734, "COL C/4/2."

[60] For examples, see the trading expedition of 1755 to Île Sainte Marie: Bouvet, 8 February 1755, "COL C/4/9." On French failures, see the report of the EIC ship the Harrington in 1736, who observed a French ship which had trouble finding Fort Dauphin, the traders arrived starving and many of their men dead. The ship journal of the Harrington, 1736, "IOR/L/MAR/B/654 B."

These voyages provided support that would satisfy the needs of the colonists in most years, but were not sufficient when natural disasters ruined crops on the island. In 1730, following a particularly violent cyclone, many homes and buildings were destroyed on the islands. In 1733, mice and rats consumed many of the remaining crops.[61] With little food available, the governors sent several additional ships to eastern Madagascar.[62] Following this crisis, the governors decided to develop a colony on Île Marotte in Antongil Bay, which was quickly abandoned (see Chapter 4). The leaders of the islands tried repeatedly to establish colonies in Madagascar in an effort to secure food and labor for the Mascarenes.[63] Perhaps due to these attempts, the French faced more hostility from leaders in eastern Madagascar as the eighteenth century progressed.[64]

Exporting War

By 1744, the EIC relied upon India for imports of cloth and spices but faced competition from the French for the domination of this commerce.[65] The French embarked an ambitious plan to conquer the Carnatic coast of India. The conflict resulted in the First Carnatic War, with official fighting beginning in 1744. In subsequent years, the British and French fought the Second Carnatic War from 1748-1754, and a third in 1756-1763 (also known as the Seven Year's War). Even after their defeat, the French continued to supply the Indian Maratha Empire with firearms and military training. The

[61] Memoir, n.d., "COL F/3/1." In 1737, the crops again failed due to a hurricane and the French sent ships to Madagascar for food and slaves: De la Bourdonnais, letter, 1 December 1737, "COL C/4/2."

[62] Deliberations of the Compagnie des Indes, 4 March 1733, "COL C/3/7"; letter, 7 February 1731, "COL F/3/46-48."

[63] For more details on this colony, see Chapter 4.

[64] Leading to disagreements with Malagasy in Antongil Bay: De la Bourdonnais, letter, 1739, "COL C/4/3."

[65] On the English East India Company, see Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600-1800* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976).

French attempted to assist them in their battle against the British in the three Anglo-Maratha wars, fought between 1774 and 1818.[66]

As a result, the British and French remained involved in military engagements in India for over half a century. In return for supplies from Madagascar, the British provided the Sakalava Empire with a constant infusion of firearms and other foreign imports. In 1744, about ten British warships joined the usual "India ships" of the EIC visiting St. Augustine's Bay.[67] The British officer described the "melancholy condition of the ship's company," with 110 men sick, "most of which were dangerously ill." [68] The men went ashore where they recovered by sleeping in tents and eating "[every] sort of food or fruits that could be proper for their different disorders." [69] British commanders found plentiful beef and water in the bay, after sending the usual present to King Baba in Tulear.[70] The ships set sail with only a little salted meat, rice, and callavances (a type of bean) because, according to the commander, they had not spent enough time to wait for the traders to bring the food items to St. Augustine's Bay. He mentioned that, if they had had more salt, he could have purchased many more cattle from King Baba.[71]

The French also turned to Madagascar for supplies of food and labor during the wars. As early as 1746, the French government at Île de France and Bourbon sent

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[66] On the details of the Anglo-Maratha conflict and the French role in these wars, see the following works: Anil Athale, *Struggle for Empire: Anglo-Maratha Wars - 1679-1818* (New Delhi: Reliance Publishing House, 2001); Stewart Gordon, *The Marathas: 1600-1818* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Aniruddha Ray, *Trade, Politics, and Plunder: the Marathas at Cambay, c. AD 1725-1825* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2006); S. P. Sen, *The French in India: 1763-1816* (New Delhi: Munishiram Manoharlal, 1971).

[67] Curtis Barnett, letter, 9 October 1744, *Admiralty Letters*, "ADM 1/160," National Archives, Kew, UK (henceforth ADM).

[68] The captains also tried to hire any "lascars, Portuguese, Dutch, or any sort of people we think can be of service to us." The British may have hired or bought Malagasy from St. Augustine's Bay to work as sailors or soldiers. Griffin, 23 October 1746, "ADM 1/160."

[69] Curtis Barnett, letter, 9 October 1744, "ADM 1/160."

[70] Ibid.; the ship journal of the Pearl, 1745, "ADM 51/723."

[71] Curtis Barnett, letter, 9 October 1744, "ADM 1/160."

multiple ships to Madagascar in search of cattle and other animals to supplement supplies for the warships.[72] The French bought hundreds of cattle, including 470 cattle in one year from Foulpointe alone.[73] In 1749, a French ship bought 400 cattle at Fort Dauphin but lost all but 180 of them on the voyage back to the Mascarenes.[74] The importation of food, especially cattle, was necessary to restore the supplies of the islands after the annual visits of the French fleets and their "*grande consommation*."[75] Each warship consumed an estimated fifteen cattle each during their stay. Visits of eight or ten ships would require 120-150 cattle a year.[76] The French turned to tortoise meat to feed their soldiers and sailors. They sent ships to the nearby island of Diego Rodrigues (present-day Rodrigues), where sailors would capture hundreds of tortoises.[77]

The French probably profited a great deal from exports of coffee and other exotic commodities and hoped to purchase food in Madagascar with the proceeds.[78] Their plans would have succeeded, except supplies from Madagascar were not forthcoming. Even if the French could purchase the necessary food from the island, they constantly worried about the threat of an English invasion of their islands.[79] French fears of British attacks near Madagascar were not unwarranted, as the British did contemplate invading

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[72] Albert, letter, October 1747, "COL C/2/33"; the ship journal of the Anglesea, 1748, "MAR 4 JJ/77"; the ship journal of the Argonaut, Brilland, Lis and Leside, 1736, "MAR 4 JJ/102."

[73] David, December 1747, letter, "COL C/4/5." Note that this trade occurred after the conclusion of the alliance between the Sakalava and the Betsimisaraka of Foulpointe, who sold slaves to the Sakalava in return for cattle. These cattle therefore may have come from the Sakalava.

[74] David, 28 February 1749, letter, "COL C/4/6."

[75] Described at length in various letters written by David in 1749-50, in Ibid.

[76] Ibid. Additionally, the French bought 320 cattle from Fort Dauphin in 1757, in the midst of a drought in southern Madagascar: Magon, 14 December 1757, journal, "COL C/4/10."

[77] For example, see Poivre, letter, 1767, "COL C/4/18."

[78] David, letter, 28 February 1749, "COL C/4/6."

[79] Tortoises on the shores of Madagascar also faced increased hunting, especially during the eighteenth century. The consumption of tortoise meat probably forced several species of tortoises into extinction.

Mauritius and conducted surveillance on the French forces on the islands.[80] Fear of the British also likely discouraged the French from purchasing food from the west coast of Madagascar.

In an effort to secure more supplies for passing warships, the French decided to establish a colony off Madagascar in 1750.[81] The French signed a treaty with the east coast ruler of Foulpointe, Princess Bety.[82] The self-declared sovereign of Île Sainte Marie, the queen and the other *grands* (chiefs) from the east coast agreed to give the French possession of the island in "perpetuity."[83] The colony lasted only a few years. A few months after a small contingent of soldiers had arrived, a trading ship passed by the island. The captain of this ship discovered that the people of Île Sainte Marie had massacred a French colonial officer, Gosse, for reportedly mistreating the Malagasy. The French placed more soldiers on the island, but moved the establishment to a small island off Île Sainte Marie, Île Caye. On this island, the settlers struggled to trade for provisions and the colony was disbanded by 1754. Many of the Malagasy fled from the island to the mainland in fear of French reprisals, further disrupting communities on the east coast.[84]

By 1754, the French had failed to create a lasting trading settlement on Île Sainte Marie but they had succeeded in creating considerable unrest on the east coast. For the first time, the French found the communities along the coast without rice or cattle for

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[80] Edward Boscawen, letter, 17 October 1748, "ADM 1/160." See also: the ship journal of the Ruby, 1751, "ADM 52/696." An expedition to gather intelligence about the islands was discussed by the English in 1761: Cornish, letter, 6 December, 1761, "ADM 1/162." On the surveillance, see George Pocock, reports on French ships, 1757-9, "ADM 1/161"; Robert Harland, 26 December 1769, "ADM 1/163." Other valuable information could be obtained from passing Portuguese ships and questioning locals. For instance, see the ship journal of the Haeslingfield, 1739, "IOR/L/MAR/B/642 B.".

[81] David, orders, 1750, "COL C/4/6." See also: Vignol, "project of the establishment in Madagascar," 1749, in "COL C/5A/1."

[82] Probably the sister of Ratsimilahoe, founder of the Betsimisaraka confederation.

[83] The treaty is copied in 1750, COL C/5a/1.

[84] Detailed by Legentil, memoir, 1761, in *Fonds ministériels, Dépôt fortifications colonial, Sainte Marie de Madagascar*, "XVII/memoires/88," Centre des Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, France.

sale. Intermittent war, probably caused by a lack of food along the east coast of Madagascar, interrupted trade, as did several droughts and the spread of a virulent epidemic. [85] By the outbreak of the third Carnatic War in 1756, the French worried seriously about food shortages affecting their populations and sent ships to western Madagascar and even East Africa in search of supplies.[86] The governors also began sending vessels to the Cape of Good Hope to buy food from the Dutch.[87] They begged merchant ships to bring rice to the islands from the French colonies in Indonesia.[88]

French commanders continued to visit eastern Madagascar, but the prices for goods had increased dramatically.[89] French ships contracted debts the company could not pay at Foulpointe, effectively halting trade there even further.[90] Without an influx of piastres, the islands could not pay off their debts to the Malagasy nor procure new supplies.[91] In the words of French merchants, the trade of eastern Madagascar was "ruined."[92] The final indication of their problems was the pleas of the governors for the colonists to begin growing food, not coffee and other exports, during the 1760s.[93]

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[85] Magon, journal, 6 October 1757, "COL C/4/10." The community of Foulpointe, a major trading partner for the French, came under attack from their neighbors, the "Betalimenes," who pillaged the port in 1754. Letter from Île de France, 20 January 1753, "COL C/4/153."

[86] Desforges Boucher, 6 March 1760, "COL C/4/12."

[87] Desforges Boucher, journal, 31 December 1759, "COL C/4/12."

[88]Desforges Boucher, letter, 18 January 1762, "COL C/4/14."

[89] D'Ache, letter to Magon, written off the coast of Madagascar, 31 July 1759, "COL C/4/11." See also Dull, *The French Navy*, 117-141. David, letter discussing trade in Madagascar, 1750, "COL C/2/35-36"; Brenier, letter, 19 October 1755, "COL C/3/11." On the piastre trade, see Chapter 4.

[90] Magon, journal, 12 December 1756, "COL C/4/9."

[91] Memoir on the commerce of the Indies, around 1766, "COL C/4/16"; memoir on the financial difficulties on the islands, 1767, "COL C/4/19." The governors of the Mascarene Islands later came under investigation for their expenditure of large amounts of silver during the last few years of the war.

[92] See problems getting food in 1761: Desforges Boucher, letter, 1 December 1761, "COL C/4/13." The visits of French ships to Madagascar are detailed in the ship journals of the Bertin, Valliant, and Compte D'Artois, 1761-2, all in "MAR 4 JJ/80"; the ship journal of the Comte de Provence, 1763, "MAR 4 JJ/81." On further disruptions at Foulpointe: The ship journals of the Comte d'Argenson, 1765, "MAR 4 JJ/92." On the trade being ruined: Poivre, letter, 15 January 1768, "COL C/4/22."

[93] Poivre, letter, 30 November 1767, "COL C/4/18."

In 1768, the French again decided to found a settlement on Madagascar, this time at Fort Dauphin, the location of an earlier French colony.[94] After some debate, the company officials decided that a colonial administrator who had experience in India, Comte Dolisie de Maudave (or Modave), would lead it.[95] After remaining in Fort Dauphin for roughly two years, he failed to create a prosperous settlement in the region. Modave and his troops were constantly embroiled in local political disputes and had trouble gaining food supplies.[96] Modave pleaded for greater investment from the French, in terms of soldiers and trading supplies, but was forced to return to Europe from where he continued his pleas through 1770.[97]

In the midst of French failures in Madagascar, British ships continued to visit St. Augustine's Bay.[98] British successes in purchasing supplies in Madagascar can be contrasted with French difficulties on the east coast of the island. A lack of sea support for French troops in India, caused in part by the lack of food in the Mascarenes, damaged French military operations. In 1758, the French navy, under the command of the French admiral D'Ache, sailed from the Indian coast to provision their ships at the Mascarenes. Upon arriving at Île de France, the admiral discovered that the islands were suffering from a "dire shortage of supplies."[99] He sent most of his fleet to the Cape for supplies and

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[94] On the Fort Dauphin colony, see chapter 1.

[95] Dumas, letter, 26 July 1768, "COL C/4/20"; Dumas and Poivre, correspondance about the necessity for a colony in Madagascar, 17 March and 3 June 1768, "COL C/5A/2."

[96] Modave's journal from 1768 is copied in "COL C/5a/2."

[97] Modave, letter written asking for reinvestment in a Fort Dauphin French colony, 28 August 1770, "COL C/5a/3."

[98] Cornish, letter, 19 December 1759, "ADM 1/162"; see also the records of EIC merchant ships visiting Madagascar and successfully obtaining food during this period: the ship journal of the Royal Duke, 1756, "IOR/L/MAR/B/614 A-D"; the ship journal of the London, 1767, "IOR/L/MAR/B/1E." Despite British successes, the French complained in 1759 they could not get any rice in St. Augustine's Bay: Desforges Boucher, journal, 28 November 1759, "COL C/4/12."

[99] Dull, *The French Navy*, 141.

sailed to India with a smaller contingent of sailors and soldiers.[100] The admiral had left French land forces unprotected and, in the absence of naval support, they were forced to retreat.[101] A year later, D'Ache returned to the Mascarenes for supplies but, in January 1760, a cyclone hit the islands and crippled the fleet at anchor there. D'Ache remained in the Mascarenes to protect the islands against British invasion. Without the benefit of naval protection, the French forces in India lost a major battle in 1760 and surrendered their control of major ports in India during the next year.[102]

The Aftermath

After the wars ended, the British and French began to take more interest in controlling the southwestern Indian Ocean, including Madagascar. Their wartime experiences convinced governments of the value in dominating trade from Madagascar, as well as the shores along the southwestern Indian Ocean. Both the British and French maintained large contingents of soldiers and sailors in the ocean, even after the war ended.[103] The British fought with the Marathas for the next few decades and these battles required the continued dispatches of British ships into the ocean.[104] The French also continued to send trading ships to Madagascar.[105] The French, however, experienced

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[100] This was despite imports of cattle numbering upwards of 500 a year from Madagascar. David, letter, 21 October 1768, "COL C/4/5"; David, letter, 28 February 1749, "COL C/4/6." D'Ache has been described as "overly cautious." Dull, *The French Navy*, 141.

[101] Mahan, *The influence of sea power*, 273-4.

[102] Dull, *The French Navy*, 170-3. The Seven Years' War essentially ended in the Indian Ocean by 1761.

[103] Examples of French plans for the Indies: Montigny, letter, 30 June 1782, "COL C/2/166-167"; Soulliac, letter, 8 July 1785, "COL C/2/169."

[104] On famine in India: Harland, letter, 9 October 1771, "ADM 1/163." The admiral describes the people of the bay: "The inhabitants seldom remain long in a place but move about and when they come to a spot where they chose to remain, build themselves small huts with the branches of trees, it cannot therefore in the circumstances, be supposed that the sick had anything more than tents for their reception which were erected for that purpose." Harland, letter, 9 January 1773, Ibid.

[105] See the French "essay sur le commerce de l'Inde," 1770?, "COL C/2/107."

severe financial difficulties during this period. Attempting to slow the flow of silver to Madagascar, the French government outlawed the slave trade from Madagascar for a few years during the 1770s.[106] Instead, more ships went to East Africa and the west coast of Madagascar, where guns were still used to trade for slaves, particularly after an outbreak of the "petite verolle," (*vérole* or small pox) in 1771 damaged slave populations. [107]

The French formed another colony on the shores of Madagascar in 1774. The establishment, according to one leader, "appears absolutely necessary to procure for Île de France the help of which it needs."[108] This last attempt to colonize Madagascar during the eighteenth century failed more disastrously than previous ones. The French hoped that a Hungarian "adventurer," Benyowsky, would set up a trading establishment in Antongil Bay. Benyowksy adopted the title of "Ampanscabe" [Mpanjaka-be, literally, big king] and attempted to conquer portions of the island. His colony disrupted commerce and antagonized Malagasy communities. He lost many of his men to disease and warfare.[109] He begged the island governors for more men and firearms, but they refused.[110] In an effort to raise more money for the colony, Benyowsky tried to start an

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[106] On the continuation of the illegal trade, see Desroches, letter, 16 September 1770, "COL C/4/26."

[107]Cremont, letter, 3 July 1771, "COL C/3/13"; de Ternay, letter, 23 February 1773, "COL C/4/33." Food supplies were dwindling in Madagascar and the French suddenly realized that the same cyclones that hit their island, also struck Madagascar. Maillart Dumesle, letter, 17 October 1773, "COL C/4/34." Ships were dispatched to the Cape but food proved to be too expensive from there as well. Percheron, letter, 7 February 1775, "COL C/5B/1"; Provost de la Croix, letter, 16 March 1775, "MAR B/3/618," f. 214.

[108] De Boyner, letter to Benyowsky, 19 March 1773, "M 1031." On English information about Benyowsky: J. Clavering, report, 18 July 1774, "IOR/H/116," India Office Records, Home Miscellaneous, British Library, f. 201-2.

[109] See Benyowsky's own account of his time in Madagascar in Maurice-Auguste Benyowsky, *Voyages et Memoirs de Maurice-Auguste, Comte de Benyowsky*, 2 vols. (Paris: F. Buisson, 1791), 2: 211-472. See the English report on his progress, or lack thereof: Harland, diary, 1774, "ADM 1/163."

[110] See various correspondences in COL C/5A/5."

export business and sent slave ships from Madagascar to the Cape, but he got into trouble with the Mascarene governors.[111]

When Benyowsky's colony failed in 1779, the governors agreed to leave a few traders in Foulpointe for organizing annual shipments from the port.[112] In 1792, the French government created a "commissaire civile" to operate at Foulpointe to trade with the chiefs in the surrounding province.[113] There were also a few French traders based at Île Sainte Marie and Fort Dauphin for overseeing trade at these ports.[114] The government at Île de France in 1777 pursued plans for procuring slaves from East Africa and one trader concluded a treaty with the Sultan of Kilwa.[115] Despite these plans, the French government turned again to Madagascar, believing control of the island would make them "the masters of commerce in the Indies."[116] The prices of food on the islands continued to increase and inhabitants dealt with recurring food shortages and crises as they had difficulty purchasing food in Madagascar.[117]

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[111] On sending voyages to the Cape: Benyowsky to the ministry, letter, 13 May 1776, "COL C/5A/6." On the slave exports in 1776, see the ship journal of the Étoile describing the arrival of the Belle Arture with slaves at the Cape, 1776, "MAR 4 JJ/144/D."

