

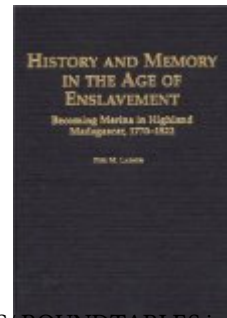
H-Net Reviews

in the Humanities & Social Sciences



Pier M. Larson. *History and Memory in the Age of Enslavement. Becoming Merina in Highland Madagascar, 1770-1822*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 2000. xxxii + 414 pp. \$24.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-325-00217-0.

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Review Editor's note: H-SAFRICA is pleased to introduce the first of our REVIEW ARTICLES/ROUNDTABLES in which interesting new books are reviewed by multiple authors. A further review of this book will follow. Raised here are important differences between 'cultural'/'oral' and 'orthodox' or empirical historians and questions of method that may prove fertile discussion points.

Introduction

This book sets out to examine the impact of the slave export trade between 1770 and 1822 on Imerina, a small region of the central highlands of Madagascar. However, its aim is wider. Assuming the role of spokesman for 'cultural' and 'oral' historians, Pier Larson launches an attack on 'orthodox' empirical historians of Africa and the slave trade for their neglect of 'oral' history. Empirical historians, he claims, neglect the history of enslaved peoples, some 24 million who remained in Africa, in part because they are preoccupied with the Atlantic slave trade and the Afro-American experience. Increasingly absorbed by quantitative assessments based on primarily European sources, they produce dry, detached analyses that, at their worst, are mere exercises in number crunching. His list of prominent 'culprits' includes Walter Rodney, Phyllis Martin, Joseph Inikori, Paul Lovejoy, David Eltis, Joseph Miller, Patrick Manning, Robin Law, John Thornton, Stanley Engerman, James Searing and Martin Klein. In ignoring techniques that might uncover the 'African' dimension of enslavement, their approach, Larson writes, is both 'narrow' and colonialist:

... most major studies of the slave trade published during the last twenty years are based exclusively or near exclusively upon contemporary written documents produced by Europeans. The reluctance of historians of African slavery and the slave trade to meaningfully engage African memories is a serious shortcoming that returns African historiography to colonial patterns. (p.

279)

Larson advocates rather research into 'social memory - defined as the way in which a community understands its history or, more precisely, conceptualizes its experience through a variety of means including narrative, ritual, dance, customs, bodily practices, and other forms of socially meaningful action.' The techniques involved, those of the 'oral' or 'cultural' historian, require scholars to temporarily set aside their own historical memories with all their professional techniques and hypotheses... modifying the idea that something verifiable and recoverable happened in the past that can be reconstructed if only factually accurate contemporary accounts can be located in the archives or extracted from 'oral traditions' through proper historical procedure, processing and analysis. (pp. 38-40)

This polemic reflects a deep schism in the historical and social sciences in North America, one that needs to be set against the rise of Afro-American studies and the historical legacy of America's involvement in slavery and the slave trade. Larson thus throws down the academic gauntlet and offers his study of Madagascar as a model of oral and cultural history, a contrast and corrective to the empiricist trend. The central theme of his case study is the hidden history of women in Imerina, in the central highlands of Madagascar, from 1770-1822. This review assesses the validity of Larson's case study through an examination of the main sources used and the techniques of interpretation employed.

The Case Study: 'In Memory of the Forgotten'

Larson promises to reveal a history, forgotten by the Merina and hitherto undiscovered by historians, of the impact of the slave export trade upon those who remained behind in Imerina, in the highlands of Madagascar. His central contention is that 70,000 Merina, mostly male, were exported as slaves, with revolutionary consequences: mass impoverishment, a demographic imbalance that resulted in women entering agricultural work for the first time, and ultimately, a female revolt against the crown, focused around a sense of popular Merina ethnic identity expressed symbolically through coiffure.