[112] ." On the 1777 proposal for a French trading chief at Foulpointe to procure rice and cattle, see Darele, proposal, 18 October 1777, "COL C/5A/9." See "COL C/5A/8," French Archives Nationales, Paris, 1777; De Sanglier, memoir, 6 December 1786, "COL C/5A/8."

[113]On the trading post in Foulpoint, see the records of Lescallier, commissaire civil, 1782, "MAD7/15."

[114] The Mascarene island colonists still required large supplies of slaves to grow coffee, sugarcane, and indigo, despite recurring problems with drought. See various memoirs, n.d "COL F/3/46-48."

[115] On this plan, see M. Morice, *Projet d'un establissment a la cote orientale d'Afrique, Rhodes House, MS.Afr. 6*, copy found in the Zanzibar National Archives, "BZ 2/1 1777"; for another copy of Morice's documents on the visit, see G. S. P. Freeman-Grenville, *The French at Kilwa Island; an episode in eighteenth-century East African history* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 63-218. He focuses explicitly on East African trade, as the trade with Madagascar is "well known." Ibid., 218.

[116] De le Serre?, memoir on trade in the Indies, 1785?, "COL C/2/113-114." For a similar view, see the late eighteenth-century document on Madagascar's role in trade, "sous la république" in "MAD150/207."

[117] Machant, letter, 26 February 1807, "COL C/3/26."

The British were aware of French difficulties in Madagascar.[118] The real problem was not the execution of French plans, but rather the lack of availability of food from eastern Madagascar. The British and French continued to struggle with each other during the Napoleonic Wars of the early nineteenth century. During these wars, the French attacked British vessels within the Indian Ocean and the British, in turn, blockaded French ports.[119] In 1810, the British sent an expedition to seize Île de France. British control over the island was formalized in the Treaty of Paris in 1814. After this date, the British took advantage of French weaknesses and increased their commercial influence in eastern Madagascar.

The Merina Empire increasingly controlled trade and land on the east coast of the island. The Merina, allied with the British, were the first real rivals to Sakalava dominance over trade in Madagascar. British assisted the Merina against the Sakalava and the French found themselves closely allied with the Sakalava, in a reversal of the relationships of the eighteenth-century. The next chapter continues the story of the Sakalava, during a period of decline. The leaders of the Sakalava Empire turned to the Comoro islands and East Africa in an effort to continue their military and commercial expansion. When the Sakalava began importing slaves into Madagascar, they came under attack by the British, who sought to stabilize trade within the Indian Ocean.

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[118] Colpoy, report of the lieutenant of the Dolphin, 1772, "ADM 1/163." The French *compagnie des indes*, always in dire financial straits, faced problems of supply, financing, and bankruptcy, in part thanks to British blockading of French ports. On the financial and administrative problems of the compagnie des indes, see Sen, *The French in India,* 37-50.

[119] Jones, *The Art of War*, 377.

Chapter 6

Sakalava "Pirates"

As early as the sixteenth century, merchants in northwestern Madagascar sold slaves, food, and luxury items to passing dhows in return for precious metals, guns, and cloth. Europeans were largely ignorant of these exchanges prior to the nineteenth century, when they began to note the bustling trade between the Antaloatra and Swahili, Indian, and Arab merchants, particularly in slaves.[1] Europeans were also struck by the scope of the slave trade within the Indian Ocean during the nineteenth century. One British abolitionist stated that he was "utterly astounded to learn that a traffic I supposed entirely restricted to the coast of Africa and the new world, was in much more active progress between East Africa and the northern shores of the Indian Ocean."[2] Europeans concluded that this trade had been around for centuries, based upon a "small but constant" trickle of slaves from northwest Madagascar.[3] It seems more likely that this trade underwent a revolution during the nineteenth century, when it increased in scope and magnitude dramatically.[4]

Economic ties between Madagascar and the rest of the southwest Indian Ocean fluctuated over the centuries in response to external and internal political changes.

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[1] The Portuguese archives may contain descriptions of this trade between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Various historians have begun to explore the chronology of this trade, although few trace the shift from the late sixteenth century Portuguese-observed trade to the relatively abundant observations of the nineteenth century. For instance, Campbell entitled a chapter on trade patterns, "The Traditional Economy, 1750-1820," in Gwyn Campbell, *An Economic History of Imperial Madagascar 1750-1895: the Rise and Fall of an Island Empire* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 18.

[2] Philip H. Colomb, *Slave-Catching in the Indian Ocean: A Record of Naval Experiences* (originally published in 1873; London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1968,), 21-2.

[3] "Report addressed to the Earl of Clarendon by the Committee on the East African Slave Trade", January 24, 1870, in "BL 1/1 - State Papers Relating to East Africa, 1857-1874, Volume 1," Zanzibar National Archives, f. 6 (henceforth ZNA).

[4] This growth was a result of increasing slave trading across the Mozambique Channel. See Nancy Jane Hafkin, "Trade, Society, and Politics in Northern Mozambique, c. 1753-1913" (PhD diss., Boston University, 1973).

Following the conquest of the northwest coast during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Sakalava rulers established a system of overseeing and profiting from the trade.[5] The nineteenth century brought competing imperial powers to the coast. Sakalava leaders attempted to present themselves as the "traditional" leaders of the northwest and exert their power, via the slave trade, across the southwestern Indian Ocean region. A land-based empire started to become an oceanic one, through similar mechanisms that powered the expansion of Sakalava influence across Madagascar prior to 1800.[6] The Sakalava acquired commercial allies within the Indian Ocean but violence accompanied this commercial expansion.

Due to heightened demands for resources in Madagascar by the late eighteenth century, Sakalava leaders turned to the ocean in search of new sources. Slaves were particularly sought after by the French in the Mascarenes and the Portuguese for the Americas, as well as within Madagascar for use by the Merina and Sakalava.[7] During the nineteenth century, British, French, Omani, and Sakalava leaders pursued plans of imperial expansion across the ocean, plans that included forceful interventions into local politics and exchange networks. The British took control of portions of the Indian subcontinent as well as Mauritius and the Cape of Good Hope. The French formed their

[5] For details, see Chapters 2 and 4.

[6] These mechanisms include intermarriage with conquered peoples, as well as the fati-dra ceremony. Sakalava commercial influence followed military intervention in the Indian Ocean, as it had within Madagascar. For details, see Chapter 4.

[7] Pomeranz argues for the importance of raw materials for economic development during this period, see Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: Europe, China, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

The highland state was named the Merina kingdom under the rule of Andrianampoinimerina, who first led the kingdom in 1795. When the state is described prior to this date, it will be called the Hova state. On details of this terminology, see Solofo Randrianja and Stephen Ellis, *Madagascar: A Short History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 112.

first lasting colonies on the islands on Madagascar. The Omani sultan moved the center of his empire to Zanzibar.

The Sakalava also tried to develop new connections within the southwestern Indian Ocean. Beginning in 1790, warriors from the coasts of Madagascar attacked coastal communities in the southwestern Indian Ocean region, particularly the Comoro Islands and East Africa. Even though these attacks were probably not under the direct command of Sakalava monarchs, the raids were similar to those conducted by the Sakalava decades earlier across northern and eastern Madagascar. Sakalava leaders intervened militarily in the region to make themselves more economically and politically influential. In East Africa and the Comoros, the Sakalava used violence to enforce trading agreements and to assist trading allies. Following these attacks, the west coast of Madagascar became an important transshipment point for commodities from East Africa to the Middle East. In response to political shifts in the region, the Sakalava Empire established stronger ties with the Islamic world, particularly East Africa.

These attacks became associated with the Sakalava by the 1820s.[8] The British used the attacks and the resulting upheaval in the region as arguments for the abolition of the slave trade in the Indian Ocean.[9] Despite British perceptions, various descriptions by Portuguese, French, English, and Comorian observers make clear that Sakalava leaders

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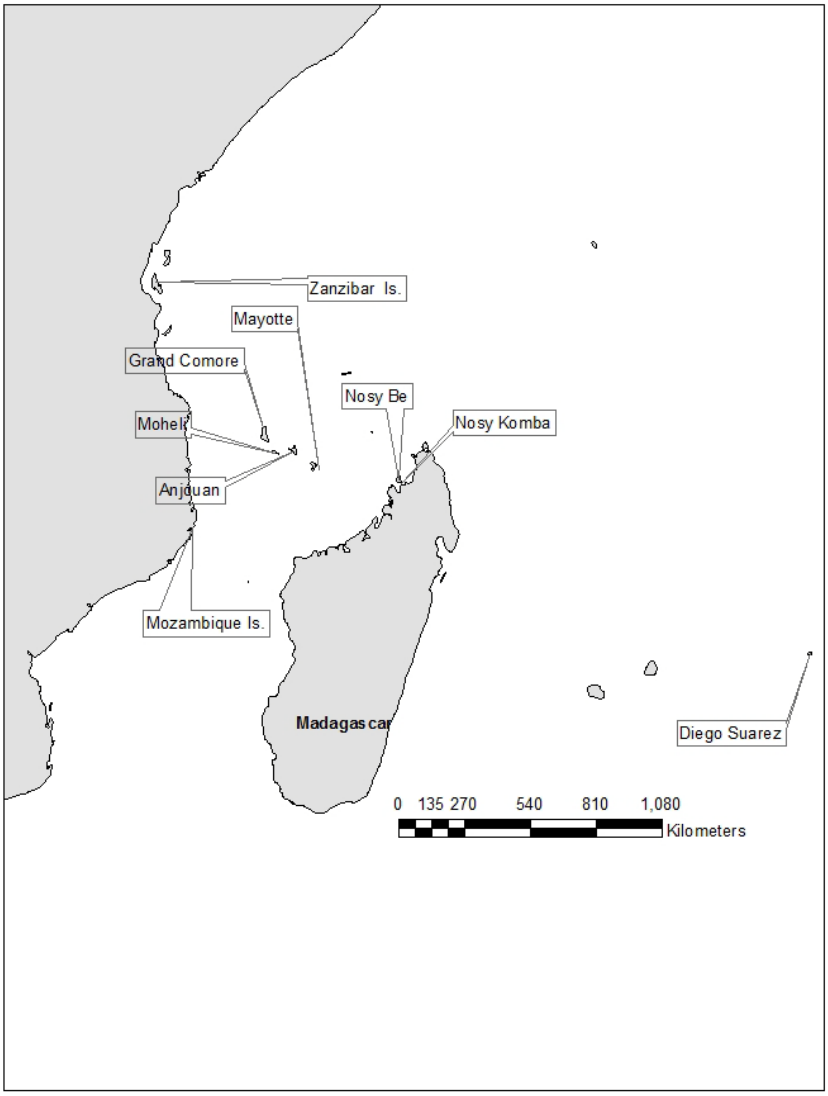
[8] Henry Salt, a British traveler, states that he learned from Arab traders about "a nation of pirates on the north-east point of Madagascar, called by the Portuguese Sekelaves, but whose real name I have season to believe is Marati, which for many years back has been known to infest the Comoro Islands." In the footnote, Salt clarifies: "this I learned subsequently from the Arabian traders. The Sekelaves, I was informed by Captain Fisher and others who visited that part of the island, are subjects of the Queen of Pembetoc, residing on the north-western side of Madagascar." Henry Salt, *A voyage to Abyssinia, and Travels into the Interior of that Country, Executed under the Orders of the British Government in the Years 1809 and 1810* (originally published 1816; London: Cass, 1967), 76.

[9] Despite the identification as the pirates by the English, most scholars now allow for some ambiguity in the identities. For instance: Gwyn Campbell, "The Structure of Trade in Madagascar, 1750-1810," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 26, no. 1 (1993): 14; Jean Martin, *Comores: quatre îles entre pirates et planteurs*, 2 vols. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1983).

were not responsible for the attacks. In fact, the Sakalava queen of Boina had warned the Portuguese against at least one of the raids.[10] European comments on Sakalava violence, particularly British comments, probably did not accurately depict the frequency with which Sakalava aggressively pursued their commercial goals.

During the nineteenth century, following the cessation of the attacks, the Sakalava became involved in a precarious struggle. They tried to maintain their control over commerce from the western Madagascar region in the face of encroaching imperial states. The turn of the century marked the start of the decline of the Sakalava Empire within Madagascar but it also marked a period of expanding Sakalava commercial influence in the Indian Ocean. Sakalava-controlled ports became centers for the shipment of slaves in the ocean from Mozambique to Zanzibar and the northern Indian Ocean. Unfortunately, for Sakalava leaders, this new slave trade conflicted with British attempts to abolish the slave trade in the Indian Ocean. As Sakalava leaders came into frequent conflict with British, Merina, and French rivals, the Sakalava Empire crumbled.

[10] Edward Alpers, "Madagascar and Mozambique in the Nineteenth Century: the Era of the Sakalava Raids (1800-1820)," *Omaly sy anio* 5-6 (1977): 49.



Map 6: Madagascar, the Comoro Islands, and East Africa

Sakalava "Pirates"?

Around 1790, armed warriors began attacking the people of the Comoro Islands and Mozambique. These violent attacks destabilized communities in both regions over the next thirty years. The warriors arrived in large canoes known as *lakana* or *laka*, likely fitted with outriggers and a sail.[11] The canoes used in the raids were quite large and held up to sixty men.[12] The organization and scale of these attacks shocked European observers. A British naval commander found these incursions "very remarkable" from a "nation of savages," as he assumed that they were ignorant of military techniques and lacked navigational knowledge. That the warriors could assemble such large fleets, according to the European, was "so strange an event in modern history as scarcely to be believed." He stated that the British navy should be mortified that they were "even then excelled, in numbers at least by African savages!"[13]

The motivations and identities of the attackers have remained uncertain, despite the existence of several sources, both European and Comorian, describing the attacks.[14] Portuguese colonial rulers struggled to repulse the canoe raiders from Mozambique.

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[11] Alpers has cited descriptions of the canoes as "laka" in Portuguese sources, although they are also called lakana. Edward Alpers, "Madagascar and Mozambique," 42. Martin implies that they were *lakan*-drafitra, or canoes made of boards found primarily in southern Madagascar. Martin, *Comores*, 89. For recent description of their construction in western Madagascar, see Rita Astuti, *People of the Sea: Identity and Descent among the Vezo of Madagascar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 18-22. The use of outrigger canoes has been traced to Indonesia and East Africa. For linkages between the outriggers of Madagascar and those of East Africa and Indonesia, see James Hornell, "The Common Origin of the Outrigger Canoes of Madagascar and East Africa," *Man* 20 (1920): 134-9. In western Madagascar, Malagasy built canoes with a single or double outrigger.

[12] They could be as large as 10 by 1.2 meters. Gwyn Campbell, *An Economic History*, 38. Scholars have speculated that these canoes had been used on the east coast of Madagascar in whale hunting. Gevrey refers to them as *pirogues*, or canoes, and likens them to those of eastern Madagascar. Alfred Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores* (Pondichery: A. Saligny, 1870), 106, 212.

[13] James Prior, *Voyage along the Eastern Coast of Africa, to Mosambique, Johanna, and Quiloa; to St. Helena; to Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, and Pernambuco in Brazil, in the Nisus Frigate* (London: Sir Richard Phillips and Co, 1819), 58-60.

[14] The Portuguese sources are summarized by Alpers, "Madagascar and Mozambique." The other sources are Gevrey, *Essai sur les comores* and Said Bakari Bin Sultani Ahmed, *The Swahili Chronicle of Ngazija*, ed. Lyndon Harries (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 1977).

Comorian islanders also fought multiple battles against the invaders. Their records have provided descriptions of the range of the attacks but less information about the raiders themselves. They appeared to have acted without a coordinated purpose or goal in mind. Likewise, the writers did not describe them as Sakalava or Betsimisarka. Sources referred to them as "Malagasy" or, in Comorian sources, the "Wabuki," a term in use since the sixteenth century to describe the non-Muslim (not Antaloatra) people inhabiting Madagascar.[15]

The raiders initially targeted communities in the Comoro archipelago, which consists of four islands: Grande Comore (Ngazidja), Anjouan (Ndzwani), Mohéli (Mwali), and Mayotte (Maore). Their first recorded attacks were against populations in the Grande Comore in 1792 but the raiders also targeted the other islands.[16] There has been no credible explanation for the start of the raids, although commercial, political, and religious connections between Madagascar and the Comoro Islands had been existence for centuries. Leaders on the Comoro Islands regularly sent ships to purchase slaves and food on the shores of Madagascar.[17] Comorians and Malagasy frequently moved within this area, migrating and maintaining familial ties throughout the region.[18]

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[15] Ahmed, *The Swahili Chronicle*, 22. On Buki as a term for non-Muslim Malagasy, see a description by Ramusio of Madagascar in 1550 in which he states that the Arabs and Swahili called the Malagasy "Bouki," COACM, 1: 99. Buki does not seem to be a Malagasy word but rather the Swahili term for Madagascar. Interestingly, one Swahili dictionary defines Malagasy as *Mbuki* and an inhabitant of the western coast of Madagascar as *Msakalawa*. See *The Kamusi Project*, an online "living Swahili dictionary,"
http://kamusiproject.org <accessed 2 March 2010>.

[16] Martin, *Comores*, 1: 101-3.

[17] On Comorian dhows, see Captain Stanes, "A Journal of a voyage to Muscat and Surrat," 1703, "Add. 24931," ff. 96; a slightly different copy of the account by Stanes can be found in "Sloane Ms. 3145."

[18] Pre-sixteenth century Arabic documents frequently refer to the land of this part of the indian Ocean as "al Qumr," of the moon, used interchangeably for the Comoro islands, Madagascar, and even East African islands. See Ahmad ibn Majid al-Najdi, *Arab navigation in the Indian Ocean before the coming of the Portuguese* G. R. Tibbetts, ed. (London: Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1972), 433-5.

In addition, the leaders of the Comoro Islands, much like the Swahili and Antaloatra, were proud of their links to communities living on the shores of the Indian Ocean. For instance, in 1612, the king of Mohéli told Europeans that he recently had visited Mecca on pilgrimage. He and other Comorian rulers traced their ancestry to the Middle East. [19] They also maintained connections with leaders in the region. In 1703, a British captain visited Anjouan and described the frequency with which ships from Mukha, Surat, Ormuz, and Muscat visited the island. Before leaving, the sultan of Anjouan gave the captain a "letter of recommendation to Bona Sultan Zoff the Arabian king at Muscat" to carry on his voyage to the northern Indian Ocean.[20]

For several centuries, communities on the Comoro Islands relied upon imports of food and slaves from Madagascar, selling these imports to both European and non-European ships during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[21] Populations in the Comoros were relatively small and leaders on the islands likely imported slaves from Madagascar for resale to slave traders. As late as 1794, the French still bought slaves for their Indian Ocean possessions from merchants in Anjouan.[22] The supplies of slaves coming from northwestern Madagascar probably became more limited during the late

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[19] Richard Cocks, letter to the Right Worshipful Sir Thomas Smith, Knight, Governor of the East India Company, 12 January 1612, in *Letters Received by the East India Company*, ed. Frederick Charles Danvers (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1896), 1: 215; "Relâche de John Saris à L'île de Moheli", 1611, COACM, 1: 480.

[20] Stanes, "A Journal of a voyage to Muscat and Surrat," ff. 114.

[21] Remarks on the principal bays and harbors of île Dauphine, 1670 , "COL C/5A/1"; the ship journal of the Lion, 1615, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XVIII"; the ship journal of the Hart, 1627, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XLIX"; the ship journal of the Hector, 1614, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XX"; the ship journal of the Hopewell, 1628, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XLVI." Food like rice and meat was also sold to non-European traders: see records of visits to the Comoros, COACM, 2: 361; the ship journal of the Discovery, 1626, "IOR/L/MAR/A/XLIII" and "IOR/L/MAR/A/XLIV. Two useful collections of European sources concerning the Comoros: Anne Molet-Sauvaget, ed. *Documents anciens sur les îles Comores: 1591-1810* (Paris: Institut des langues et civilisations orientales, 1994); Anne Molet-Sauvaget, ed. *Documents anciens sur les îles Comores: 1591-1800, Supplement / II* (Paris: Institut des langues et civilisations orientales, 1996).

[22] In this case, these slaves were intended for the Seychelles, which the French had just begun to settle. Letter, 1794, "COL C/4/146-147."

eighteenth century, as the Merina exported fewer slaves from the interior of Madagascar. As a result, the Sakalava and Comorians now had a shortage of slaves for use locally and for sale to visiting traders. In fact, Malagasy raiders attacking the islands might have been in search of slaves, or so speculated Europeans during the nineteenth century.[23]

Given the timing and specific actions of the raiders, however, it appears more likely that the attacks were prompted by political conflicts within the Comoro Islands. Muslim sultans governed the islands.[24] Throughout the early modern period, sultans on Anjouan repeatedly tried express their dominance over the other, more fertile, islands in the group.[25] In 1601, an Anjouani sultan claimed that he had ruled over the neighboring islands for centuries.[26] A century later, in 1704, a British captain met with a "governor" on Anjouan. During the meeting, the sultan described the Mohélians as his tributaries for the past four hundred years. He complained that he had not received tribute from them in years.[27] Constant power struggles strained relationships between Comorian leaders. In 1750, the captain of an English East India Company ship, the Warren, attempted to buy rice and cattle at Mohéli, and then Anjouan. He angered the leaders of both islands for trying to purchase food from both islands.[28]

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[23] Martin, *Comores*, 1: 86; Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 212-3.

[24] On the exercise of power in the Comoros, see Sultan Chouzour, *Le pouvoir de l'honneur: tradition et contestation en Grande Comore* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994). Robineau argues the raids were an extension of this practice: Claude Robineau, "L'Islam aux Comores: Une étude d'histoire culturelle de l'île d'Anjouan." in *Arabes et Islamisés à Madagascar et dans l'océan Indien* (Revue de Madagascar, distribué par Hachette-Madagascar, 1967), 49.

[25] On the production of the various islands, see Claude Chanudet and Jean-Aimé Rakotoarisoa, *Mohéli: une île des Comores à la recherche de son identité* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000).

[26] "Relâche aux îles comores et maurice de Jacques van Heemskerk (1601-1602)," COACM 1: 272; see also: "Relâche aux isles comores de l'Amiral G. Spilberg"(1601-2), ibid., 1: 319.

[27] Captain Stanes, "A Journal of a voyage to Muscat and Surrat," ff. 90, 113.

[28] The ship journal of the Warren, 1749, "IOR/L/MAR/B/571 A."

The English had developed a close relationship with the leaders of Anjouan. See letter, 1676, Letter book, "IOR/E/3/88," f. 199.

These conflicts were not just between island leaders. Just a few years prior to the raids, rebellions in Anjouan disrupted the trade within the region. The EIC ship the Walpole visited Anjouan in 1786. He reported that, "There was a great scarcity of bullocks and poultry owing to the country people having rebelled against the king."[29] These rebellions were indicative of struggles on the island, perhaps between the leaders who managed oceanic trade and the people who produced the crops for export.[30] These disputes may have represented an opportunity for rival leaders in the Comoros and they may have asked the Malagasy for assistance. Traditionally, sultans in the Comoros sent their soldiers in canoes to attack their enemies and this was the strategy used by the Malagasy raiders. This may not have even been the first time the Malagasy intervened on behalf of their Comorian trading partners.[31] Some historians have speculated that the raiders were mercenaries, hired by leaders in the Comoros, but the attacks got out of hand.[32]

[29] The ship journal of the Walpole, 1786, "IOR/L/MAR/B/293O."

[30] Martin describes them as disputes from peasants and slaves against their ruler in Domoni, on Anjouan. He describes the disputes as protests against taxes during the 1770s and 1780s. Martin, *Comores*, 53.

[31] In 1700, the kings of Comoro were at war with those of Anjouan and, again in 1715, French traders noted the constant wars among the islands: the ship journal of the Pearl, 1700, and the ship journal of the Deux Couronner, 1715, both in "MAR 4 JJ/111." A French traveler observed in 1713 that the king of Anjouan was at war that that of Mohéli: Jean de La Roque, *A Voyage to Arabia Felix*, trans. Dominique de Moulins and Carl Phillips (New York: The Oleander Press, 2004), 13-14. In 1713, the French also confirmed that the people of Anjouan at war with those of Mohéli and Mayotte: the ship journal of the Lis, "MAR 4 JJ/94." When a French ship visited Anjouan in 1736, the king of Mayotte was there, having been dethroned by his brother and asking the Anjouan king for assistance: the ship journal of the Appollon, 1736, "MAR 4 JJ/98." One French captain described the king of Anjouan as master of Mayotte, although he also says the people of Moheli fight against the Anjouan soldiers. The ship journal of the Penthiere, 1743, "MAR 4 JJ/116."

[32] Chiefly in Martin, *Comores*, 1: 85.

The Attacks

When the raids began during the 1790s, they targeted communities on Anjouan. There were few sources describing these attacks until a sultan on Anjouan attempted to draw the British into the conflict. In 1796, the eldest son of the sultan visited British officials in Bombay. He begged the British government to take control of the island and protect the islanders from Malagasy soldiers. The prince reminded the British of the long history of peaceful trade between British traders and the people of Anjouan. In return for granting the island to the British, the prince asked for a ship with several hundred guns and instruction on the use of these weapons.[33] The British, perhaps consumed with struggles elsewhere, ignored this plea for assistance.

The attacks then spread beyond Anjouan and into the neighboring islands. In 1797, a fleet of "Betsimisaraka" warriors attacked Mayotte, reportedly targeting a region inhabited by settlers from Anjouan. The raiders destroyed a village on the island the following year.[34] Several more attacks occurred during the first decades of the nineteenth century. It appears that the Malagasy attacked communities on both Anjouan and Grand Comore in 1802, and then Grand Comore in 1808, 1810, and 1814.[35] They may have raided the islands on other years as well. The warriors burnt the homes of the Comorians and stole their cattle and slaves. In the wake of these attacks, Comorians built defensive walls around their settlements, but many inhabitants also fled into the interior of the islands. They also travelled to other islands and even to the east coast of Africa to escape

[33] "Memo relative to the offer of the King of Baba to cede the Island of Johanna to the Company," 1796, Home Miscellaneous, India Office Records, "IOR/H/511," British Library, f. 1.

[34] *Chroniques mahoraises*, ed. Jean-François Gourlet (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001), 40-2; Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 210-1.

[35] Ahmed, *Swahili Chronicle*, 98; Martin, *Comores*, 1: 87.

the Malagasy raiders. Many villages in Mayotte and Anjouan were deserted after the first years of these attacks.[36]

According to one account, the raiders came from various locations throughout the island, but they met before sailing to the Comoros Islands together. The people described themselves as Betsimisaraka, Sakalava, Antankara, and Antavaratra (the latter two groups from the north).[37] The leader was a king known as *Fohiloha* and the warriors came in large canoes known as *lakandrafitra*.[38] Starting around October, the year being unspecified, different chiefs on the east coast of Madagascar gathered warriors. They each sent armed canoes of thirty to thirty-six men to the north. These canoes met more warriors at Vohémar and then rounded the northern end of Madagascar. They halted at Nosy Be on the northwest coast, an island over a hundred miles from Vohémar. The canoes from the east met many more warriors arriving from the west coast. The attacking force was reportedly comprised of four to five hundred canoes, carrying a total of 15,000 to 18,000 men.[39] This description does not provide further information about the destination of the warriors.

The chronicle of a leader on Grand Comore, Said Bakari bin Sultani Ahmed, provides an account of the conduct of the warriors when they arrived at the island. Said Bakari described the struggle against the Malagasy invaders as *Kupijana na Wabuki*. Around 1798, the Wabuki (Malagasy), arrived at Fumbani, a town on Grand Comore, but

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[36] Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 212-3.

[37] Martin, *Comores*, 1: 83. It seems likely that Antankara was ruled by Lamboine, a Sakalava ally and tributary, during the eighteenth century. See Chapter 4. The Antavaratra probably came from the northeast coast.

[38] Ibid, 89; Ahmed, *Swahili Chronicle*, 100. It has been suggested that an individual from eastern Madagascar, a celebrated warrior, was named Fohiloha. See G. S. Chapus and Andre Dandouau, *Manuel d'histoire de Madagascar* (Paris: Larose, 1961), 22.

[39] The details are derived from a description of M. Ep. Colin, *Annales des voyages*, tome 13, Malte-Brun and cited in Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 210-2.

Comorian soldiers repulsed the warriors. According to his account, the Malagasy attacked the town of Ikoni on the island on three separate occasions, in roughly 1808, 1810 and again in 1814.[40] The Comorians repeatedly repulsed the Malagasy attackers and forced them to flee.[41]

When the warriors arrived at the island, they would establish a base where they stayed for seven or eight months before returning to Madagascar.[42] From there, they undertook raids on nearby communities, stealing food and slaves, returning to Madagascar several months later with their spoils. During the final attack on Ikoni, the Malagasy developed a plan for their defense. The Malagasy built a stockade and a rock fortress, known as a *manda*, around their encampment.[43] They attacked the islanders, capturing and enslaving those who could not fight, and killing the others. In this final invasion, the Malagasy captured many elites, male and female, and demanded ransom for their release. Then the Malagasy returned to Madagascar in their canoes.[44]

As with the earliest attacks, these attacks provoked the leaders of the Comoros to seek outside assistance. In 1800, the sultan Abdulla of Anjouan asked the English for help in this "unjust war" with Madagascar.[45] Again, in 1807, he attempted to cede all four Comoro Islands to the British, but they dismissed his claim to the throne.[46] Despite the English dismissal of Comorian complaints, other European groups became drawn into

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[40] Ahmed, *Swahili Chronicle*, 5.

[41] The attackers were targeting the Sultan Ahmed of Grande Comore. The Comorians, according to the chronicle, were assisted by slaves the sultan had imported from East Africa and armed with guns. Ahmed, *Swahili Chronicles*, 6.

[42] Martin, *Comores*, 1: 90.

[43] Ahmed, *Swahili Chronicle*, 100; on the building of manda on the west coast of Madagacar, see Chantal Radimilahy and Barthélémy Manjakahery, "Archaeology of St Augustine's Bay, Lower and Middle Onilahy Valley, Southwestern Madagascar," *Studies in the African Past* 5, no. (2006): 64.

[44] Ahmed, *Swahili Chronicle*, 52-3, 101.

[45] Abdullah, king of Joanna, letter to EIC governor in Bombay, 10 July 1800, India Office Records, Home Miscellaneous "IOR/H/473," f. 241-2.

[46] Letter on events in Anjouan, 1807, "IOR/H/511," f. 7.

conflicts with these Malagasy warriors. On one of these return trips in 1805, the Malagasy canoes encountered a Portuguese ship visiting Anjouan. A fleet of twenty-five canoes, each holding about twenty or more armed men, approached the ship. The Portuguese, thinking the men were friendly, allowed them to board the ship. The Malagasy killed almost all of the crew and stole trading goods from the ship.[47] Portuguese rulers in Mozambique were determined to seek retribution. In 1806, the Portuguese sent a ship to visit Anjouan and then to Cap d'Ambre, the northernmost point of Madagascar. The Portuguese failed to see any threatening Malagasy in canoes and returned to Mozambique.[48]

Malagasy warriors began attacking East African communities around 1800, further antagonizing the Portuguese of Mozambique. Due to the timing and similarities of the raids, all of these attempts appeared linked. Portuguese sources described the attacks on Mozambique. According to one account, three boats of about sixty people arrived on the coast of East Africa in 1800. The men waited for the monsoon winds to change and allow their crossing of the channel, but they had no food to eat. They resorted to robbing coastal communities for food, also stealing slaves. This source does not explicitly describe the visitors as Malagasy, although these men traveled in canoes of the type used in Madagascar, not the dhows sailed by Swahili and Comorian traders.[49] It seems unlikely that Malagasy traders would have been travelling to Mozambique, over three hundred miles from Madagascar, in canoes, although it was possible. More likely, these raiders were linked to the Comoro attacks, especially given subsequent events. It appears

[47] Ahmed, *Swahili Chronicle*, 99.
[48] Alpers, "Madagascar and Mozambique," 40; Martin, *Comores*, 1: 87.
[49] Alpers, "Madagascar and Mozambique," 38-9.

the Malagasy were expanding their range of influence from beyond the Comoro Islands to the East African coast.

In 1808 and 1809, "Sakalava" canoes landed at coastal villages throughout East Africa, from Ushanga to Tungui. The Malagasy had crossed the Mozambique Channel, a wide body of water with unpredictable currents and comparatively distant from the west coast of Madagascar. It may have taken these fleets several weeks to cross the channel. After they arrived, the Malagasy began attacking local villages, but they faced losses in their numbers due to deaths in these battles and an outbreak of the small pox among the Malagasy. During their trip to Mozambique, the Malagasy took eight hundred Africans hostage. Swahili traders paid ransoms for some of these captives, but to do so, they had to travel to the Sakalava trading port of Bombetoc, located on the west coast of Madagascar.[50]

After these attacks, warnings of future raids reached the Portuguese colonial leaders in Mozambique. In 1814, the sultan of Anjouan warned the Portuguese of another attack on Mozambique, although the warning proved ungrounded.[51] The following year, however, different "Moors," likely traders frequenting the ports of Mozambique, the Comoros, and Madagascar, told the Portuguese that the "Sakalava" were sending forty canoes to attack the coast. The Portuguese prepared for battle and attacked the raiders while they were on Quirimba Island, three hundred miles to the north of Mozambique Island. The Malagasy suffered many losses in this attack and retreated to Madagascar. Despite the Portuguese victory, many Mozambicans fled inland in fear of future attacks.[52]

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[50] Ibid., 40-1.
[51] Ibid., 41.
[52] Ibid., 42-3.

In 1816, another fleet, reportedly consisting of a hundred fifty canoes reached East Africa. The Portuguese heard that the fleet was moving south following their attack at the island of Kilwa to the north. The fleet reached Mozambique six months later, but now consisted of seventy-one canoes. The fleet was led by "Prince Sicandar of Anjouan" who told the Portuguese that he was headed to battle with the Shaikh of Sancul, a Swahili sultan living on the African mainland near Mozambique Island. The Prince explained that they had simply gotten off course and that they meant no harm to the Portuguese or their subjects. The Portuguese leaders refused to believe the Prince and attacked the raiders.[53] If the Prince was from Anjouan, this Comorian leader may have led the attack with the help of Malagasy mercenaries.

The second half of this attacking fleet, likely separated in the crossing of the channel, consisted of an estimated five hundred canoes. A "Moor" named "Nassiri" commanded this fleet. His force also attacked Kilwa before disembarking near Mozambique Island. These raiders left after the Portuguese refused to leave their fortress on the east coast. Later that year, Portuguese colonial officials observed about thirty-eight canoes attacking villages along the east coast. When the canoes came close to Zanzibar Island, the Zanzibari sultan sent ships to fight against the "Sakalava" intruders who were armed, not with firearms, but with spears, perhaps due to convenience. The Zanzibari soldiers defeated the invaders. After their defeat, the leader of the raiders swore to the sultan that they would not return. He also promised they would cease attacking the "Umani [Omani] and Portuguese coasts of East Africa."[54] The raiders appeared to target specific leaders in East Africa, not Europeans, and only halted when challenged by

[53] Ibid., 43.
[54] Ibid., 44-5.

African leaders. There were no more recorded incidences of raids conducted by warriors in canoes.

A New Era

These raids produced disorder throughout the southwestern Indian Ocean region. People formerly living along the Mozambique coast fled inland, at least temporarily. Even after the defeat of the invaders, they feared future attacks. Comorians fled to the East African coast and sought protection in Omani-controlled Zanzibar.[55] They left major sections of Mayotte deserted.[56] The people who remained fortified their cities in defense of future attacks and these walls are still visible on the islands.[57] In 1819, the Portuguese heard rumors that a hundred-canoe fleet had left Madagascar. They later received a report that a cyclone destroyed all of these canoes while they were crossing the Mozambique Channel.[58]

From the perspective of all the other turmoil of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, these raids were small, short-lived, and undertaken by only a few thousand warriors. The numbers of slaves captured in the raids were also small in number. Perhaps for this reason, the raids did not profoundly alter the commercial relationships between the Sakalava and communities on the Mozambique coast or in the Comoro islands. Communities in these regions were accustomed to sea battles and

[55] Comorians continued migrating to Zanzibar throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. See Anne K. Bang, *Sufis and Scholars of the Sea: Family Networks in East Africa, 1860-1925* (London: Routledge, 2003), 54.

[56] Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 212-6.

[57] Martin Ottenheimer, *Marriage in Domoni: Husbands and Wives in an Indian Ocean Community* (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1985), 20.

[58] Alpers, "Madagascar and Mozambique," 46.

struggles for control of commerce and political leadership.[59] In fact, attacks of this kind may have been a more common feature of the landscape of the southwestern Indian Ocean than has been assumed.[60]

The attacks nevertheless marked the start a new era in terms of relations between the Sakalava and the British. The British expressed an interest in creating a peaceful, commercially productive zone in the southwest Indian Ocean.[61] The raids proved that the Malagasy, without European oversight, were incapable of guaranteeing the smooth flow of commodities from and within the region. These excursions coincided with the British resolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to abolish the slave trade in the Atlantic and Indian oceans.[62] When the rulers of the Comoros complained about the raids, the British quickly linked them to a score of evils associated with the slave trade in the Indian Ocean. Sakalava and Betsimisaraka leaders came under attack for their participation in the raids and the slave trade. In British eyes, the Sakalava went from trading partners to bandits. The Sakalava were described as "a nation of pirates," as they had disobeyed maritime laws. One European explained that the "subjects of the Queen of

[59] Conflicts on the East African and Comoro Islands not involving Europeans have been described by archeologists and historians at length. On warfare in East Africa between Zanzibar i and Omani officials with East Africans, see the chronicle of Pate: Marina Tolmacheva, *The Pate Chronicle* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1993), 14.

[60] Examples of canoes being used with warfare in Madagascar: on the east coast: the ship journal of the Duc d'Anjou, 1737, "MAR 4 JJ/76"; on the use of dhows in warfare in the Comoros, see Stanes, "Add. 24931," f. 96.

[61] Such ideas are repeatedly expressed by British abolitionists with increasing frequency towards the end of the nineteenth century. See, for instance, Bartle Frere's records during his visit to Zanzibar, 1872-3, especially: Frere, letter, March 10, 1873, "AA 1/10," ZNA, f. 192.