The Oral History Sources

Larson identifies three primordial oral history sources as his basis for uncovering the secret history of the women of Imerina. The first, *Tantara ny Andriana*, literally 'History of the Kings', is presented by Larson as a 'popular' oral history source. The majority view is different. The *History of the Kings* comprises a collection of royal traditions centring on the dynasty founded by Andrianampoinimerina in the late eighteenth century. Typical of its type, it justifies the king's seizure of power and glorifies his reign. Callet, the Catholic missionary who compiled the *History of the Kings* between 1865 and 1883, drew chiefly on courtly manuscripts and traditions. His initial information was gleaned from his time as teacher in the school for royalty at the court in Antananarivo, while his main 'oral' source was Faralehibemalo, a native of Ambohimanga, the sacred capital of Andrianampoinimerina (to which Callet was confined for five years from 1876 to 1881), and who was related to Rabefraïsaana, a companion of the celebrated hero-king.[1] Since the appearance of the first volume in 1873, the *History of the Kings* has been published in a number of editions.

Larson's second source, Raombana's *History*, is like the *History of the Kings*, elite in origin, and a manuscript rather than an 'oral' source. Raombana was of the royal lineage, a descendant of Andriamasinavalona, an earlier 'hero king' accredited with first uniting Imerina and establishing a 'golden age' that Andrianampoinimerina is said to have recaptured. In 1820, aged 9, Raombana and his twin brother Rahaniraka were sent to Britain where they were educated under the supervision of the London Missionary Society, whose agents had recently founded a mission in Madagascar. He returned to Madagascar in 1829 aged 18, after the death of Radama I, speaking only English (another Malagasy - Raolombelona - served as interpreter). Although Raombana relearned Malagasy, his

History, compiled in 1853, two years before his death, was written in English. Later, his brother, Rahaniraka wrote a eulogy - also in English - of Radama II and his pro-European policies.

Both the 'History of the Kings' and Raombana's *History* are clearly 'elite' narratives, whilst the latter is heavily influenced by a British, missionary supervised education. They are well known and have been extensively used by scholars of Madagascar.

Far more exciting and of potentially greater significance in terms of 'oral' history is the Larson Fieldwork Collection, which the author identifies as 135 'interviews' with 'Hira Gasy' [i.e. 'Malagasy Songs'], 'Famidihana' ['secondary funeral'] proceedings' and people in south west Imerina. The names, places and dates of these interviews are detailed over four pages (pp.384-88) but their contents are not revealed, and they are referred to in the text but twice, in footnotes that support peripheral observations.(p. 108 n.107 and p. 151 n.158) Elsewhere, Larson provides a possible reason for his neglect of this primary oral source: 'Public memory of enslavement... has generally faded with time and inclination, particularly among the descendants of slavers and slaveholders.' (p. 11)

By contrast, Larson makes far greater use of missionary sources than he does of either Raombana or of his own Fieldwork Collection. A frequently cited source is *HOM*, which he presents as a primary missionary source.[2] However, *HOM* is Larson's abbreviation for *History of Madagascar* (London, 1838) by William Ellis, an LMS Director who had never been to Madagascar, drew on missionary journals, notably those of David Jones and David Griffiths (who worked largely in the orbit of the royal court from the early 1820s) and from a number of secondary sources. The only person to check Ellis' manuscript was LMS missionary Joseph Freeman who arrived in Madagascar a year before the death of Radama I in 1828 and was thus not in position to personally comment either about the greater part of Radama I's reign, or about that of Andrianampoinimerina. Moreover, Ellis had an agenda: to demonstrate that both the slave trade and French and Roman Catholic influence were heinous, and that these could be combated only by influencing the Merina courtly elite to accept English political and religious (Protestant) influence.[3] Ellis' *History* has to be treated with due caution, and cannot be used with any reliability as a sole source for events that occurred prior to 1820 - most of the period covered by Larson's case study.

Also, a source central to some of Larson's key arguments, and from which the author has quoted extracts, is

Voyage a Madagascar et aux iles Comores (1823 a 1830), a two-volume work by Legueval de Lacombe. No serious historian of Madagascar has used this work since 1871 when Alfred Grandidier, one of the greatest scholars of Madagascar, exposed it as being largely fictitious.[4]

Thus, far from presenting new sources of 'popular' or 'oral' historical traditions, Larson's case study is based largely on the long published and widely used 'elite' *History of the Kings* narratives and British missionary and other European archival and published sources - one of which has long been discredited.

Interpreting the Silences

In turning from Larson's sources to his interpretation thereof, focus falls on the central and novel aspect of his thesis, the 'secret history' of Merina females (1770-1822), hitherto ignored by historians and forgotten even by the Malagasy themselves (a case of what Larson terms 'social amnesia'). 'Like Peter Burke', he writes, 'I see the historian as a "remembrancer," a custodian and shaper of public memory who may remind people what they would rather forget.' (p. 286)

Larson argues that the removal of 70,000 Merina, mostly males, through the slave export trade impoverished the ordinary people and obliged females to largely replace males in productive activity. For the first time in their history, they were obliged to undertake agricultural work, which they did at the cost of weaving - their traditional activity. Their economic and social status steadily worsened until in 1822 they openly protested against the monarch.

The Origin of Slaves

However, serious flaws appear both in Larson's argument and in his interpretative techniques. First, there are major inconsistencies in the text: At times he states that 70,000 people were exported from Imerina in the half century from 1780-1820.(pp. 100 & 118) Elsewhere, he reiterates the majority view that, with the end of the Merina civil wars around c.1790, the slaving frontier moved *outside* Imerina: 'From that time, the export of Merina slaves slowed dramatically, while that of other ethnic groups, enslaved by the Merina, and exported through Imerina, greatly increased.' (p. 37)[5] As the number of slaves exported grew dramatically from 1810, especially from 1815, as demand for servile labour boomed on the Mascarenes, to reach a peak in 1820 (p. 61), it would thus appear that the vast majority of the 70,000 slaves Larson contends were exported from the markets

of Imerina in the period 1770-1820 were of *non-Merina origin*. Indeed, Larson overlooks two passages from his chief source, the *History of the Kings*, which clearly indicate that most slaves were captured in battle or kidnapped from the neighbouring Betsileo region.[6]

Moreover, Larson's only evidence of a major gender imbalance due to the slave export trade ['British missionaries reported that the ratio of women to men in villages across Imerina commonly approached three, four, and sometimes even five to one!' (p. 237, see also p. 123)] comes from Ellis' *History*. Valid for the 1820s, it specifies Betsileo and Sakalava land - two of the regions most visited by Merina slave parties from the 1790s - as being the most demographically ravaged regions of Madagascar.[7] Larson's own sources thus indicate that the demographic and socio-economic impact of the export slave trade was primarily experienced *outside Imerina*.

The Secret History of Merina Women

Nevertheless, Larson proceeds to construct his 'secret history' of Merina womanhood: 'the commerce that deprived 70,000 highlanders (Larson's term for the inhabitants of Imerina (p. xv)[8]) of their lives with their families ... feminized agricultural labor.'(p. 131)[9] This, he contends, constituted a social and economic revolution. Until the late eighteenth century, women worked exclusively in weaving and domestic craftwork. However, the loss of men forced them for the first time to assume the major part of economically productive activity in the Merina economy, and work in the fields. The main source for this contention is Mayeur who in 1777 and 1787 noted Merina females occupied in cloth manufacture (spinning and weaving) and pottery whilst men worked the fields. (pp. 125-6) This, Larson argues, 'suggests' that the modern division of labour in which women work also in agriculture resulted from '[d]emographic transformations in highland Madagascar issuing from enslavement'. (p. 126) Within a few paragraphs this 'suggestion' has become 'fact':