[62] On the impact in Madagascar in particular, see Gwyn Campbell, "Unfree labour and the significance of abolition in Madagascar, c. 1825-97," in *Abolition and its aftermath in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia*, ed. Gwyn Campbell. (Routledge, 2005), 66-73. Richard Allen argues that British abolitionist efforts in the Indian Ocean dated back to 1777: "Europeans and the movement of unfree laborers in the Indian Ocean, 1600-1850," paper given at the conference for the Zanzibar Indian Ocean Research Institute, Zanzibar, August 2008.

Pembetoc [Bombetoc]" had attacked the Comoro Islands in search of slaves to sell to the French.[63]

What role did Sakalava leaders play in the attacks? The evidence suggests only indirect leadership by the Sakalava. Although the warriors had leaders, none of them described themselves as Sakalava nor were the leaders using names of Sakalava monarchs. Instead, the leaders of the attacks seem to have varied from year to year. The raiders were skilled in ocean travel, suggesting they came from the northern portion of Madagascar. Malagasy along the west coast of the island used outrigger canoes for river travel within the island or for short fishing expeditions, but these canoes tended to be relatively small. Scholars have suggested communities on the east coast of Madagascar built the large canoes, similar in proportion to the canoes used by fishermen for killing whales.[64] Malagasy from both coasts probably participated in the raids. The Sakalava Empire had integrated Malagasy populations through a commercial system that stretched from the west coast to the northeast of the island. Networks enabled by the Sakalava Empire may have helped warriors coordinate the attacks from both sides of Madagascar.

Between 1780 and 1808, the Sakalava queen Ravahiny controlled the northwest half of the empire. In 1805, she sent a warning to the governor-general of Mozambique that a fleet of six hundred canoes had left her coast to attack the east coast of Africa. She insisted that these ships, of twenty to twenty-five tons each, carried her people, but were not under her command.[65] We can speculate that she may have sent similar warnings to the Comoro Islands. Why did she send this warning? Ravahiny had developed closer commercial ties with leaders in the Comoros and East Africa during this period, perhaps

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[63] Salt, *A voyage to Abyssinia*, 76-79.
[64] Campbell, *An Economic History*, 38.
[65] Alpers, "Mozambique and Madagascar," 49.

prompting her to send the warning to Mozambique. Even during the time of these raids, the leaders in the region continued to trade with the Sakalava state, which would have been unlikely if the Sakalava leadership was directly involved in the attacks. Trade in the Sakalava-controlled northwest ports flourished towards the end of the eighteenth century, despite the growth of the Merina state. Sakalava concentrated on defending their territory against the Merina, especially as they slowly incorporated previously independent highland states that had been Sakalava trading partners.[66] The entire west coast, however, remained peaceful and prosperous under Sakalava control. Wars between the Sakalava and the Merina on the empire's borders did not disrupt commerce.[67] During this period, however, the Sakalava searched for new allies and commercial partners and they found them among the Muslim rulers of the Comoros and East Africa.

By 1820, the Sakalava Empire appeared strong and prosperous to passing Europeans, due, in part, to the strengthening of these alliances.[68] The northern Sakalava-controlled territories supplied cattle for export to Merina markets, to the east coast, and to passing European ships.[69] In St. Augustine's Bay, the inhabitants struck hard bargains with Europeans, bartering "with a judgment matured by experience."[70] Sakalava ports also received increased numbers of ships from the Atlantic. By 1816, American ships,

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[66] Mayeur, voyage to Ancove, January 1777, "Add. Ms. 18128-18129," 1: 166. See also Conrad P. Kottak, "The Process of State Formation in Madagascar," *American Ethnologist* 4, no. 1 (1977): 140-1.

[67] Lacombe, *Voyage*, 2: 108. About the Sakalava leader giving his daughter to marry Radama, the Merina king, as well as the Sakalava trade with Arabs; ibid., 2: 111.

[68] See the following visits to western Madagascar: the ship log of the Aurora, 1801, "IOR/L/MAR/B/228 A"; the ship journal of the Preston, 1801, "IOR/L/MAR/B/307 B"; the ship journal of the Henry Dundas, 1801, "IOR/L/MAR/B/331 F"; Capmartin, voyage to St. Augustine's Bay, 1804, in "Add. Ms. 18128-18129," 1: 63-8.

[69] On the development of this cattle trade, see Chapter 4.

[70] William MacIntosh, *Travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa*, 2 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1781), 2: 394

particularly whalers, frequented northwest Madagascar.[71] Their watering and refueling in Sakalava ports increased the flow of money, goods, and firearms to the Sakalava Empire. The French also steadily increased their presence in and around Madagascar. They relied upon the island for food and small numbers of slaves.[72] When the British took control of Mauritius in 1815, however, they engaged contract laborers and attempted to halt Sakalava exports of slaves.

Despite the existence of these other traders visiting their ports, the Sakalava came to depend upon trading networks that linked them with Comorian, Swahili, Arab, and Indian merchants. Ravahiny was responsible for overseeing the expansion of Sakalava economic influence and welcoming traders from all around the Indian Ocean to settle in her domains.[73] She oversaw the administration of trade in the port of "Mouzangaye," home of "Arab" and "Indian" merchants.[74] There was no evidence of these traders living in such large numbers in the port cities until the middle of the eighteenth century.[75] The queen oversaw justice and punished thefts in the port cities. She ensured that Indians accused of crimes were judged by other Indians, but oversaw the punishment of Sakalava

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[71] For instance, see the ship journal of the Amphitrite, 1816, *Fonds de la Marine, Séries modernes, Service Hydrographique*, "MAR 5 JJ/427," French National Archives, Paris; the ship journal of the Cybèle, 1818, "MAR 5 JJ/415."

[72] Allen, "The Constant Demand of the French."

[73] Dumaine, visit to the west coast, 1793, in *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de L'isle de Madagascar* , ed. B. Froberville, Add. Ms. 18128-18129, 1: 295

[74] On the trade of "Mouzangaye," see memoir, written by Desroches, 1816, in *Pieces Diverses Relatives à Madagascar*, ed. B. Froberville, "Add. 18135," British Library, f. 36; Samuel Copland, *A History of the Island of Madagascar* (London: R. Clay for Burton and Smith, 1822), 2-18. In 1824, the British described the port as home to a "horde of Arabs, moors and Indians, who till now held the principal chieftain of this part of the island in complete subjection..." See the extract of a political letter, 1 December 1824, Board's Collections, "IOR/F/4/905," British Library, ff. 77-8.

[75] Early Portuguese sources describe Muslims living in the northwest, but in 1764, a British captain visiting "Managaro" observed the presence of "native Mores" and those of "Surate, Johana, Mosenbeck, and the Commoro islands. It is the sanctuary allowed for the Mores, by the king of this country." See the ship journal of the Fly, 1763, "IOR/L/MAR/B/597 B."

thieves herself.[76] The queen also determined guilt for crimes by using poison trials involving the consumption of a poisonous plant called *tanguin*.[77] She appointed three leaders, "Arab sheiks," to develop the trade in rice, slaves, and cattle from her ports.[78]

Between 1808 and 1822, under the leadership of Ravahiny's successor, Tsimaloma, the northwestern trade continued to flourish, in spite of increasing Merina competition. The Sakalava continued to supervise the trade between Nosy Be and Diego Suarez with Surat and other ports in the northern Indian Ocean.[79] By 1820, the town of "Mazangaye" [Moudzagaye or Majunga] was frequented by Arab, Swahili, American, Portuguese, Indian, and French traders.[80] The influence of Islam in this region appeared to have increased, according to one French traveler, who described two Arab merchants who acted as "missionaries" from Muscat during the 1820s and 1830s.[81] The ascendency of Omani influence in the southwestern Indian Ocean may have encouraged conversion to Islam among the Sakalava.[82]

Sakalava merchants also changed their slave trading patterns and began to import slaves from East Africa. They used to purchase slaves from the highlands or obtain them through warfare. The Merina gradually halted the practice of enslavement, particularly

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[76] Blanchy discusses the migration of Indians to northwestern Madagascar by around 1700: Sophie Blanchy, *Karana et Banians: Les communautés commerçantes d'origin indienne à Madagascar* (Paris: Harmattan, 1995), 51-6.

[77] Tanguin trials were also used half a century later by Merina rulers to root out Christianity on the island. See the "tagena, or poison water" ritual in Lyons McLeod, *Madagascar and Its People* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969, originally published 1865), 87; François Callet, *Histoire Des Rois, Traduction Du Tantaran'ny Andriana*. 5 vols. (Tananarive: Éditions de la Librairie de Madagascar, 1953), 3: 204; André Coppalle, *Voyage dans l'intérieur de Madagascar et à la capitale du roi Radama Ier: Un peintre découvre la Grande Île, 1825-1826*, ed. Éric Poix (Besançon: Éditions la Lanterne magique, 2006), 116-7.

[78] Dumaine, visit to the west coast, 1793, "Add. 18128-18129," 1: 296-7; on Ravahiny, see Desroches, 15March 1816, "Notes sur Madagascar," "Add. 18135," f. 36.

[79] B. F. Leguével de Lacombe, *Voyage à Madagascar et aux îles Comores (1823 À 1830)*, 2 vols. (Paris: Louis Dessart, 1840), 2: 66.

[80] Ibid., 2: 75-7.

[81] Ibid., 2: 104.

[82] Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 216-7.

among incorporated subjects, and, as a result, the Sakalava had difficulty obtaining supplies within Madagascar.[83] As early as 1808, slaves from Mozambique arrived in Bombetoc, although this trade may have begun decades earlier.[84] Hundreds of slaves were imported into northwestern Madagascar during the nineteenth century, although exact numbers are unknown. In 1876, one missionary observed that, in one northwest district, over two-thirds of the population was "African" or "Makoa."[85] Some of the slaves were used locally and were engaged in agriculture tasks and cattle-herding. These slaves developed their own "Makua" (also known as Makoa or Masombika) communities in northwest and western Madagascar, where they continued to speak Swahili. A century later, however, they had become part of Sakalava communities.[86]

Europeans, especially British abolitionists, recorded information about the slave trade across the Mozambique Channel. The Sakalava imported slaves from Mozambique and then sold the slaves to Europeans passing by their shores, until the British attempted to enforce the restrictions on the slave trade. The Sakalava also used their links with leaders in East Africa and the Comoro islands to transform their ports into transshipment centers for slaves. States in Mozambique, in particular, began exporting large numbers of

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[83] Prior to around 1810, large numbers of slaves acquired through Merina wars of expansion were exported from the highlands to the east coast, for sale to the French from the Mascarenes. This trade came to a halt in part due to the lack of any other viable enemies in Madagascar. Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 119-20.

[84] The order of 1808, in "Add. 18135," f. 194.

[85] 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), 17-8.

[86] On the Makua, 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), 8-15; Hafkin, "Trade, society, and politics," 19-28. On Mozambique slaves working for the Sakalava, see Joseph S. 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: Abraham Kingdon, 1875), 12. See also some "Makoa" tales included in *Contes de la coˆte ouest de Madagascar, recueillis et traduits par N. J. Gueunier* (Antananarivo: Ambozontany, 1991?), example: 78. On the Makua becoming Sakalava, see Chapter 7. Few sources describe how these slaves were employed during the nineteenth century or provide details about the conduct of the slave trade within Madagascar.

slaves by the late eighteenth century, to Europeans and, increasingly, to Arabs.[87] As the need to evade British anti-slave trade patrols increased, the rulers sent their agents to Boina to coordinate the shipment of slaves from Mozambique to the Comoros, Zanzibar, and the Arabian Peninsula. Sakalava and Antaloatra traders in northwest Madagascar oversaw communication between traders throughout the region, controlled the movement of payment for slaves, and ensured that the slave trade within the region continued for the entire nineteenth century. [88]

The Anglo-Merina Treaty

Changes during the nineteenth century increased commercial opportunities for the people of northern and western Madagascar, who emphasized their connections with Comorian, Swahili, and Mozambican communities. This period of increasing commercial interactions that enabled population movements across the ocean, also was a period of intense violence.[89] Sakalava leaders and others throughout the southwestern Indian Ocean region participated in bloody battles for the domination of trade and experienced a drastic reduction of the territories under their control. The development of coastal states in Mozambique led to the massive export of slaves from East Africa to the Mascarenes and the Americas. The Omani sultanate firmly established itself as a global commercial empire by 1798, after fighting bloody battles for the control of coastal East Africa.[90]

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[87] On the rise of the Swahili coastal rulers, see Hafkin, "Trade, society, and politics," 8-28.

[88] See the letter captured by the Portuguese, written by traders in Boina to Mozambican rulers in 1878, quoted in Ibid, 55.

[89] As was the case elsewhere in Africa, see, for instance, Richard J. Reid, *Political Power in Pre-Colonial Buganda : Economy, Society & Warfare in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: James Currey, 2002).

[90] This year marked the first commercial treaty between the sultanate in Muscat and the British. In 1813, Sultan, or Sayyid, Said moved to Zanzibar and fully asserted Omani power on the East African coast. See Norman Robert Bennett, *Arab versus European: Diplomacy and War in nineteenth-century East Central Africa* (New York: Africana Pub. Co., 1986).

In the midst of these changes, the British aggressively pursued a plan to dominate global commerce. By 1814, following the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars, the British controlled portions of India and southern Africa, as well as Mauritius. Now that they possessed military and commercial bases on the shores of the Indian Ocean, the British focused upon gaining direct access to the trade within the ocean. They believed the slave trade hampered their access to valuable commodities such as gold, ivory, and cloth. To end the slave trade, British officials formed an alliance with the Omani sultan living in Zanzibar. By 1820, Zanzibar had become the main destination for slaves coming from Mozambique, via Madagascar. As one observer stated in 1871, Zanzibar was an "emporium for the sea-borne trade of Madagascar, Mozambique, the Comoro Islands, and the whole of the East Coast of Africa."[91] Zanzibari owners used their slaves as plantation workers, but many of the slaves were shipped north towards the Arabian Peninsula.[92] British officials pressured leaders in Zanzibar to end this slave trade and the Omani sultan passed several decrees that would slowly abolish the trade. Arabs and Africans still managed to get around the slave trade ban and dhows continued to carry slaves from East Africa, to Madagascar, and then to Zanzibar through the 1890s.[93]

Due to the role of the Malagasy in coordinating the slave trade, the British also pressured rulers on the island to sign treaties abolishing the trade. The British began by establishing a close relationship with the Merina king, Radama. Around 1810, after the British had assumed control of Mauritius, the British began trading in Tamatave, a port in eastern Madagascar. Radama provided merchants in Tamatave with food and other

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[91]Minutes from evidence taken before the Select Committee, 20 July 1871, in the correspondence of Lt Col CP Rigby, Consul at Zanzibar, "AA 12/2," ZNA, ff. 150-1.

[92] On this development, see Frederick Cooper, *Plantation Slavery on the East Coast of Africa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

[93] Bennett, *Arab versus European*, 55.

exports and he developed a close relationship with the British. In order to end the slave trade on the coasts of the island, the British agreed to assist Radama in seizing control of territory in Madagascar.

In 1817, Radama signed a proclamation for the abolition of the slave trade.[94] In the treaty, he was described as the "king of Madagascar." He urged his "brother, Jean Rene," the "chief" of Tamatave, and other chiefs on the coast to end the slave trade. He also requested that they "abstain from any maritime predatory excursion whatever." He warned against any future raids on the Comoro Islands or East African coast. He stated that the culprits would earn his "most severe displeasure, and of incurring the punishment due to pirates." In so doing, the treaty implicitly targeted the Sakalava. The treaty did not just recognize Radama as the sole legitimate "King of Madagascar," but also gave him the right to seize any slave ships operating around Madagascar and to punish slave traders as pirates. In return for signing this treaty, the British agreed to provide Radama with military assistance, in the form of training and materials, especially weapons.[95]

The British observed in 1821 that Radama was overseeing the complete abolition of the slave trade and "adhering religiously" to his treaties and agreements with the British.[96] With British military assistance, Radama extended his control first to the east and forced the ruler of Tamatave into recognizing Merina rule. Radama expanded his hold on rice-producing sections of the east coast of Madagascar and gained access to more laborers. The Merina government implemented strict labor-controls and taxation

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[94] 'Proclamation of Radama, King of Madagascar, for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 23 October, 1817', in *Hertslet's commercial treaties: A collection of treaties and conventions, between Great Britain and foreign powers...* vol. 3 (London: Butterworth, 1841), 240. See also the other treaty between Radama and Great Britain in 1817, in ibid., 1: 354; the proclamations and additional articles released by Radama in 1820, in ibid., 3: 240-2.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Farquhar, letter, 8 December 1821, "IOR/F/4/913," ff. 272-273.

throughout the region. Producing exports and making the Merina Empire self-sustaining became one of the goals of its rulers.[97] Radama set his sights next on the Sakalava-controlled territory to the north and west. Merina armies attempted to seize control of a number of Sakalava ports: Vohémar, Diego Suarez, Majunga, and St. Augustine's Bay. In 1824, Radama took control of the port of Majunga, previously a center of Sakalava trade. With the help of the British navy, he now controlled the previous center of the northwestern trade of the island and, from there, he could oversee the suppression of the slave trade.[98]

Despite the seizure of Majunga, however, Radama still had not conquered the Sakalava Empire. The Sakalava identity would become an important rallying call for people oppressed by Merina armies and a means for people to retain their own history and beliefs in the face of conquest. Northwestern Sakalava ports, such as Bombetoc, remained centers of illicit slave trading and of Sakalava resistance. In response to the barriers placed to Sakalava imperial expansion, the Sakalava Empire turned inwards and focused on consolidating power within the homeland of the state. The transformation of the state represented, in many ways, a return an emphasis on the ties between Malagasy communities and the land they occupied.

The next chapter traces how the Sakalava Empire fractured in response to these new pressures from the British, French, and Merina Empires. Even while the Sakalava divided into several distinct groups, Sakalava rulers preserved the memory of the empire as a potent source of unification and rebellion through the nineteenth century. With

[97] Campbell, *An economic history*, 7-15.
[98] Extract of political letter, 1 December 1824, "IOR/F/4/905," ff. 9-10.

reduced resources and fewer opportunities to gain power locally and globally, the Sakalava ceased to be a cohesive and powerful empire.

Chapter 7

The Decline of the Sakalava Empire?

The nineteenth century ushered in a new period of globalization to communities in Madagascar. Rather than allowing the Malagasy to contend with economic changes and challenges on their own terms, as they had during previous centuries, Europeans used political and military power to intervene in political developments on the island. Economically as well, the Malagasy were increasingly at a disadvantage in dealing with Europeans.[1] Even though the people of Madagascar did not export valued commodities such as ivory, Europeans still attempted to control exchanges from Madagascar. Merina rulers allowed the British to participate in their government in ways that the Sakalava never had.[2] The tumult produced by these power shifts influenced how Sakalava leaders mediated between their subjects and the wider world.[3]

In 1810, the British became economically influential in eastern Madagascar after they gained control of Mauritius from the French. They came to the coast in search of food to support their colony. British officials assisted a Malagasy named Jean-René with gaining control of Tamatave because they hoped to gain preferential access to commodities from the port.[4] When Radama marched to the coast with his army in 1817,

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[1] On parallel developments in East Africa 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); Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices, & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1873* (London: J. Currey, 1987).

[2] On this idea, see Solofo Randrianja and Stephen Ellis, *Madagascar: A Short History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 149.