However creative their range of responses, household decision makers inevitably deployed female labor into agricultural production and away from textile manufacture. The early nineteenth-century gender division of labor in which women toiled in the fields leaves little room for alternative explanations. (p. 126)

The evidence Larson summons for this assertion is slim - Mayeur's observations were made in the dry off-peak agricultural season, when cloth manufacture for festivals peaked, and are reiterated by, for instance,

Chardenoux when he visited Imerina in 1816.[10] Moreover, in a passage overlooked by Larson, the *History of the Kings* explicitly states that women had always worked in the fields during the main agricultural season:

Here is how the rice fields were worked according to time honoured procedures, going back to the era of the first settlement.... Men perform the labour in the seed plots and rice fields, breaking the topsoil, trampling the earth, harvesting, threshing, and preparing the silos. Women's labour consists of transporting manure, of taking up the plants and replanting them, of collecting the rice, transporting it, threshing it (a task for both men and women), spreading it out in the sun, winnowing, and storing the rice in pits...[11]

Larson's conclusion that female manufacture of textiles declined sharply similarly devolves on one source - the long discredited Legueval de Lacombe.[23] Reliable sources indicate that, although Betsileo was the chief area of textile production, female production of cotton textiles in Imerina remained strong until the late 1880s, and of other textiles for much longer.[12]

The contention that Merina households were impoverished throughout the period from the 1790s to 1820s is further undermined by evidence of a large growth in slave ownership throughout Merina society during these years throughout Merina society. For instance, Hastie, the British agent sent to Imerina in 1817, reported that an estimated 33 percent of the population of Imerina were slaves (50: 50 inherited slaves and prisoners of war) and that so many were employed in agriculture that free adult male Merina rarely worked -although Merina females continue to do so![13]

The 'Land of the Long Hair'

As opposed to the 'orthodox' school's obsession with formal documentary evidence, Larson argues, scholars of 'oral' history uncover African 'memory' with techniques more rigorous, nuanced and interpretative than those employed by orthodox historians:

Taking historical memory seriously entails moving beyond the comfortable territory of European languages and tempering numbers and economic projections with serious work in vernacular languages and cultures. It means allowing interpretations and reconstructions of contemporary data to be shaped by African worldviews, narratives, vocabularies, artistic expressions, ritual action and symbolism, organizations of space, and embodied memories (such as spirit possession, dress, coiffure).

(p. 280)

Such African 'oral' traditions and 'memories' cannot be evaluated as 'evidence' in the conventional sense, he states. Rather, the scholar must enter the African mind, and use the 'poetical' to uncover history, listening to the 'silences' in that history as much as its 'narrative'.

However, Larson's historical and linguistic techniques sometimes result in fanciful interpretations and incorrect translations. He contends that the key to unlocking the Malagasy mentality, and thus revealing the full meaning of the 'secret' history of Merina women and their revolt in 1822, is through an analysis of the symbolic significance of coiffure. Traditionally worn long by both sexes, hair was the symbol of Imerina, of fertility and life-giving forces, of the golden age of Andrianampoinimerina when subjects enjoyed civil rights - while the cutting of hair symbolised political subjection, and enslavement.

However, Larson's argument is based on a highly questionable interpretation of the Malagasy text. For instance, he asserts that in preparation for a boy's circumcision, women adopted a coiffure wherein:

Hairdressers parted and braided women's hair so that it was divided into four fields representing the four districts at the center of Imerina. The social cohesiveness of the kingdom was symbolically insured by inscribing royally sanctioned social divisions on women's heads. Each section of the hairdo, neatly parted and separated from the others, represented the political order that Andrianampoinimerina imposed on his kingdom, a precondition according to royal ideology, of agricultural and human fertility. (p. 246)