[3] Feeley-Harnik argues that the shift to royal ancestor worship was due, in part, to imperial encroachments on Sakalava kingdoms during the nineteenth century. She states, "it could be said that Sakalava monarchy survived the French colonial period not by denying the death of kings, but by celebrating it." Gillian Feeley-Harnik, "Issues in Divine Kingship," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 14 (1985): 285.

[4] His father was French and his mother was Malagasy. Dominique Ranaivoson, *Madagascar: Dictionnaire des personalités historiques* (Saint-Maur-des-Fossés, France: Sépia, 2005), 85-6.

the British identified him as an even more powerful leader and quickly signed a treaty with him.[5]

As the British merchants became powerful on the east coast, they drove their French rivals to the other side of Madagascar. This move forced the French to rethink the place of Madagascar in their foreign policy. Without Mauritius, the French government sought new bases for their traders on islands located near Madagascar such as Nosy Be, Île Sainte Marie, and Mayotte. The British worried over the growing influence of the French in the southwestern Indian Ocean region.[6] In the midst of European maneuvering for the control of resources in Madagascar, the Merina Empire asserted its authority over much of the island. Sakalava rulers involved themselves in rivalries within the region and ultimately lost control of much of their territory by the middle of the nineteenth century.

This chapter describes the events that led up to the French colonization of Madagascar. It closes with an examination of how the Sakalava dealt with the changes of the nineteenth century and maintained their beliefs and practices in the face of competing imperialisms. The real story of this period was the reinvention of the Sakalava monarchy in the face of tremendous pressures from imperialist rivals. Over the entire nineteenth century, the Sakalava refused to submit to European or Merina plans for the control of their territory. Rulers led their subjects in thefts of Merina property, allied with the French against the Merina, and even migrated to the Comoro Islands. In the midst of political and military maneuvering, the Sakalava people resisted conversion to

[5] Ibid., 123; Gwyn Campbell, *An Economic History of Imperial Madagascar 1750-1895: The Rise and Fall of an Island Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 61. The treaty is detailed in Chapter 6.

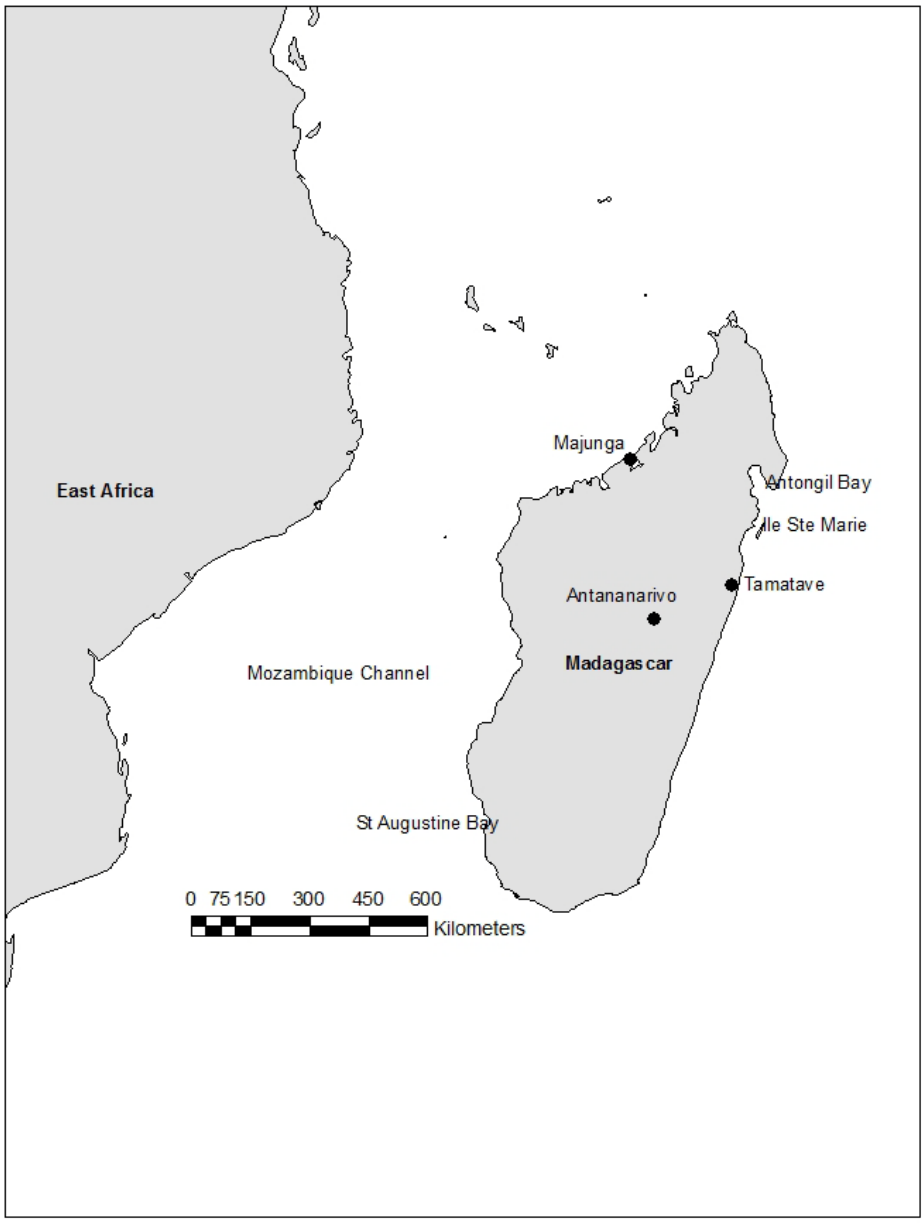
[6] Farquhar, letter, 1822, Board's Collections, "IOR/F/4/913," British Library, f. 480.

Christianity, although many, especially in the northwest, converted to Islam.[7] The Sakalava participated in ceremonies that involved worshipping deceased royalty and told stories of their glorious past to foreigners who passed through their territory. To be Sakalava no longer meant subjection to a certain king or ruler. Instead, it represented a way of seeing the world and understanding the past, as well as the future.[8]

[7] On conversions to Islam, see Chapter 6.

[8] This chapter posits that elite power structures continued, in spite of colonialism, and manifested in ways that were not always in the form of retaliation or defensive, but rather spiritual or involving identity politics. This was also the case on the East African coast. See, for instance, Jonathon Glassman, *Feasts and Riot: Revelry, Rebellion, and Popular Consciousness on the Swahili Coast, 1856-1888* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1995).

On the origins of the Merina ethnicity, a not dissimilar process, see the works of Pier Larson, especially Pier Martin Larson, *History and Memory in the Age of Enslavement : becoming Merina in highland Madagascar, 1770-1822* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000), 23-32.



Map 7: Nineteenth-century Madagascar

Merina Invasions

By the late eighteenth century, Merina troops began to encroach upon Sakalava territory. Leaders, migrants, and soldiers assumed the control of lands located on the border regions of the Sakalava Empire, regions that Sakalava leaders relied upon for trade and tribute.[9] When Radama became the ruler of the Merina Empire in 1810, he continued his father's efforts to expand the borders of Imerina.[10] Radama's father, Andrianampoinimerina reportedly desired the kingdom to stretch from coast to coast, famously asserting that "Ny ranomasina no valam-parihiko" [The sea is the limit of my rice fields].[11] Radama took this pronouncement seriously. With British acquiescence, the Merina army asserted commercial control over Tamatave and other portions of the east coast. Radama encouraged the development of Tamatave into an international trading port that attracted traders who previously visited other ports on the island.[12] Radama linked the port to his capital, Antananarivo, via trade routes and coordinated the export of slaves, food, and goods, in return for coins and guns.[13]

After exerting his control over the east coast, he turned his attention to the north and west to Sakalava-controlled ports. In 1785, a French observer noted that the Merina fought differently and their military tactics were far superior to the Malagasy of the east coast, even prior to British assistance.[14] Despite the superiority of Merina military forces and their apparent ease expanding their control throughout the highlands, Merina rulers

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[9] François Callet, *Histoire des rois, traduction du Tantaran'ny andriana*, 5 vol.s. (Tananarive: Éditions de la Librairie de Madagascar, 1953), 2:163-4.

[10] This impulse is summarized in Jean Valette, *Études sur le règne de Radama Ier* (Antananarivo, Madagascar: Impr. nationale, 1962), 46-8. Imerina refers to the Merina kingdom.

[11] For a discussion of this famous quotation, see Larson, *History and Memory*, 43. Note the centrality of the rice fields in the idea of the Merina Empire.

[12] G. A. Rantoandro, "Hommes et réseaux *Malata* de la côte orientale de Madagascar à l'époque de Jean René (1773-1825)," *Annuaire des pays de l'Océan Indien* 17, no. (2001-2002): 103-4.

[13] Campbell, *An Economic History*,49.

[14] Citing Mayeur, in Valette, *Études*, 14-6.

faced difficulties in subduing the Sakalava prior to Radama. The Merina and the Sakalava had concluded a series of alliances, but the Sakalava still antagonized Merina communities by frequently raiding the periphery of the Merina Empire during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[15]

Radama's interest in controlling the west-central Sakalava kingdom likely was based on his desire to increase Merina economic power on the island. He also received encouragement from British abolitionists.[16] Sakalava rulers faced opposition from the abolitionists, due to their role in the "pirate" raids on the Comoros and East Africa and continued participation in the Indian Ocean slave trade. Despite British support for an invasion of Menabe and Majunga, the two capitals of the Sakalava Empire, the Merina likely required little encouragement to attack. Conflicts between the Sakalava and Merina had become more intense towards the end of Andrianampoinimerina's reign. When the Sakalava king of Menabe died in 1809, the debates over succession involved Andrianampoinimerina, as his niece Rabodo had married the Sakalava king.[17] Andrianampoinimerina ordered forces to assert his sovereignty over the Menabe kingdom. Early battles ended indecisively, with Ramitraho, the new ruler, refusing to let Menabe become a possession of the Merina Empire.[18]

Andrianampoinimerina's successor, Radama, resumed the attacks on the Sakalava of Menabe.[19] With the creation of a forced labor regime, called *fanompoana*, Radama possessed the means to control labor within his empire and create a large army of

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[15] Ibid., 54.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid., 55.
[18] Ibid., 58. See also Callet, *Histoire des rois,* 2: 402-12; Ranaivoson, *Madagascar*,150.
[19] Larson discusses the "social costs of war" to the Merina: Larson, *History and memory*, 217-222.

troops.[20] Radama marched to Menabe with his army several times to demand the submission of Ramitraho to the Merina Empire.[21] After the first failure, Radama returned to Antananarivo and rearmed his soldiers with a shipment of 250 British guns. Radama declared that Ramitraho would not escape this time. Radama's second attempt, labeled a "gigantic expedition" by a French observer, involved as many as 70,000-80,000 soldiers.[22] Making the disastrous choice to attack in the wintertime, Radama and his troops were defeated by starvation and disease. The passing army could not pillage the communities of the west coast, as the Sakalava had fled with food, leaving nothing to sustain the raiders. The Sakalava also took their cattle, leaving the countryside barren and absent nourishment for the Merina army. According to one source, 25,000-30,000 men died during the campaign.[23]

Upon their return to Antananarivo, Radama engaged British soldiers to train his men and with this assistance, Radama rebuilt his army.[24] He created a standing army of trained soldiers conscripted from the general population.[25] The war resumed the following year and Radama had more success with his new army. Under the threat of another attack, Ramitraho accepted an alliance with the Merina.[26] Radama promised the Sakalava he would rule them as if he were their father and mother and lead them with compassion. If they did not submit to his rule, he would enslave them all: men, women,

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[20] Gwyn Campbell, "Slavery and Fanompoana: the Structure of Forced Labor in Imerina (Madagascar), 1790-1861," *The Journal of African History* 29, no. 3 (1988): 463-486.

[21] Callet, *Histoire des rois*, 5: 15.

[22] B. F. L. d. Lacombe, *Voyage à Madagascar et aux iles Comores (1823 à 1830)*, 2 vols. (1840), 1: 65.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Callet, *Histoire des rois*, 4: 16-7.

[25] Radrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 124.

[26] Valette, *Études*, 58-60.

and children.[27] Before departing, Radama left a contingent of Merina soldiers in charge of enforcing his control over Mahabo.[28] Radama forced Ramitraho to send his daughter, Rasalimo, to Antananarivo, to become one of Radama's wives.[29] In 1820, Radama returned to Antananarivo with his new Sakalava wife and left as many as a thousand troops in Mahabo.[30]

Commerce between the west coast and the highlands resumed following the cessation of open warfare in Menabe. The Sakalava continued to provide the highlanders with cattle in return for powder, cotton cloth, flint stones, bullets, and knives. Even the Sakalava could not escape a certain amount of economic integration into the Merina Empire, but this integration had begun decades earlier. During the mid-nineteenth century, commodities in Madagascar were still priced in coins. For instance, a head of cattle was priced at a "kiroubou," defined as "a quarter of a piastre or 25 centime in French francs."[31] The Merina, who began to cast their own coins during the mid-nineteenth century, dominated the movement of coins.[32]

Continued wars and battles between the Sakalava and the Merina, however, influenced the commercial prosperity of Morondava and the entire Menabe region.[33] Within a few years, it was clear that Ramitraho would not accept Merina rule, despite giving his daughter in marriage. According to one French observer, the Sakalava, proud

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[27] Callet, *Histoire des rois,* 4: 37

[28] Ibid., 4: 7

[29] The treaty between Ramitraho and Radama was concluded in 1823, according to Lacombe, *Voyage,* 65, 108.

[30] Callet, *Histoire des rois,* 4: 35; see also the account in Lyons McLeod, *Madagascar and Its People* (originally published 1865; New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 61-2.

[31] Lacombe, *Voyage,* 2: 108.

[32] For details on coins and this commercial integration, see Chapter 4.

[33] McLeod, *Madagascar,* 278-81.

of their traditions, were passionate for independence from the Merina.[34] Sakalava rulers continued to arm their soldiers with spears and guns. The Sakalava purchased guns more frequently from Arab and Swahili traders than Europeans and, as a result, Sakalava firearms were inferior to the British ones given to Radama.[35] Despite this handicap, throughout the nineteenth century, the French observed the Sakalava attacking Merina forts, stealing cattle, and taking Merina children hostage to be redeemed or sold as slaves.[36]

Following the nominal submission of the Sakalava king of Menabe in 1820, Radama refocused his energy towards the northern portion of the Sakalava Empire. Even prior to the invasion of Menabe, the Sakalava of the northwest coast were frequently at war with the Merina but the British encouraged the Merina invasion once again.[37] The British saw Merina control over the northwestern port cities as central in halting the slave trade in the southwestern Indian Ocean.

During the mid-1820s, Majunga (Mahajanga, also written by Europeans as Mouzangaie, Mondzangaie, Mazungay) was a bustling port on the northwest coast, attracting traders from India, Oman, Zanzibar, Anjouan, and Mozambique.[38] It was home to prosperous Antaloatra merchants who lived in stone houses along the waterfront.[39] Majunga was located along the "natural highway" formed by the Betsiboka River. This

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[34] Lacombe, *Voyage*, 2: 108

[35] Ibid., 2: 111.

[36] See, for instance, various French letters from the 1880s in "4z/14-32."

[37] Memoir, in "Add. 18135 - Pieces Diverses Relatives à Madagascar," ed. M. de Froberville, British Library, f. 129.

[38] The letter j in Malagasy is frequently pronounced with a z sound, thus making Majunga into Mazungay.

[39] Colomb, *Slave-Catching in the Indian Ocean: A Record of Naval Experiences* (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1968, orginally published in 1873), 321.

location enabled a bustling trade in slaves and food from the coast to the interior.[40] The trade bolstered Sakalava power in the region and enabled the Sakalava rulers to dominate provinces in the interior. The Sakalava coexisted with the Antaloatra who inhabited this part of Madagascar. During the early nineteenth century, an "Arab chief" reportedly supervised trade at the town of Majunga but gave presents, tribute, and taxes to the king of Boina.[41] Prior to the Merina invasion, an estimated ten thousand people lived in this great trade emporium.[42]

The British urged Radama to invade the town of "Mazungay" to get rid of the "nest of slave dealers," ranging from "Arabs, Moors, and Indians."[43] The presence of non-African slave traders especially worried the British, who were slowly gathering signatories for treaties on the abolition on the slave trade.[44] The British also worried about growing influence of the Omani, an influence that reached even northwestern Madagascar. The expansion of the economic influence of rival empires such as the Omani Empire represented a threat and an alternative ordering of the maritime commercial world that the British desired to create in the Indian Ocean.[45] For this reason, the British urged Radama to eliminate the presence of these other groups, including French, Americans, and Arabs, on the northwest coast of Madagascar.

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[40] McLeod, *Madagascar*, 265.

[41] Ibid., 262.

[42] In 1824: Ibid., 266 -9.

[43] Letter to Secretary Newnham, July 27, 1824, extracted in Board's Collections, "IOR/F/4/905," British Library, f. 77-8.

[44] For an explanation of the Indian-dominated financial system, see Campbell, *An Economic History,* 14-15. On Banian merchant networks in East Africa, see N. Benjamin, "Trading Activities of Indians in East Africa (with Special Reference to Slavery) in the Nineteenth Century," *Indian Economic & Social History Review* 35, no. 4 (1998): 405-419. See also M. N. Pearson, *Port Cities and Intruders: the Swahili Coast, India, and Portugal in the early modern era* (Baltimore; Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

[45] Norman Robert Bennett, *Arab Versus European: Diplomacy and War in Nineteenth-Century East Central Africa* (New York: Africana Pub. Co., 1986).

With British assistance, Radama invaded the northwest coast in 1824 and, by 1825, he had defeated the Sakalava. Following this defeat, Radama seized control of Majunga and built a fortress for the newly appointed Merina governor of the province and his soldiers. During the invasion, the Sakalava and Antaloatra deserted the port city in droves and the new Merina governor Ramanetaka reportedly burnt many of its buildings.[46] After the invasion, the Merina outlawed the people of Majunga from participating in foreign trade. All foreign trade in northwestern Madagascar was to go through Majunga, so the Merina governor could collect trading duties from passing American and European ships alike.[47]

Although illicit trading likely continued at Majunga, Sakalava and Antaloatra merchants redirected much of the Indian, Arab, and Swahili trade to ports distant from Merina observation.[48] The Merina were unable to eliminate this trade along the northwest coast, despite frequent attempts at preventing ships from stopping in other ports. The Merina, however, had succeeded in destroying the prosperity of Majunga for several decades. Following the Merina attacks, a British captain visited the northwestern coast during the 1830s. He found Majunga transformed from a "large straggling town" into a collection of derelict and uninhabitable houses. He even suggested that the Arab inhabitants of the town had assisted the Merina against the Sakalava, although he did not provide any evidence to support this claim.[49]

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[46] McLeod, *Madagascar,* 263.
[47] Ibid., 270
[48] See the complaints of British such as Colomb, *Slave-catching.*
[49] W. F. W. Owen, *Narrative of Voyages to Explore the Shores of Africa, Arabia, and Madagascar* (London: Richard Bentley, 1833), 186

Throughout the nineteenth century, the invasions negatively impacted other towns, such as Bombetoc, even though they continued to be trading ports.[50] Dhows from Mozambique, Zanzibar, and the Comoro Islands continued to visit other ports on the northwest coast, especially "Cajemba Bay" [Mahajambe?], Boyanna Bay (Bali Bay) and new Massalege, or Petit Massaily.[51] These non-Merina ports attracted traders seeking to circumvent British laws against the slave trade, as well as Merina port taxes.[52] For instance, at Sakalava-controlled ports, it seems possible that ships purchased slaves during the middle of the nineteenth century. Many of the visiting ships were "American whalers" and one trader noted that, "while the sperm-whale is often fished with success along this coast by American whalers," many of these whalers may have been slave ships looking to "visit the Mozambique Channel and baffle the British cruisers in those waters."[53] As slave traders sought to evade capture, it is possible that Portuguese or even Swahili traders used U.S. or other flags to disguise their nationalities. These ships also bought food. The Portuguese colony in Mozambique relied upon food imports from Madagascar, especially from Bombetoc, to feed colonists, slaves, and workers. Traders in Zanzibar also imported rice from Madagascar throughout the nineteenth century.[54]

Radama withdrew his forces from Majunga in 1825 and he left a representative, Ramanetaka, in charge of overseeing the rule and trade of Majunga. Radama sent troops to finish his conquest of other regions of the island, going south to Fort Dauphin in 1825

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[50] M. Vincent Noel, *Île de Madagascar: recherches sur les Sakkalava* (Paris: Imprimerie de Bourgogne et Martinet, 1843), 8

[51] McLeod, *Madagascar*, 270-3.