In fact, the *History of the Kings* passage cited as the source for this assertion explicitly states that mothers had their hair dressed in 'three' (*telo*) divisions - two to the fore and one at the back (*'Dia atao telo no fanoritra ny volo, ka ny roa atao eo anoloana, ary ny iray ao an-katoka'*). In addition, it makes no allusion to 'four districts' or 'royally sanctioned social divisions.' [14] This elementary error of translation is further confounded by the cultural significance of the misinterpretation, for it was taboo for the Merina to braid hair into four (or any even number) of plaits -as that was how the hair of the dead was dressed. Taboos, called *fady* in Malagasy, are believed to carry awesome penalties when contravened.[15]

Again, the caption beneath a photograph included by

Larson of a Bara (Ihosa) female that reads: 'Her plaits are similar to those sported by men and women in highland Madagascar [i.e. Imerina] during the early nineteenth century' (p. 241), displays a lack of awareness of the different cultures within Madagascar - an island larger than France, Belgium and the Netherlands combined. Each ethnic group in Madagascar possessed markedly different coiffure traditions. The Bara, who lived far to the south, and were inveterate enemies of the Merina, were reputed for possessing amongst the most striking of coiffure traditions - one quite distinct from that of the Merina.[16]

In addition, Larson throughout translates the Malagasy word *volò* as 'hair.' Thus he claims that 'Highland Malagasy refer to uncultivated land as "land of long hair" (*tany lava volò*.' (p. 178) However, *volò* can also mean moss, feathers, grass, bamboo (it is a generic word for bamboos) and bush: i.e. 'natural growth', the precise nature of which depends on the context.[17] Most uncultivated land in Imerina was formerly low-lying marshes like the Betsimitatra in which - before it was drained and brought under cultivation - grew 'only *zozoro* ('a tall sedge'[18]), rushes and small trees.'[19] Also, the Malagasy word *lava* can signify both 'long' (as Larson has translated it) and 'tall'.[20] Thus an alternative and conceivably more plausible translation of *tany lava volò* - 'uncultivated land' - would be literal: 'land of the tall reeds.'

There is also little evidence for Larson's contention that the Merina at the time of Andrianampoinimerina shaved the heads of enslaved prisoners of war and 'condemned criminals.' (p. 243) The texts cited in support of this assertion make no allusion to enslaved prisoners of war, but do refer to *volò*: one passage mentions the cutting of hair, but only in the case of petty thieves - who could hardly be described as 'condemned criminals' - too poor to pay a minor fine. The other passage specifies that should someone be unable to pay a fine imposed for allowing his birds or chickens to roam and destroy the crops of another, the authorities would pluck the *feathers* [i.e. *volò*] of the offending birds - not the hair of their 'criminal' owners, as asserted by Larson![21]

Again, Larson's claim that: 'When in the late eighteenth century the king of Marovatana developed a reputation for illegitimately enslaving his own subjects, highlanders renamed him Rabehefy, "Mr. Big scissors," a reference to his penchant for cutting the hair of ill-gotten captives,' (p. 243) is supported neither by the footnote cited nor by any of the many other references

to Rabehefy by Raombana and in the *History of the Kings*.[22]

Finally the suggestion that having hair cut short was a 'badge of dishonour' and a symbol of 'subordination' is countered by the fact that soldiers, the only ones permitted by Merina law to cut their hair short, left a distinguishing tuft on the front of the head called a *sanga*, a mark of honour or renown (from *sangana* 'to be honoured or renowned').[23]

The Female Protest of 1822

The question remains, if not hair, what was the underlying reason for 4,000 women to protest publicly against the Merina crown? The British missionaries present were in no doubt that the protest was directed against them, and initially feared for their lives. From their arrival in late 1820, they had established schools, teaching the foreign *taratasy* - reading and writing skills commonly believed to possess magical powers, and advocating the supremacy of Jehovah - believed by the Malagasy to be the sacred ancestor of Europeans. They obliged students to honour Christmas (1821), and the European New Year (1822) - a deliberate attack on the sacred *Fandroana*, or Merina New Year - on which occasion they taught that baptism was a ritual superior to circumcision.[24]

More critically, the missionaries were directly associated with the end of the slave export trade. Both Jones and Griffiths were paid by, and under orders from Robert Farquhar, the British governor of Mauritius. He despatched Jones to Imerina, as part of an official British delegation that signed the October 1820 Britanno-Merina treaty prohibiting slave exports. Many Merina subjects, as slave-owners and slave traders, had strongly opposed the ban when first proposed in 1817. The 1820 prohibition, effectively enforced in 1821, deprived them of the foreign exchange earnings that had hitherto granted them a life of relative luxury. Resentment of the crown - which alone received compensation from the British - and of the missionaries ran high amongst Merina subjects facing, in April 1822, a second trading season with no outlet for their surplus stocks of slaves.[25]

Thus the king's decision to have a haircut might well have been the match that ignited the protest, but the causes lay deeper: Far from being the impoverished victims of a process of enslavement, as Larson claims, those female protestors, and the males they represented, were slave owners and slave traders - the benefactors of some thirty years of exploitation of non-Merina provinces of

Madagascar and of enslavement of non-Merina peoples. British missionaries and later writers have clearly indicated not 'secret' but overt and enduring memories amongst other Malagasy ethnic groups of Merina imperial oppression and enslavement from the time of Andriampoinimerina onwards.[26]

Conclusion

At one point in this book, Larson writes: 'Professional historians must always seek to employ, reconcile, layer, and situate variant strands of evidence and retain an explicitly critical distance from each of them.' (p. 287) However, Larson is not critically detached:

My purpose is to ... honor and memorialize all those who suffered under the intercontinental system of slavery, especially the family and kin who remained behind in the societies from which slaves were drawn To accomplish these goals I must exorcise the highland amnesia of professional historiography, modern politics, and highland Malagasy social memory. *Ho fahatsiarovana ny hadino* ; in memory of the forgotten. (p. 46)

Whilst some might appreciate the author's zealous identification with the downtrodden, and others find it an interesting reflection of white America's search for atonement, as a historical exercise this book is seriously flawed: it presents no new source of oral history, is highly selective in its use of the traditional sources, and contains many misinterpretations. At the same time, Larson's central thesis of a 'secret history' of Merina females is largely unsupported by the evidence he presents.

The potential of oral history studies is indubitable. However, this book underlines the need for 'oral' historians to clarify the precise nature of their sources, and explain the way in which they tackle the inherent difficulties. Of major importance are the application of rigorous linguistic techniques and an understanding of the problems (e.g. dialects; proverbs; word play) of interpretation. It is often exceptionally difficult for foreigners to acquire even a basic knowledge of a current dialect of an African language, let alone venture to explore its historical and cultural nuances.

Moreover the sensibility of the 'slave' issue is such that in some societies (e.g. Madagascar) it is very difficult to broach the subject with people of slave or slave-owning origin. Respondents' answers to that and many other issues tend to be evasive (how can the researcher assess the veracity of the response). Anthropological training, cultural sensibility and linguistic rigour are re-

quired to begin to tackle such issues in the research field. In the case of Madagascar, it might prove more productive to probe non-Merina Malagasy societies in search of 'histories of enslavement'. Some modern scholars have shown the fruits of truly rigorous linguistic and anthropological research in such areas.[27]

In short, it is clear that the 'secret history of the slave trade' (p. 23) in the 'land of the long hair' is a construct of Larson's own imagination. He notes that 'the dead cannot now be interviewed.' (p. 34) I would suggest that neither *should* they be invented. Larson's work, far from undermining the 'orthodox' school it attacks, emphasises the dangers of 'poetry' in interpretation, and of pseudo-psychological jabs in the dark at other cultures in order to awaken them from 'social amnesia' and prise from them their 'forgotten histories'. It also serves to underline the key importance of anchoring historical research in exhaustive empirical accuracy.

Notes

[The following abbreviations are used throughout the footnotes: AAMM (*Antananarivo Annual and Missionary Magazine*); BAM (*Bulletin de l'Academie Malgache*); *Tantara* (*R. P. Callet, Tantara ny andriana eto Madagascar/Histoire des Rois*).]