[52] For British observations of this trade: Captain Hamerton, letter to Lord Aberdeen, September 28, 1846, in Captain Hamerton's outward letters, "AA 1/3," National British Archives, Kew, f. 177.

[53] Ibid., 277.

[54] Edward Alpers, "The Western Indian Ocean as a Regional Food Network in the Nineteenth Century," in *Africa and the Indian Ocean* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2009), 28-9, 31.

and officially declared himself sovereign of Tamatave in 1827.[55] Following these conquests, Radama stated, "The entire island is mine" and believed that he controlled all of the major provinces of the island and ruled the provinces by the same laws.[56]

Despite his lofty statement, Radama faced difficulties in controlling his new territories. A series of Sakalava revolts shook the provinces, first in 1825, in Menabe, and in subsequent years, in the north and northwest regions.[57] The exercise of Merina power would prove to be patchy, especially in the Sakalava territories. The Merina soldiers controlled ports on the western coastline and the areas outside of the ports remained in Sakalava hands. During the middle of the nineteenth century, the people of this region were "attached" to relics of the former kings of Boina. They used this history as a focus of rebellion against Merina control outside of Majunga, as will be described in the next section.[58]

Exporting Conflict

Following Merina conquest, many Sakalava and Antaloatra fled from Majunga to the Comoro Islands.[59] An estimated ten thousand people migrated in dhows for the Comoro Islands, East Africa, and other places in Madagascar, effectively depopulating large portions of northwest Madagascar.[60] When the Sakalava and Antaloatra migrated to the Comoros, the communities they encountered there were still recovering from the attacks of the past few decades. The history of the Comoro Islands during these decades

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[55] Callet, *Histoire Des Rois,* 4: 8; McLeod, *Madagascar,* 62.
[56] Valette, *Études,* 69.
[57] Valette, *Études,* 69.
[58] McLeod, *Madagascar,* 264-5.
[59] Valette, *Études,* 66.
[60] Sophie Blanchy, *Karana et Banians: Les communautés commerçantes d'origin indienne à Madagascar* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1995), 56; By 1842, the Anataloatra in nearby Moudzangaye numbered only 675 free people and 250 slaves: from Guillian, by Ibid., 57.

involved a series of complex shifts in alliances and military conflicts that involved Europeans, Malagasy, and Comorians. The close relationship between the communities in the Comoro Islands and Madagascar, combined with this political disorder, led to the expansion of conflicts from Madagascar into the islands.

The Comoro Islands had been zones of conflict since at least the sixteenth century, when Europeans began recording their observations of the islands. During the nineteenth century, the period of the Malagasy invasions, the usual struggles over succession engulfed Mayotte in particular. Around 1806, a slave reportedly killed the most prominent sultan on the island, Salim, and the slave's master, "Maouana Mahdi," took the throne.[61] This new sultan used an alliance with the northwestern Sakalava to try to bolster his control in Mayotte. Mahdi married an Antaloatra woman from Madagascar, who gave him a son, who he named Boina Combo.[62]

Boina Combo's fate was intertwined with that of the Sakalava king of northwestern Madagascar, Andriantsouly (Andriantsohy).[63] A king named "Tse Levalou" inherited the control of the Sakalava kingdom based in Boina in 1822.[64] Tse Levalou struggled against imperial powers within Madagascar. While he was seeking assistance abroad against the Merina, he developed strong connections with rulers in the Comoros and East Africa, including the Omani leaders based in Zanzibar. He formed an alliance with Mahdi, the sultan in Mayotte, by concluding a treaty that included a fati-dra

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[61] Jean Martin, *Comores: Quatre Îles Entre Pirates Et Planteurs*, 2 vols. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1983), 1: 105.

[62] Ibid., 1: 105.

[63] Ranaivoson, *Madagascar*, 41-2.

[64] It is hard to uncover the chronology of events in this region, due to a lack of sources. The few sources, both Comorian and Malagasy, that exist frequently contradict each other, particularly in terms of dates.

ceremony.[65] This treaty led to a closer friendship between the Sakalava king and the Mayotte sultan.[66]

Under the influence of Comorian aristocrats, Tse Levalou converted to Islam in 1823 and changed his name to Andriantsouly (Andriantsouli), the converted king.[67] The conversion helped to integrate the Sakalava into networks crossing the Indian Ocean and assisted Andriantsouly in gaining political support from other Muslim rulers around the ocean.[68] It also represented the increasing influence of the Swahili traders who provided the Sakalava with guns and encouragement in their battles against the Merina.[69] When the Mayotte sultan Mahdi was murdered in a series of intrigues, his son, Boina Combo, tried to regain control of the throne.[70] He turned to the Sakalava king Andriantsouly for assistance. In response, Andriantsouly supposedly sent a fleet of canoes and three hundred warriors to help him resume control of his sultanate.[71]

Andriantsouly's rule at Boina came under attack by the Merina forces in 1824-6 and his allies were less forthcoming. Andriantsouly visited his allies in the Comoros, as well as Zanzibar, where he asked for help from the Omani ruler, Said bin Sultan Al-Said. Said was unable to assist the Sakalava king, as he was already dealing with rebellions on the East African coast.[72] In 1828, when he heard of the death of Radama, Andriantsouly returned to northwestern Madagascar and attempted to rebuild his empire after the loss of

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[65] Ibid., 1: 105. The ceremony was called known as the *fati-dra* or "serment du sang." It was instrumental in creating alliances within the Sakalava Empire and European merchants and missionaries during the nineteenth century also concluded fatidra with the Sakalava. For details of the history of this practice, see Chapter 2.

[66] Ranaivoson, *Madagascar*, 41-2.

[67] Marie-Pierre Ballarin, *Les reliques royales à Madagascar: source de légitimation et enjeu de pouvoir, XVIIIe-XXe siècles* (Paris: Karthala, 2000), 45; Alfred Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores* (Pondichery: A. Saligny, 1870), 217; Martin, *Comores,* 1: 132.

[68] Martin, *Comores,* 1: 133.

[69] Lacombe, *Voyage,* 167.

[70]Martin, *Comores,* 1: 105.

[71] Ibid., 1: 105.

[72] Ibid., 1: 133.

Majunga.[73] After a few years of failing to remove the Merina army from the northern portion of the island, Andriantsouly faced pressure from his subjects who accused him of mismanagement. In 1832, his subjects disposed him in favor of his sister, "Betsi" or "Ouantitsi."[74] Failing in his attempt to protect the Sakalava Empire, he fled to the nearby island of Mayotte with thousands of his followers. He decided he would live on Mayotte with his close ally, Boina Combo.

When Andriantsouly arrived to the Comoro Islands, he encountered a familiar foe: Ramanetaka, the former governor of Majunga. When Radama, the head of the Merina Empire, died in 1828, his heir, Queen Ranavalona I, was determined to assert her control. She set out to murder various claimants for the throne and began replacing individuals in powerful offices with her own appointees. Ramanetaka, who was also a cousin to Radama, came under attack by Queen Ranavalona's new government.[75]

Before she managed to kill him, Ramanetaka left for the nearby Comoro Islands with a hundred of his Merina supporters around 1828.[76] When he arrived at Anjouan, the local sultan Abdallah welcomed Ramanetaka and his followers, but within only a few months, the sultan discovered that Ramanetaka had conspired against him with Seid-Ali, who was the sultan's brother. By the early 1830s, relations between the Merina migrant and the sultan had reached a breaking point.[77] Ramanetaka fled to nearby Mohéli, where the reigning sultan was an enemy of Sultan Abdallah. In 1830, Abdallah attacked Mohéli to reassert his control over the island, which he held to be his possession. Ramanetaka

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[73] Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 217.
[74]Ibid., 218; Martin, *Comores*, 1: 134. See also Ranaivoson, *Madagascar*, 41-2.
[75] McLeod, *Madagascar*, 76.
[76] Ranaivoson, *Madagascar*, 138.
[77] Martin, *Comores*, 1: 129.

offered his services to the sultan of Mohéli.[78] Thanks to his help, the sultan repulsed the Anjouan invaders. After the victory, around 1832 or 1833, the people of Mohéli proclaimed Ramanetaka to be the ruler of the island.[79]

Ramanetaka's rule came under threat when the Sakalava migrations arrived at Mayotte. Andriantsouly and his followers arrived in Mayotte around the same time Ramanetaka became ruler of Mohéli. Ramanetaka already faced considerable opposition from the Muslims who lived on Mohéli. Ramanetaka converted to Islam and took the name Abd-el-Rhaman, perhaps to deflect their criticism of him.[80] He was not able to quell the anger fomented by the arrival of the Sakalava in Mayotte. Between roughly 1832 and 1836, a series of wars led by the Malagasy migrants engulfed the Comoros and increased political instability throughout the Indian Ocean world.[81]

Upon his arrival in Mayotte, the former Sakalava king Andriantsouly did not get along with Boina Combo, despite their long friendship. The ambitious Andriantsouly seized control of Mayotte from Boina Combo in 1833. Boina Combo asked Ramanetaka for assistance and, after defeating Andriantsouly, Ramanetaka himself took control of Mayotte.[82] Andriantsouly returned to Anjouan and attempted to incite the sultan of Anjouan to attack Ramanetaka again, as he had a few years earlier.[83]

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[78] On the long history of strife between these islands, especially Anjouani aggression, see Chapter 6.

[79] Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 153. Another source states he took power in 1829: Said Bakari Bin Sultani Ahmed, *The Swahili Chronicle of Ngazija*, ed. Lyndon Harries (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University, 1977), 113.

[80] Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 154.

[81] Martin, *Comores*, 1: 132.

[82] Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 218-9. Boina Combo was, according to Gevrey, related to Andriantsouli, as his mother was Sakalava. Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 216. See also Martin, *Comores*, 1: 105, who describes a blood alliance between the sultan of Mayotte and the Sakalava in 1806-7.

[83] Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 219.

A few years later, in 1836, the sultan of Anjouan, Abdallah, sent an expedition of Anjouan, Comorian, Mohélian, and Sakalava troops to attack Mayotte. A strong wind struck the boats, according to some observers, and while Andriantsouly escaped, other Sakalava warriors were captured. Abdallah, the sultan of Anjouan, died in captivity in Mayotte. After the defeat of his enemies, Ramanetaka resumed his role of sultan in Mohéli, until he died in 1841.[84] He allowed Andriantsouly to take the title of sultan in Mayotte, where he ruled until around 1840.[85] Both rulers experienced considerable resistance from local communities but adeptly played factions against each other. They also benefited with their connections to Madagascar, particularly with merchant communities, to consolidate their rule.

When Andriantsouly died, the French took advantage of the ensuing disorder in the region and negotiated for control of Mayotte.[86] On April 25, 1841, they signed a treaty, annexing Mayotte in the name of France.[87] Following the loss of Mauritius, and its commodious harbor of Port Louis to the British, the French desired a trading port in the southwestern Indian Ocean.[88] They had been developing colonies in coastal regions of Madagascar for centuries and, more recently, during the early decades of the nineteenth

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[84] Martin, *Comores*, 1: 158; Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 155, gives the date as 1842, which seems incorrect.

[85] Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 225. These events are also described by Ahmed, *Swahili Chronicle* , 112-3.

[86] Some argued that Andriantsouly negotiated with the French for support in return for allowing the French to seize control of the island. Ranaivoson, *Madagascar*, 42.

[87] Treaty for Mayotte in 1841, in *Madagascar, fonds historique, pièces diverses concernant Nossi-Bé, Mayotte et la côte Nord-Ouest de Madagascar (1841-1897)*, "4z/151-167," Centre des Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, France; Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 227. The British complained that Mayotte had previously been a dependency of Anjouan until a Sakalava chief seized the island and sold it to the French. See Josiah Napier, letter to Palmerston, November 1, 1848, in Letters from the Consul of the Comoros (Johanna), "AA 1/5," ZNA, f. 7.

[88] Martin, Comores, 1: 115.

century, on Île Sainte Marie and on the east coast of Madagascar, at Point Teintingue.[89] When the French took control of Mayotte, the island was home to a diverse population. According to a French survey, there were 300 "Arabs," 700 Antaloatra or Mahoris (the French had difficulty telling them apart), 600 Sakalava, and 1,200-1,300 hundred slaves, of both African and Malagasy descent.[90]

The French also took control of the island of Nosy Be, just off the northwest coast of Madagascar, in the same 1841 treaty.[91] Starting around 1837, the Merina attacked plantations and towns on Nosy Be and Nosy Kumba, where many Sakalava had fled to from Majunga. The Merina claimed the attacks were retribution for Sakalava attacks on Merina-controlled Majunga.[92] Following a voyage of a French ship to northwestern Madagascar in 1839, the Sakalava queen of the island of Nosy Be, "Tsioumeik (Bioumeke)" asked for French support against Merina incursions. The queen would later sign over the islands of Nosy Be and the Nosy Kumba to the French.[93] She also renounced her claims to the west coast of Madagascar from the bay of Passandava to Cape St Vincent.[94] The French declared much of the west coast of Madagascar to be

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[89] Point Teintingue was near present-day Manompana, on the main island, due west of Ile Sainte Marie. The French called a *kabary* with prominant leaders on ile Sainte Marie in 1818, see the report of the signed treaty provided by the French commercial agent Jean Baptiste Sylvain Roux in "1/z 1-159." The Malagasy of île Sainte Marie submitted to French rule "with joy," if this was true, it was due to increasing violence emanating from the east coast of Madagascar. In the same year, Roux took possession of Point Teintingue. This act is also found in "1/z 1-159."

[90] Gevrey, *Essai sur les Comores*, 251. Thousands of people fled from the Comoros archipelago to the East African coast, to places such as Lamu, and by 1862, "between three and four thousand" lived in Zanzibar. Ibid., 148; William Coudel, letter, 24 February 182, "AA 1/5," f. 223.

Many of the original residents of Mayotte had fled from the island following the wars, although these migrations may have begun with the Malagasy raids earlier in the century. See Chapter 6.

[91] The treaty was ratified in France in 1843: Martin, *Comores*, 1: 148-51.

[92] McLeod, *Madagascar*, 247.

[93] François Pollen, D.C. van Dam, S. C. Snellen van Vollenhoven, Edm. de Sélys Longchamps, C. K. Hoffmann, J. G. de Man, *Recherches sur la faune de Madagascar et de ses dépendances: d'après les découvertes de François P. L. Pollen et D. C. van Dam*, part 1 (Leyde: Steenhoff, 1869), 157.

[94] McLeod, *Madagascar*, 93.

under French protection. The Sakalava rulers even gave the French permission to send Catholic priests into the region.[95]

When the French began to colonize Mayotte and Nosy Be, the only protest to the establishment of these colonies came from the Omani sultan Said of Zanzibar. The sultan claimed that earlier pleas from the Sakalava for his assistance against the Merina had led to the establishment of an Omani protectorate over the islands. In 1840, Said begged the British to help him defend "his subjects" of Nosy Be and Mayotte against "the encroachments of the French."[96] A few years later, after the treaty was signed, he again wrote to the queen of England and argued that "the French nation" was "continually interfering with my People and Possessions... tampering with the people of the islands... and it is well known to all men that the people of those islands are the subjects of Zanzibar."[97] These complaints came too late. The French ignored the protests and the British did little to aid the sultan at Zanzibar.[98]

Meanwhile, the French attempted to convert the land on Nosy Be and Mayotte to profitable sugar plantations. The French colonies struggled to find new sources for labor, due to the abolition of the slave trade, and they lived in the constant fear of insurrection by the few Malagasy they employed.[99] Many of the local people left Nosy Be following French colonization, so workers had to be imported from East Africa or Madagascar.[100] The French attempted to address the labor shortage by acquiring *engagé* (contract) labor

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[95] See the French report of 1859, in Fonds historique, Madagascar, pièces diverses concernant Nossi-Bé, Mayotte et la côte Nord-Ouest de Madagascar (1841-1897), "4z/45-60."

[96] Hamerton, letter to L. R. Reid, 4 November 1840, Outward: Political and Secret Department, "AA 3/1," 87.

[97] Translated letter to the Queen of England from the Imam of Muscat to Lord Palmerston, 19 August 1848, Letters from British Foreign Office, Inwards, "AA 1/4," 181.

[98] Martin, Comores, 1: 159; Pollen, *Recherches*, 158.

[99] Martin, *Comores*, 1: 215-229.

[100] Jehanne-Emmanuelle Monnier, *Esclaves de la canne à sucre: engagés et planteurs à Nossi-Bé, Madagascar 1850-1880* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006), 38.

from East Africa, Madagascar, and the Comoro Islands between 1850 and 1880.[101] It was a source of tension between the British and the French that the French continued to hire laborers and work them in slave-like conditions.[102]

Malagasy continued to live in the northern portion of Nosy Be, where they grew rice, sweet potatoes, and manioc, although many of these people decided to work for the French, due in part to recurring famines striking Nosy Be.[103] The Sakalava on Nosy Be tried to continue trading with groups throughout the Indian Ocean. Around five hundred traders, mostly based in the Nosy Be port of Ambanourou, exchanged goods with ships arriving from the north. During the 1860s, they traded with merchants from Mozambique, Zanzibar, and Bombay.[104] Despite their continued presence on the island, the Sakalava had to contend with French laws and controls over their movements. For instance, in 1856, the Sakalava leader "Temboula Ben Soultan" had to write to the French commandant at Nosy Be for permission to travel on the island and visit his mother's tomb.[105]

In 1844, in addition to becoming a permanent fixture in the Zanzibari sultan's court, the British created a consulate in Anjouan to observe French activities in Nosy Be and Mayotte.[106] British commercial interests also motivated this development. The British consulate official described Anjouan as depopulated by constant wars and battles.

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[101] Monnier, *Esclaves*, 12. They also imported "Makoa" workers, probably from Mozambique: see the list of workers given on 16 October 1867, in "4z/1-13."

[102] William Sunley letter, March 31, 1858, "AA 1/5," f. 118; there are several other letters on this issue included in the collection.

[103] Monnier, *Esclaves*, 42-8.

[104] Monnier, *Esclaves*, 21-2.

[105] Written in 1856, in "4z/1-13."

[106] Martin, *Comores,* 318-20. In 1848, the British became convinced that the "nearest living relative of Radama" was the queen of Mohéli and discussed reinstating her as ruler of Madagascar, as preferable to the hostile and xenophobic queen Ranavalona: Josiah Napier, letter to Palmerston, 1 November 1848, "AA 1/5," ff. 3-4.

The British hoped this country, with "an enlightened government," could become a prosperous trading island following the cessation of the slave trade. The British consulate officer in Anjouan concluded, "there is no country in these parts so eligible for the settlement of Europeans."[107] The British abolitionists made similar arguments in Zanzibar and envisioned abolition of the slave trade ushering in a period of commercial growth to East Africa. British warships monitored the waters of the Mozambique Channel and attempted to eliminate French imports of laborers to their island colonies.

Under Merina Rule

Struggles between the British and French came in the midst of turmoil within the Merina Empire. The death of Radama and the succession of his wife, Ranavalona, marked a turning point in relations between the Merina Empire and Europeans. Radama had welcomed Christian missionaries to Madagascar and encouraged thousands of them to teach the Malagasy to read and write using the Latin alphabet.[108] His rule was seen as having an "enlightening and humanizing" influence on the Malagasy.[109]

Ranavalona decided to renounce Christianity. According to an English missionary, this change was due to "the influence of the idol-keepers, and of the supporters of divination and other superstitions of the country."[110] The queen dismissed all missionaries from the country. She punished Christian Malagasy with "fine,

[107] "Report of the Island of Johanna," 22 June 1849, "AA 1/5," ff. 11-14.

[108] William Ellis, *Three Visits to Madagascar During the Years 1853, 1854, 1856* (Philadelphia: Bradley & Co., 1867), 18. The graduates were then employed in his government, but without pay. Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 125.

[109] Ellis, *Three Visits*, 19.

[110] Ibid. On the political maneuvering that led up to her accession, see Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 126.

imprisonment, or unredeemable slavery; and... death."[111] The British in particular presented themselves as injured by this switch and expressed concern over the decline of the Merina Empire.

British despair also stemmed from practical concerns over the supply of food for Mauritius. Ranavalona outlawed trade with foreigners. The French and British even sent warships to Tamatave to intervene in 1845.[112] Even after Ranavalona's death in 1861, dissent over the direction of the Merina Empire continued. Her heir, Radama II, became involved in a struggle between xenophobic forces in the kingdom and the British.[113] In this struggle, Radama II was killed and his wife, Rabodo, took the throne in 1863.[114] She welcomed Christian missionaries to the island and said she would give protection to all foreigners on the island.[115] Despite this victory, political clashes continued within Madagascar, between European and Malagasy forces, for the control of commerce in the island.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, European colonies continued to rely on the produce of Madagascar. The British of Mauritius, however, purchased commodities from India by 1833 and seldom traded for food in southwestern Madagascar after this date. The Merina tried to control and profit from this trade, largely by exacting duties for trade from Majunga. [116] The governor, exercising "almost unlimited authority" over the Majunga province, tried to end smuggling. He inflicted capital punishment for the production of counterfeit money or the burying of money, which the Merina state

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[111] Ellis, *Three Visits*, 21.
[112] Ibid., 20.
[113] McLeod, *Madagascar*, 184-7. It is worth nothing that "Rasalimo," the Sakalava princess married to Radama to "seal the peace" between the Sakalava and the Merina attended the accession of Radama II (previously Rakoto) to the throne. Ibid., 175-8.
[114] Ibid., 191.
[115] Ibid., 191-2.
[116] Ibid., 254, 270.

defined as "the property of the sovereign."[117] Despite these harsh rules, the Merina governor faced difficulties in controlling the Sakalava economically as he had previously.[118] High duties drove Europeans away from trading at Majunga and led them to visit other ports.[119]

When traders could not purchase goods from Merina-controlled Tamatave or Majunga, they went to other ports.[120] Perhaps due to the lack of concerted Merina control in the region, Sakalava merchants continued to profit from foreign trade on the coast. During the mid-nineteenth century, between eighty and ninety tons of rice were exported from the island every year, mostly to Mozambique. Exports of cattle, wax, and gums also fueled the local economy on the west coast.[121] In towns of this region, as many as a thousand head of cattle were penned in preparation for their sale to passing ships.[122] Mozambique settlements relied upon the island for rice, the Mascarene and Seychelles imported cattle from Madagascar, and the French replaced their slaves with Malagasy contract laborers.[123] American whalers still bought goods to the west coast, especially Tulear and St. Augustine's Bay.[124]

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[117] Joseph Barlow Felt Osgood, *Notes of travel: or, Recollections of Majunga, Zanzibar, Muscat, Aden, Mocha, and other eastern ports* (Salem, MA: George Creamer, 1854), 14.

[118] McLeod, *Madagascar*, 246-7.

[119] Osgood, *Notes of Travel*, 7.

[120] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 132.

[121] Ibid., 245-6.

[122] Joseph S. 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: Abraham Kingdon, 1875), 18.

[123] McLeod, *Madagascar*, 247-9.

[124] These ships, the British observer McLeod suggests, may have been slavers: "while the sperm-whale is often fished with success along this coast by American whalers, under which guise many slavers visit the Mozambique Channel and baffle the British cruisers in those waters." Ibid., 277, see also 281.

Economically, the Sakalava ports were still central to trade in the Indian Ocean.[125] The strength of trade on the northwest coast of Madagascar, in particular, was a testament to the extent to which the Sakalava had created lasting ties with merchant communities in the region, even if these traders increasingly operated outside of Sakalava (and Merina) control. Malagasy migrations to the Comoro Islands and East Africa only increased this commerce. The Antaloatra, from northwest Madagascar, comprised as much as thirty percent of the population of Anjouan. The Antaloatra sent letters to Boina and Mozambique to coordinate commerce in the region as late as 1879.[126].

Attacks on Merina troops in Sakalava territory also continued throughout the nineteenth century. As one British observer noted during the 1890s, the Sakalava kings could lead large armies and they continued to train young warriors in the use of firearms. The Sakalava armies had several advantages over the Merina.[127] Most importantly, they knew the countryside well. This knowledge meant that they could move easily following any threats from the Merina. As one observer astutely noted, the Sakalava lacked large towns that Merina forces could conquer.[128] The Merina constantly faced what we would now call guerilla warfare. The Sakalava rulers also allied with the French representatives living on the nearby island of Nosy Be, in hopes of attaining weapons and support for their struggles. [129] In return, the French sought engagé laborers for their island sugar colonies and purchased food. The Merina tried to eliminate these exchanges and the

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[125] Nancy Jane Hafkin, "Trade, Society, and Politics in Northern Mozambique, c. 1753-1913" (PhD diss., Boston University, 1973), 53-4.

[126] See the letter example in Sewell, *The Sakalava*, 55.

[127] It has been suggested that the raids of the Sakalava posed little threat to Merina rule, as raiders "showed no inclination to assert any system of regular territorial control over the highlands. Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*¸132.

[128] George Herbert Smith, *Among the Menabe; or, Thirteen months on the West coast of Madagascar* (London: 1896), 91-2.

[129] See French note in 1880, in "4z/45-60."

French constantly schemed to overthrow the Merina Empire and its chokehold on exports from the island.[130]

As early as 1842, following their seizure of Mayotte and Nosy Be, the French developed a plan to land at Bombetoc with a large French force. From there, the French would arm their allies, the Sakalava. French and Sakalava soldiers would march together to Antananarivo and defeat the Merina.[131] One other plan from the 1860s involved a few thousand French troops, "assisted by the north Sacalavas, who could easily be induced to join them." They would, "without difficulty, march on the capital."[132]

Judging by the abundant correspondence between the French on Nosy Be and Sakalava leaders on the main island, the Sakalava were receptive to French plans. The leaders probably desired the influx of arms such an agreement would entail. The Merina worried about the French smuggling arms and gunpowder to different Sakalava leaders.[133] Merina governors tried to prevent French visits to Sakalava royalty in the port of Baly. The planned alliance between the French and the Sakalava never was never concluded, perhaps because the Sakalava were too divided to work with the French, or because the French themselves lacked the resources for following through on such an attack.[134]

Despite the failure of the French plan, the Sakalava resisted the Merina in subtle ways. The Merina wanted to oversee the transformation of the Sakalava into productive subjects within the Merina Empire. According to a British sea captain, it appeared that

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[130] "Renseignemens sur Madagascar" on the Hova army, c. 1846, "MAD151/208."

[131] Morel, note, 1842, in "MAD17/32-33."

[132] J. C. Wilson, "Notes on the West Coast of Madagascar," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 36, no. (1866): 246.

[133] Letter to the commandant of Nosy Be, 1883, "4z/1-13."

[134] There was supposedly "little cohesion amongst them [Sakalava rulers]" on the west coast of Madagascar: Joseph Mullens, *Twelve Months in Madagascar* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1875), 167.

the Merina wanted to "keep the Sacalavas in such a state of subjection, that they cannot call an inch of ground their own."[135] In reality, the inhabitants of Sakalava villages in western Madagascar maintained their allegiance to Sakalava kings.[136] The "independent Sakalava" continued to worship their ancestors, royal ancestors in particular.[137]

Even during the 1870s, the Sakalava frequently stole Merina cattle and taunted them. The most common name for the Merina was *amboalambo*, or pig-dogs.[138] Perhaps due to the Merina's "dread of their courage and skill in war," Sakalava chiefs carved out a "no man's land" between their own land and Merina-controlled territory, creating a patchwork of territories that were under Sakalava control.[139] Within their territory, the Sakalava lived "thin and scattered" and focused on producing enough food for their own survival, including fish, plantains, and beef from their cattle.[140] The people were constantly in a state of war against the Merina. When one British missionary visited Menabe, the men were performing a "war song" with their "guns and spears" and complaining of the Merina theft of three hundred cattle from their territory in the last month.[141] The Merina outposts bordering on Sakalava territory frequently could not trade locally for goods. Merina soldiers resorted to theft for survival, which in turn brought

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[135] Frederick Barnard, *A three years' cruize in the Mozambique Channel* (Freeport: Books for Libraries Press, 1868), 218. See also Kestrell-Cornish, who visited some of the Sakalava chiefs in the 1870s, Bishop 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), 11. One of the most important demands for the organization of the Merina government, and one of the most hated, was the *fanompoana* labor demands. Sakalava, even "from remote parts," were ordered to construct bridges, clear roads, and deliver messages: Ibid., 14.

[136]. Sewell, *The Sakalava*, 13.

[137] Ibid., 308.

[138] *Amboa* (in the Sakalava dialect, the word derived from Swahili *mbwa*) means dog. *Lambo*, a wild pig. Mullens, *Twelve Months in Madagascar*, 168.

[139] Ibid., 178.

[140] Ibid., 317-8.

[141] Sewell, *The Sakalava*, 14-5. On Missionary sources for the study of Madagascar, see Larson, *History and Memory*, 33-4. These cattle raids echo those of previous centuries. See Chapter 4.

retribution from Sakalava leaders and warriors. To visiting missionaries, many of the Sakalava still appeared to be a "wild, lawless race."[142]

Meanwhile, the French gradually assumed power over Madagascar, taking advantage of conflicts within the Merina state.[143] The British lacked the resources to dominate Madagascar and they eventually ceded their claim to Madagascar to the French. As the French gathered their resources for the invasion of the island, they relied upon and supported traders based in northwestern Madagascar, and the French provided rebels on the coast with imports in return.[144] The Merina leaders faced severe economic difficulties, as well as continued dissent from groups within the empire, including the Sakalava. The French entered Antananarivo in 1895 and took control of the government.[145] Following the colonization of the island, the French struggled to unite and rule this divided island.

Being Sakalava

In the midst of these political and economic changes, the Sakalava maintained their religious practices and loyalty to their leaders. For the entire nineteenth century, Europeans viewed Sakalava beliefs and practices as a rejection of Merina and European influence. Even when the Sakalava converted to Christianity, their practices belied a continuing belief in the divinity of royal ancestors.[146] The missionaries described certain

[142] Kestrell-Cornish, *Journal of a Tour of Exploration in the North of Madagascar*, 15.
[143] Randrianja and Ellis, *Madagascar*, 152.
[144] Gwyn Campbell, *An Economic History*, 15, 232.
[145] Ibid., 14.
[146] Mullens, *Twelve Months in Madagascar*, 319. See also Smith, *Among the Menabe*, 21.Many of these visitors saw the refusal to convert as a sign of the influence of Arabs and the Islamic faith on the coast: Kestrell-Cornish, *Journal of a Tour of Exploration in the North of Madagascar*, 20. These visitors saw the refusal to convert as a sign of the influence of Arabs and the Islamic faith on the coast. There are no recordings of the numbers of converts to Islam from this period, although during the nineteenth century,

local practices, including the fati-dra, a blood ceremony creating a bond between the Sakalava rulers and the missionaries. A local advisor told them this covenant was part of a "belief in the sanctity of the hazo manga [*hazomanga*]" which was posted in villages as a sort of monument.[147] Missionaries dismissed such practices as "superstitious observances."[148] When missionaries encountered Muslims, they dismissed them as "Arab" and highlighted their involvement in the slave trade.[149] Europeans had begun to identify the Sakalava by their religious practices during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

These practices also demonstrated beliefs about the history of the Sakalava Empire and the ordering of their worlds. Sakalava ceremonies created an alliance between the past, present, and future of the people in western Madagascar. Origin stories repeated by the Sakalava asserted that their ancestors gained control of the west coast of the island through a combination of divine will and superior military strength.[150] The remembered past, as recited in these oral histories, united Sakalava communities during periods of strife and uncertainty.

According to tradition, following the interpretation of signs by royal priests, known as the *ombiasy*, the Sakalava chose to live in Menabe during the sixteenth

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a large class of merchants, known as the Karana and Silamo, dominated trade from the Sakalava ports in the northwest. See Blanchy, *Karana et Banians*, 76-103.

[147] Smith, *Among the Menabe*, 21-23.

[148] Ibid., 101.

[149] Mullens, *Twelve Months in Madagascar*, 316.

[150] For the best presentation of this myth, see Birkeli, "Folklore Sakalava: recueilli dans la region de Morondava," 171-192. These myths are paralleled by Merina oral traditions, on their conquest of the highlands of Madagascar: see Callet, *Histoire des rois*, 1: 8-15. Other sources include: *Contes de la côte ouest de Madagascar, recueillis et traduits par N. J. Gueunier* (Antananarivo: Ambozontany, 1991?); Andre Dandouau, *Contes populaires des Sakalava et des Tsimihety de la region d'Analalava* (Alger: Jules Carbonel, 1922); Charles Guillain, *Documents sur l'histoire, la geographie et le commerce de la partie occidentale de Madagascar* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1845); Noel, *Ile de Madagascar: Recherches sur les Sakkalava*.

century.[151] Cardinal directions, numbers, and colors all represented the ordering of the universe. The ombiasy interpreted signs given through the positioning of seeds, the orientation of houses, and ritual killings of cattle. In this way, the ombiasy assisted the Sakalava in founding their state in Menabe.[152] The ombiasy also provided the kings with advice and protective amulets, known as *ody* (or *aoly*). The ody were endowed with *hasina* (sacred power) to protect the wearer against evil.[153] The kings hung the ody around their necks and these talismans allowed the kings to resist gunshots. The ombiasy also created ody from cattle horns and decorated them with auspicious symbols, to protect people against cattle theft and other hazards of living on the west coast.[154] These ody and access to the ombiasy provided spiritual strength to the leaders of the southeast.[155] This part of the origin history resonated with everyday practice of the

[151] Discussed at length in Ballarin, *Les reliques royales à Madagascar: source de légitimation et enjeu de pouvoir, XVIIIe-XXe siècles*, 53-86; It remains hard to historicize even this aspect of Sakalava divine kingship, as most sources date from the nineteenth century. Even if the various aspects – ancestor worship, etc – only began with the nineteenth century, the root beliefs appear to have been similar during the 18th century, according to contemporary beliefs. For example, see Drury's discussion of ancestor worship, tombs, and the respect the Sakalava paid to the Vazimba: Robert Drury, *The adventures of Robert Drury* (London: Printed and sold by W. Meadows 1743; Hull Reprinted for Stodart and Craggs, 1807), 351. People throughout western and southern Madagascar believed in the power of the ombiasy as diviners. A French observer also noted the presence of "universities" or schools in the southeast to train the ombiasy, so these same priests may have been active elsewhere in the island. See the report of French colonist Modave, near Fort Dauphin, during 1763?, in COL C/5a/2. The Ombiasy probably also tried to protect and treat diseases: see the eighteenth-century memoir on diseases in Madagascar in "COL C/5a/7."

[152] The ombiasy of the southeast Madagascar also knew how to write and read sorabe texts but there is no sign of Arabico-Malagasy writing in the western part of the island. On the religious practices of the southeast of Madagascar, see various documents in COL C/2/2.

[153] On the Antemoro (southeastern Madagascar group) origins of ody, see Jacques Lombard, *Le royaume sakalava du Menabe, 17è-20è: essai d'analyse d'un système politique à Madagascar* (Paris: Editions de l'ORSTOM, 1988), 14. Drury describes the use of the "Owley" in southern Madagascar: Drury, *The Adventures of Robert Drury*, 77.

[154] For the image of such an ody, see "Kingdoms of Madagascar: Maroserana and Merina", exhibit at the Metropolitan museum art, New York, catalog available at: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/madg_1/hd_madg_1.htm <accessed April 6, 2009>.

[155] They may have even worn them during throughout the eighteenth century, according to one French visitor. The Frenchman describes the use of "aule" by the Sakalava of Boina as a way of providing the Malagasy to be "idolatrous." "Relation d'un voyage fait a Madagascar en 1751 par Louis Fort, de Carthagene", in COACM, 5: 249.

Sakalava during the twentieth century, when they continued to wear ody around their necks.[156]

The origin histories recorded during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries also emphasized the development of hierarchical relationships in the past. Sakalava rulers expressed their power through ceremonies and through physical monuments to the power of royal ancestors. Kings erected buildings at sacred places, called *doany*, where royal reliquaries were kept.[157] These tombs reminded people passing through the territory to worship royal ancestors and established Sakalava control of key locations. When a Sakalava ruler travelled, he or she would first visit his ancestral tomb, taking piece of *tany masina*, or sacred earth, from the land surrounding the tomb on their trip.[158] Much like the ody talismans produced by royal priests, the earth protected and ensured the success of the visitor's travels.[159] The compounds that held the relics, or *dady*, were marked by wooden monuments called the *hazomanga*, "blue wood," meant to be used in prayer, sacrifices, and boys' circumcision ceremonies.[160] Tomb decorations represented similar themes found elsewhere on the island, especially cattle wealth and dependence on sea trade and travel, but also emphasized fertility.[161] The Sakalava continued to build and use these compounds as centers of worship during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, even under the pressures of Merina and French colonization.

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[156] Walter D. Marcuse, *Through Western Madagascar: In Quest of the Golden Bean* (University of California, 1914), 195.