[1]. Delivre, 1974: 36-62

[2]. For instance, in a discussion of *kabary*, Larson writes: "After the formation of the army," wrote British missionaries perceptively, "these councils of the nation became less frequent and are now mere matters of form." Larson, 2000: 245 ; for another instance of this, see Larson, 2000: 237

[3]. Ellis, 1838. I: iii-vi ; Freeman and Johns, 1840 ; Stephens, 1889

[4]. Larson, 2000: 103-4 ; 128 n.51 ; for de Lacombe see Sibree, 1877, 12 and Dahle, 1884: 107

[5]. Though he is inconsistent in his view, he elsewhere dates the start of the 'external' expansion of the slaving frontier to 1810. (pp. 121-2)

[6]. *Tantara*: 633 ; see also *ibid*: 321-2

[7]. Ellis, 1838, I: 114, 152

[8]. Larson's use of 'highlands' for Imerina, and 'highlanders' for the Merina is misleading. Imerina formed but a small region of the highlands of Madagascar which run on a north-south axis almost the entire length

of the island.

[9]. For a similar unsubstantiated move from 'suggestion' to fact see Larson's treatment of a 'communally defined morality of enslavement' (p.96)

[10]. Chardenoux, 1816: 174

[11]. *Tantara*: 276-7

[12]. Grandidier, 1917: 174-5 ; Mack, 1989.

[13]. Hastie, 1817: 184, 250-1; see also Campbell, 1988a

[14]. *Tantara*: 74 ; see also Grandidier, 1917: 17, 158 n.3b

[15]. Grandidier, 1917: 17, 158 n.1, 560 n.113; Ruud, 1960

[16]. See, for example, Shaw, 1876: 106 ; Grandidier, 1917: 157

[17]. Richardson, 1885: 777-9 ; Abinal and Malzac, 1930: 851-3.

[18]. Richardson, 1885: 803

[19]. *Tantara*: 275-6

[20]. Richardson, 1885: 383; Abinal and Malzac, 1930: 391.

[21]. *Tantara*: 781- 'If you let your cattle, sheep, birds or chickens trespass onto the land of others and devour their crops, are too arrogant to beg the pardon of the proprietor, and the local council fails to bring about an agreement, then a fine will be imposed and the proprietor be compensated. The fine is a kirobo [\$0.25] per [offending] oxen, a voamena [\$0.04] per sheep; and should the guilty party be unable to pay the fine, the ear of the animal will be cut off. The fine for an offending bird [i.e. non-fowl] is an ilavoamena [\$0.02], and should the guilty party be unable to pay, the bird will have its feathers [volo] plucked; the fine for a chicken is vary 7 venty [\$0.01], and should the guilty party be unable to pay, the chicken will have its feathers [volo_] plucked.'

[22]. *Tantara*: 10, 420-1, 491, 505, 549-51, 554-5, 655-6, 949-51, 964, 967, 993 ; Raombana, 1853: 456-68, 470-4, 477

[23]. Grandidier, 1917: 176 n.3 ; Richardson, 1885: 551

[24]. Griffiths, 1843: 3; David Griffiths to William Griffith, 2 January 1822, National Library of Wales 19157E; Ellis, 1838 I: 287-9

[25]. Hastie, 1817: 184, 250-1; Campbell, 1981. For the financial crisis in Imerina caused by the ban on slave exports, see Campbell, 1986

[26]. Ellis, 1838 II: 125; Freeman and Johns, 1840: 24-35; for late nineteenth and also twentieth-century 'memories' of Merina imperial exploitation and enslavement see e.g. Walen, 1881 (for the Sakalava); Dubois, 1938 (for the Betsileo); Esoavelomandroso, 1979 (for the Betsimisaraka)

[27]. For Madagascar, see e.g. the work of Evers

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