[157] Chantal Radimilahy, "Sacred Sites in Madagascar," in *Sacred Sites, Sacred Places*, ed. David L Carmichael, Jane Hubert, Brian Reeves and Audhild Schanche (London: Routledge, 1994), 84.

[158] Ibid., 82-5.

[159] Dean, "Narrative of one of the crew belonging to the Ship Sussex, MSS. Eur. B. 2. /K. 11," British Library, ff. 29-30.

[160] Birkeli, "Folklore Sakalava: recueilli dans la region de Morondava," 178. On connections with the traditions elsewhere in Madagascar, see Jeanne Dina, "The Hazomanga among the Masikoro of Southwest Madagascar: Identity and History," *Ethnohistory* 48, no. 1-2 (2001): 13-30.

[161] On Sakalava tombs, see *Art sakalava: Statues, objets, photographies, documents sonores* (Antananarivo, Madagascar: 1963); Sophie Goedefroit and Jacques Lombard, *Andolo: l'art funéraire sakalava à Madagascar*, Collection "Musées" (Paris: Biro, 2007).

During the late nineteenth century, royalty demonstrated their power through "the possession of what is commonly called the 'dady,' that is the relics of a former sovereign."[162] A British missionary, visiting Menabe during the mid-nineteenth century, described, "a procession leaving the town... it was a great occasion for they were taking the 'dady' down to the river to be bathed." He was unable to witness the actual ceremony, as his "presence there would have been strongly resented."[163]

This practice appears to have continued and perhaps expanded during the following century.[164] A visiting anthropologist described the ceremony as the *fitampoha*, the washing of relics, in Menabe during the 1950s and 1960s.[165] The ceremony involved several days of marching, the bathing of royal relics in the river, and trance ceremonies (*tromba*). According to anthropologist Suzanne Chazan-Gillic, the fitampoha of 1968 was not a ceremony just about remembering the past.[166] In reality, the ceremony likely reflected the exercise of Sakalava power and revealed how it worked in peoples' lives.[167]

At sacred sites (doany), Sakalava ancestors spoke through royal spirit mediums known as *tromba* and communicated with the living monarchs. During the reformation and collapse of the Sakalava kingdom, rulers increasingly used spirit mediums to call upon ancestors for advice and reaffirm their legitimacy.[168] The use of these ceremonies spread throughout western Madagascar (and Mayotte) and tromba was widely practiced

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[162] Smith, *Among the Menabe,* 101-2. See also Gillian Feeley-Harnik, "The King's Men in Madagascar Slavery, Citizenship and Sakalava Monarchy," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 52, no. 2 (1982): 34-5.

[163] Smith, *Among the Menabe; or, Thirteen months on the West coast of Madagascar,* 102.

[164] The practice of guarding and worshiping royalty at tombs increased even further during the twentieth century. Françoise Raison-Jourde, "Introduction," in *Les Souverains de Madagascar: L'histoire royale et ses résurgences contemporaines*, ed. Françoise Raison-Jourde (Paris: Karthala, 1983), 50-1.

[165] Bernard Schlemmer, "La domination royal au Menabe: Détournement colonial, survivance et décomposition" in *Les Souverains de Madagascar,* ed. Raison-Jourde, 402.

[166] Suzanne Chazan-Gillic, "Le fiampoha de 1968 ou l'efficacité symbolique du mythe de la royauté sakalava dans l'actualité politique et économique malgache", in Ibid., 467.

[167] Ibid., 468-470.

[168] Raison-Jourde, "Introduction," in Ibid., 48-9.

throughout the nineteenth century. The ceremony also underwent several resurgences during the twentieth century, particularly in the 1960s, as an anti-colonial ritual.[169] According to scholar Françoise Raison-Jourde, tromba reproduced power structures and enforced Sakalava hierarchical relationships.[170] These practices constituted a restatement of Sakalava history in the present day and provided a means for addressing contemporary concerns.[171]

Similarly, the tombs and relics of western Madagascar were physical representations of royal genealogy. According to anthropologist Gillian Feeley-Harnik, Sakalava used the language of kinship to express hierarchical relationships, particularly between people and their sovereigns. Tracing genealogy was a potent means for asserting power and leadership. In northwest Madagascar during the 1980s, the sovereign clan could trace their genealogy back twenty-seven generations. Nobles could name somewhere between nine and fifteen generations, commoners, about three or five, and slaves had no kin "by definition."[172] The coastal Vezo fishermen, for instance, reported that the Sakalava used genealogy as a manner of control and domination during the Sakalava Empire.[173] More recently, the genealogy of Sakalava rulers has found physical and material expression in the doany tombs, in the practice of tromba, and in the washing

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[169] Ibid., 51.
[170] Ibid., 53.
[171] Ibid., 59; see also the account of tromba in Michael Lambek, "The Sakalava Poiesis of History: Realizing the Past through Spirit Possession in Madagascar," *American Ethnologist* 25, no. 2 (1998): 106-127.
[172] Feeley-Harnik, "The King's Men," 34; see also Sophie Goedefroit, *A l'ouest de Madagascar: Les Sakalava du Menabe* (Paris: Karthala, 1998), 96.
[173] Rita Astuti, *People of the Sea: Identity and Descent among the Vezo of Madagascar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 74-5.

of royal relics. Sakalava hierarchy was a still a powerful force in peoples' lives during the twentieth century.[174]

More recently, new groups of people have come to be recognized as Sakalava.[175] Despite the political disintegration of the Sakalava Empire, new Sakalava clans were created during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as those of slaves. These people without ancestors, *olo tsy manadrazana*, were seen as inferior and impure.[176] Many of the people without kin, descendents of slaves, were involved in relationships of dependence with the Sakalava royalty.[177] Gillian Feeley-Harnik has described how they participated in various forms of royal work and how the Sakalava rulers established relationships of dependency with the workers.[178] The Sakalava rulers, in effect, became the kin of the workers and the workers became Sakalava.

By the twentieth century, when anthropologists asked the Vezo (a coastal group), the Masikoro (from the interior), and the Mikea (of the forests) what relatives or clan they were from ("Ino razanao?", literally "Who are/were your ancestors?"), their answers would be "Sakalava vezo," or "Sakalava masikoro." These answers call our attention to the expansiveness of the Sakalava identity, perhaps particularly during periods of intense political transformation such as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[179]

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[174] Gillian Feeley-Harnik, "Sakalava Royal Work: A Study of Aesthetics in Labor and Government" (New York University, 1976), 146-7.

[175] See, for example, Goedefroit, *A l'ouest de Madagascar*, 52-3, 79.

[176] Ibid., 111.

[177] Despite the end of slavery and formal Sakalava control, people in northwest continue to work for the royalty. Feeley-Harnik, "The King's Men," 32.

[178] Ibid., 34-40.

[179] Goedefroit, *A l'ouest de Madagascar* , 80-2.

The Collapse of an Empire?

Work done by anthropologists during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries testifies to the continuing importance of the Sakalava Empire in shaping the lives of people in western Madagascar. Conceptions of the Sakalava past have been influenced by their ideas about hierarchy and the divine world. People believe that royal ancestors have the power to affect their daily lives. By continuing to experience this past vividly, the Sakalava did not view their conquest by colonial powers as resulting in the collapse of their states and empire, but rather the reformation of these political systems. As Michael Lambek, in his observations of Sakalava tromba, describes, "the space of performance enables the simultaneous display of successive temporalities. Sakalava history is thus additive in that, in principle, later generations do not displace earlier ones but perdure alongside them."[180] The continual influence of the past on the present in Madagascar challenges historians seeking to understand the trajectory of the Sakalava Empire. We cannot identify the origins of the Sakalava state any more than we can date when the Sakalava Empire ceased to be influential in the political, cultural, and spiritual realm. In a sense, the origins and the reformation of the Sakalava Empire coexist. If seeking to identify the historical origins of the empire is like worshipping a false "idol," in the words of Marc Bloch, then perhaps finding an ending is as well.[181]

[180] Michael Lambek, "The Sakalava Poiesis of History," 108.
[181] Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (Manchester University Press, 1992), 24.

Conclusion

By the nineteenth century, globalization had ensured that the island of Madagascar was a critical link in world trade. Living between two oceanic systems of exchange, the Malagasy supplied commodities that could mean the difference between economic prosperity and financial disaster for European, African, Arab, and Asian merchants. The history of how this trade developed, how they obtained these supplies, and how they established relationships with the merchants sheds light on how communities within these systems of exchange interacted and shaped globalization during the early modern period.

Would the Sakalava state have transformed into a powerful empire in Madagascar without globalization? Without global trade, there would have been fewer incentives for Sakalava rulers to lead this transformation. This research has shown that the response of the Sakalava elites to the increase in global trade in Madagascar has been significant in shaping the development of the Sakalava Empire. Their desire to control this trade led them to resort to violence. As their control of trade expanded, so did their control of the land and their subjects. They became increasingly more powerful, especially after obtaining a monopoly over imports and exports, and the violence further increased. Their power came from the control of trade, monopolization of the movement of commodities within Madagascar, threats of violence, and establishment of alliances. Successful challenges to this control of trade by the Merinas, supported by Europeans, led to the weakening and eventual downfall of the Sakalava Empire in the nineteenth century.

This history demonstrates that global trade benefited elites. As global networks of exchange were created, powerful elites excluded the majority of their people from

participation in these networks. Leaders benefited from the work of their subjects and gained a disproportionate share of rewards from their engagement with foreign merchants. By mediating contact between Europeans and Malagasy, the Sakalava rulers created at least an illusion of absolute control and prevented the establishment of alternate trading relationships. European merchants did likewise.

Beneath the blood brotherhood ceremonies and presents of *eau de vie* were acts of violence within Madagascar that enabled the formation of cross-cultural connections. Elite traders at sea and leaders on land created elaborate ceremonies, marked by the consumption of food and alcohol in front of their subjects who were not allowed to participate. In this process, slaves, workers, and soldiers became faces in the crowd, merely observers in these rituals that created and recreated hierarchies on the beaches of Madagascar. Sakalava subjects have disappeared from the history of the Sakalava Empire.

Despite their exclusion from trading rituals, the workers of Madagascar had a role to play in the development of the global economy. The scholarship of globalization, particularly of trade routes in the Indian Ocean, largely focuses on the impact of the expanded production or export of luxury items such as cloth. European merchants sailed into the Indian Ocean in search of cheaper supplies of silk, pepper, cloves, and other goods, but food and labor fueled this global trade in luxury items. Without rice, salted beef, and laborers, merchants could not successfully supply Europeans with pepper, cloves, and coffee. When seen from this perspective, supplies of goods from Madagascar were one of the building blocks to the spread of global trade during the early modern period. The English, Portuguese, Dutch, and French all depended upon supplies from

Madagascar for their trading endeavors in the Indian Ocean. When the French were unable to purchase adequate goods from the east coast of the island, for instance, they were unable to maintain their naval fleets and colonies in the ocean. The French continually based their schemes for expansion in the ocean on the ability to purchase food and slaves on the island. In fact, most companies faced problems with profitability in part due to the lack of food and labor to support trading missions in the Indian Ocean.[1]

Without the slaves, farmers, and soldiers within Madagascar, the plans of European monopoly companies would have failed. When Sakalava leaders exchanged commodities with European merchants, elites on both sides of the beach relied upon their workers to acquire these commodities. These farmers, soldiers, and cattle herders fueled long-distance trade within and from Madagascar. As globalization increased during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the duties that fell upon these workers became more onerous. In many ways, this development echoes similar ones in Europe, as well as in the Americas. Historians have drawn attention to the role of factory workers (and slaves in the Americas) in powering an industrial revolution that left them impoverished.[2]

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[1] Holden Furber, *Rival empires of trade in the Orient, 1600-1800* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976).

[2] See debates on this issue particularly by George Dalton and Karl Polanyi: George Dalton, *Traditional tribal and peasant economies: an introductory survey of economic anthropology* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1971); Karl Polanyi, *The great transformation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957); Karl Polanyi, *Dahomey and the slave trade; an analysis of an archaic economy* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966).

Scholars have also examined the cloth production in India and they draw our attention to the role of family producers in powering the export of this desired good. See, for instance, Prasannan Parthasarathi, "Rethinking Wages and Competitiveness in the Eighteenth Century: Britain and South India," *Past & Present* 158 (Feb. 1998): 79-109; Morris D. Morris,"Towards a Reinterpretation of Nineteenth-Century Indian Economic History," *The Journal of Economic History* 23, no. 4 (Dec. 1963): 606-618; Vijaya Ramaswamy, "The Genesis and Historical Role of the Master Weavers in South Indian Textile Production," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 28, no. 3(1985) 294-325. Some of these scholars explicitly refer to cloth production in India as a moment of "proto-industrialisation." On this debate, see Ramaswamy, "Genesis and Historical Role," 294-6.

Over these centuries of increased trade, migration, and knowledge exchange, what did globalization mean for the fishermen, who went out every night in search of fish? What did it mean for the cattle herders focused on supplying their families with food? What did it mean to the farmers who sowed their fields and waited for rain? It would appear that the lives of non-elites hardly intersected with global trading networks and globalization did not affect their lives a great deal. Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, their families may have moved to new locations and found new opportunities for supporting themselves. Yet their day-to-day lives were not so very different during these centuries. One could hardly say that the events of these centuries in Madagascar had been transformative, at least from a certain perspective. Life in southwest Madagascar was not unchanging, but we should avoid attributing the changes people encountered during these centuries as due only to external pressures. Globalization altered how people viewed their world but did not always revolutionize how they interacted with each other.

There were some signs of broader shifts during this period due to new economic pressures and new systems of domination. Politically and economically powerful leaders mediated access to imported goods. They dictated the price of commodities and their movement in Madagascar. The leaders used the threat of military force to discipline the lives of their subjects and their place in the local economy. These leaders were no longer accountable to local councils that could express their displeasure with the actions of rulers. In particular, the expansion of Sakalava power over the western portion of the island had placed new demands on Malagasy communities and these demands increased during the colonial period. Laws and regulations now ensured the systematic subjugation

of most Malagasy who lacked access to channels of colonial power. This process was rooted in the seventeenth century, when elites began to dominate interactions with foreign traders, but continued through the colonial period. Globalization did not fundamentally alter how the Malagasy interacted with one another in communities, but it did alter their relationships with their rulers.

Between the seventeenth and late nineteenth centuries, Europeans gradually eliminated some of the flexibility African and Asian elites had in deciding how to engage with global trade. During this period as well, large numbers of people sought protection within centralized states and empires. The relationship between ruler and ruled underwent a transformation and was increasingly marked by inequality. By the colonial era, previously prosperous ports became backwaters and communities in these regions became impoverished. Populations that used to export rice became net importers. Along with the marginalization of suppliers in Madagascar came the development of increased wealth disparities among communities on the island.[3]

By the late nineteenth century, fewer and fewer ships visited the ports of southwestern Madagascar. Almost no ships went into St. Augustine's Bay, as captains preferred to deal directly with merchants at Tulear. With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the coming of steam-ships, fewer European captains stopped along the shores of Madagascar for food or laborers. In search of goods from India or China, they bypassed the shores of the island during the nineteenth century. Under French colonial

[3] In making sense of the growing imbalance between western and non-western societies during the nineteenth century, scholars in Africa and Asia have blamed economic dependency, political disputes, and the use of violence in European colonial policies. On this transition period in East Africa, see 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 in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770-1873* (London: J. Currey, 1987). See also Donald R. Wright, *The World and a Very Small Place in Africa* (Armonk, N.Y: M.E. Sharpe, 1997). The three scholars consider the transition to the colonial period in Africa from different perspectives.

rule, exports were controlled and colonial officials focused on increasing the cultivation of certain cash crops. The southwestern region became a backwater, primarily visited by tourists in search of the "real" untouched, authentic Madagascar.[4]

In 1914, Walter D. Marcuse published an account of his visit to the western portion of Madagascar, entitled *Through Western Madagascar in Quest of the Golden Bean*.[5] From the beginning of his narrative, Marcuse described the remoteness of southwestern Madagascar. Marcuse complained continually about the lack of roads and other problems that forced colonists to rely upon fishermen, farmers, and hunters to travel through Madagascar.[6] In many ways, the life he observed appeared similar to that found in the bay centuries earlier.

He described the cultural similarities between pastoralists living to the south of St. Augustine's Bay, the Mahafaly, and the Sakalava to the north, particularly in terms of religious beliefs.[7] These people all lived as farmers and herders. They farmed yams, bananas, and manioc, but relied heavily on their animal herds. In lean years, when the rivers did not rise, people moved with their herds in search of new pastureland.[8] He described the multitude of people moving to Tulear to trade. He observed women marching towards Tulear, with corn, beans, and manioc in baskets on their heads.[9]

A passing remark from Marcuse speaks to the increasing intervention of elites in the global exchanges during the colonial period. When his convoy passed a group of men

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[4] See the presentation of southern Madagascar in one popular guide for tourists: Gemma Pitcher and Patricia C. Wright, *Lonely Planet Madagascar & Comoros*, 4th ed. (Oakland, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 2004), 99.

[5] Walter D. Marcuse, *Through Western Madagascar in Quest of the Golden Bean* (1914?).

[6] Ibid., 127, 138-9.

[7] Ibid., 195, 199. For details on these spiritual practices, see Chapter 7.

[8] Ibid., 212

[9] Ibid., 148.

traveling to Tulear, they "salaamed to us," meaning they greeted him and his men.[10] Marcuse stated that the men were "eyeing our firearms covetously the while; and as I looked at them, I wonder how many of their kind they had murdered with gunfire before the French had deprived them of their cherished flintlocks."[11] This observation was significant on several levels. When the French colonized Madagascar, they denied the Malagasy the right to carry guns, unless they were soldiers or other officials in the colonial government. This domination of the use of firearms represented a form of violent control that harkened back to the Sakalava monopoly on the importation of firearms on the west coast. Marcuse assumed that these farmers had murdered "many of their kind" prior to colonization. Marcuse, and the French colonial government, firmly believed that pre-colonial Malagasy communities lived in chaotic, antagonistic relationships with each other.

What Marcuse was missing was the connections these men could have drawn between pre-colonial and French governance in western Madagascar. Any covetous glance from the men arose from recognition of the privileges previously held by the Sakalava now granted to the Europeans. Over these centuries, people supplied food and labor to power global trade, but still dealt with the granting of special privileges to the elites that ruled them. Despite growing the corn, manioc, and beans that allowed kings, queens, and governors to participate in global trade networks, the farmers still could not own firearms themselves. The French had passed laws and rigorously protected their monopoly with more precision than the Sakalava. Malagasy who served the French

[10] The term Salaam, a greeting in many regions of Madagascar, comes from Arabic greeting *As-Salāmu `Alaykum*, itself evidence of the impact of global influences on a region where Islam was rarely practiced.

[11] Ibid., 148.

colonial government were given permission to hold arms. What the Sakalava had began centuries earlier, the French continued, but with a bureaucracy to assist them in preserving their control over the labor of the Malagasy.

The story of the rise and fall of the Sakalava Empire has been written as a litany of rulers, events, and complex diplomatic maneuvering. Indeed, the available sources have given us little opportunity for telling the history in any other way. In writing a history of southwestern Madagascar, we are left with these sorts of fragments to understand the day-to-day lives of people in places such as southwestern Madagascar. We are left with very little to make sense of the lives of these men and women who enabled and continue to enable the circulations of people, goods, and ideas throughout the world.

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